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**EXPLORING ASPECTS OF COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY (COI) IN AFROPHILIA
LEARNING PROCESSES FOR TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION USING AN
AFROPHILIC ‘PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN’ APPROACH:
A case of Sebakwe resettlement primary schools in the Midlands Province of Zimbabwe**

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the degree of

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By

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ABSTRACT

This study focused on investigating and developing an Afrophilic orientation to a sociocultural approach to philosophy for children. The main aim was to foster a critical and generative approach to considering the heritage-based curriculum foundations of Zimbabwean primary schools, focusing on Sebakwe resettlement primary schools (the case study area). Afrophilia foundations in the study are regarded as “the discourses that are the medium of philosophical reflexion” (Rettova, 2004, p. 4) in each African society. As articulated in the study, such discourses include African proverbs, poems, stories, music, and folktales which are useful in the initiation of philosophical engagements with children in a community of inquiry approach. A community of inquiry is a framework that reflects a collaborative-dialogical approach to teaching and learning.

Curriculum reviews in postcolonial Zimbabwe have revealed an unconscious misalignment of the Zimbabwean education system's philosophical underpinnings because it has continued to align itself with imperial British colonial philosophy, which contradicts the country's developmental needs (Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training [CIET], 1999, Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education [MoPSE], 2014). The philosophical misalignment is an extension of the colonial history of Zimbabwe showing that vestiges of colonial rule still shape the education sector. This leaves the education system focusing mainly on abstracted concepts with continued marginalisation of local cultures, discourses, and knowledge. Consequently, it leaves Zimbabwe together with other postcolonial education systems with the task of dealing with the phenomenon of colonial continuity.

One implication of these colonial continuities, is learner disinterest in learning, which affects the educational process negatively, affecting the learning of critical reflexive thinking, an issue which I have observed in the Sebakwe resettlement schools involved in this study where I have been teaching for 15 years. To address, this, the study sought to answer the following questions: What historical and contemporary barriers are affecting the promotion of a culture of learning in Zimbabwean resettlement primary schools, particularly as they relate to learners' underdevelopment of critical reflexive thinking skills? In addition, How can the Philosophy for Children Afrophilia curriculum intervention promote a culture of learning

in Sebakwe resettlement primary schools that is oriented toward the development of critical reflexive thinking skills in children?

In approaching the research questions, I applied postcolonial and decolonisation theory, sociocultural learning theory and curriculum theory aimed at transformative change, that is oriented towards achieving a more contextually oriented approach to teaching and learning, and a paradigm of ‘learning as connection’ (Lotz-Sisitka & Lupele, 2017; Shumba, 2017). This has been identified as a ‘missing’ discourse in mainstream educational quality discourses in southern Africa (Lotz-Sisitka & Lupele, 2017). Furthermore, to create space for curriculum development using multi-actor groups in a community of inquiry, I used decolonial research methodologies in the data generation process. The study is constituted as an interventionist case study, and I applied a four-stage process comprising document analysis, workshops, participant observations involving children between 8-11 years, and reflective interviews with parents, educators and children as instruments for data gathering. I also used process-based analytical tools developed in Philosophy of Children research to analyse the processes of critical reflexive thinking development that emerged from the Philosophy for Children pedagogy involving ten lessons which I facilitated, and video-recorded. Moreover, I used postcolonial and decolonial discourse analysis to provide the broader analytical insights that informed the interpretations of the lesson analysis data from the perspective of the research problem that I address across the research project.

This PhD is produced as a PhD by publication, which involves publishing of papers, and orientation to, and interpretation of the papers. The main findings of this study are reported in articles that I prepared for publication, three of which have already been published (see Appendices A1, A4 and A5), and four which have been submitted for publication (A2, A3, A6, A7) with some already at an advanced stage of finalisation via review. The conceptual paper (A1) that served as the foundation for the publication journey revealed that, in addition to the weight of cultural technologies of domination, the curriculum is shaped by the paradox of a superficial interpretation of *unhu/ubuntu* educational philosophy. As a result, the curriculum becomes disconnected from the learners' real-world experiences. The second paper (A2), which focuses on why Zimbabwe needs the Philosophy for Children approach with a sociocultural medley, unveils Zimbabwe's complex decolonial curriculum reforms and their many contradictions and paradoxes. However, it also emerged that the approach used in

this study empowers teachers, is relevant to the emerging constellation of practices in the Sebakwe resettlement, and influences power sharing beyond teacher-child relationships. The third paper (A3), based on children's philosophy for children practice, defends the study's decision to bring children's heritage and cultural lens to bear on curriculum and pedagogical praxis. In essence, the article explores a synergy between philosophy for children and the Zimbabwean heritage-based educational curriculum, serving to enrich both.

The fourth paper (A4) makes the case that philosophy for children could be a viable pedagogy for transformative education, and it provides evidence-based implementation of a context-based philosophy for children. According to this paper, the approach is effective in strengthening strong community relationships, instilling pride in local heritage, and advancing curriculum transformation. The fifth paper (A5) focusses on the approach's implications for teachers' roles, practices, and competencies. Six dimensions of teacher roles, practices, and competences surfaced, including the role of the teacher as a decoloniser and pedagogical innovator, among others. The sixth paper (A6), influenced by the previous papers' findings, focused on decolonisation and improving learning opportunities for children in the Sebakwe area using the philosophy for children approach. This paper's data depicts a 'third space' in which learners consolidate their cultural capital and curriculum content into their own meaning construction. The implication is that schools become neutral sites that improve learners' interdependence and inclusivity while also taking contextual realities into account. The findings of the seventh and final paper (A7) presented in this write-up advance the idea that a Philosophy for Children approach with a sociocultural medley influences an ethics of care by demonstrating how Afrophilia experiences influence a new path to wildlife conservation and sustainability.

The study highlights that integrating Philosophy for Children and Afrophilia foundations of knowledge into the school curriculum promotes critical reflexive thinking skills, helps to address real-life problems and adds relevance to the curriculum. The study further shows that the integration of philosophy for children in the advancement of curriculum transformation in Zimbabwe is a successful formative interventionist approach in the resettlement schools that are characterised by a critical shortage of teaching and learning resources. In essence, the research opens an understanding that curriculum transformation and decolonisation are context-based and multi-actor processes, as showcased in the experiences of parents,

teachers, education inspectors, and children in this study. Furthermore, this study posits that situating curriculum decolonization and transformation within *unhu/ubuntu* dialectical rationality and advancing diversity in reasoning necessitates deeper engagement with heritage-based curriculum and provides teachers with appropriate agency to modify and adapt their pedagogies in alignment with the learners' life world. According to the study, this emerged as a rational possible solution to the problem of curriculum decontextualisation. Curriculum decontextualisation as highlighted in the study via the problem of colonial continuity mentioned above, appears to be further influenced by the emphasis on examination assessment scores which seem to widen the gap between the adult and child worlds, as well as the gap between contextual realities and [curriculum] examination content. Overall, the study offers an approach that can deepen an *unhu/ubuntu* foundation for the heritage-based curriculum reform in Zimbabwe, and strengthen the learning of children in the resettlement schools, where the case was explored. Implications for further research are elaborated, as are possible implications for policy and practice.

KEY WORDS

Afrophilia

Coloniality

Community of inquiry

Cultural technologies of domination

Social abjection

Philosophy for Children

Formative intervention

Generative curriculum

Heritage education

Critical reflexive thinking

**LIST OF PAPERS PUBLISHED IN JOURNALS
AND OTHER PAPERS PREPARED FOR THESIS**

- Paper 1: Bhurekeni, J.** (2020). Decolonial reflections on the Zimbabwean primary and secondary school curriculum reform journey. *Educational Research for Social Change*, 10(2), 101- 115. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17159/2221-4070/2020/v9i2a7>.
- Paper 2: Bhurekeni, J.** (Accepted with revisions) A socioculturally framed Philosophy for Children (P4C) approach based on *unhu/ubuntu* philosophical foundations: A Zimbabwe primary schools' context.
- Paper 3: Bhurekeni J. & Lotz-Sisitka H.** (Revised for final submission) The Teachers' Roles Characterised by Competences and Practices in a Sociocultural Approach to Philosophy for Children (p4c): A Sebakwe Resettlement Schools Formative Intervention Study. Article submitted to *South African Journal of Education*.
- Paper 4: Bhurekeni, J.** (2021). An Afrophilic P4C intervention: The case of Sebakwe primary schools in Zimbabwe. *Journal of Philosophy in Schools*, 8(1), 6-32.
- Paper 5: Bhurekeni, J.** (2021) Philosophy for Children: A potential pedagogy for transformative education in Zimbabwean resettlement primary schools. *Moja: An Interdisciplinary Journal of African Studies*, 2, 67-89.
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- Paper 7: Bhurekeni, J.** (2022) Enacting Environmental Ethics Education for Wildlife Conservation using an Afrophilic 'Philosophy for Children' approach. Article submitted to *Southern African Journal of Environmental Education*.

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ACRONYMS

The following is a list of acronyms that I used in articles published and those prepared for publication as well as within this research report. I have provided the list here to act as a reference for the whole research report.

BSAC	British South African Company
BSPZ	Better Schools Programme in Zimbabwe
CIET	Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training
COI	Community of Inquiry
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
GNU	Government of National Unity
GPA	Global Political Agreement
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MoPSE	Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education
P4C	Philosophy for Children
SRA	Sebakwe Resettlement Area
SIG	School Improvement Grant
TIC	Teacher-In-Charge
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
ZANU-PF	Zimbabwe African National Union- Patriotic Front
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development
ZRC	Zibagwe Rural Council

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE CONTEXT OF ZIMBABWE TODAY AND THE RESETTLEMENT SCHOOLS' CONTEXT

This chapter presents the Zimbabwean education context as history of the present. Over the years Zimbabwe's education system has been characterised by inequalities, accounts of social abjection, and entrenchment of cultural technologies of domination. These paradoxically are found in post-independence educational policy; thus, curriculum reforms are constantly geared towards achieving social justice, equity and quality teaching and learning. Remnants from the imperial British colonial system of education still define and shape the contours of present-day Zimbabwean education. Over the last two decades (1999 – 2019), the citizenry witnessed a toxic mix of insightful curriculum reforms with an antecedent towards endogenous heritage- knowledges and, at the same time, mass establishment of poorly capacitated schools (resettlement schools) and e-learning programmes that would divide and exclude some from the educational terrain (see Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training [CIET], 1999; Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education [MoPSE], 2014). Mass enrolments in both primary and secondary education have meant quantitative expansion in terms of access to education, but little has been achieved in ensuring access to quality education for a majority of learners, especially in resettlement schools.

This postcolonial trajectory of fractional decolonial success and abysmal failure demonstrates that the country's problems (particularly in education) go beyond the continuities of Christocentric and Eurocentric world views but are reflective of a political and economic impasse that has crippled other pillars of governance. In this chapter I offer an overview of the history of the Zimbabwean education system from the pre-colonial era to the present day and track the idea of inclusion of an Afrophilia learning lens and quality education over this period. Within these broad parameters I also set out to explore the nature of curriculum reform, the changing contours of the micropolitics of the classroom, and the establishment of the phenomenon of resettlement/ satellite schools in the country.

In essence, this introductory chapter describes the history of the Zimbabwean education system from the pre-colonial age, colonial epoch to the present postcolonial trajectory. The

chapter elaborates the contextual and conceptual framework, presents the research goals and the research questions the study sought to answer. The chapter discusses the concept of an Afrophilia learning lens and the Philosophy for Children intervention that informed the study's proceedings. The chapter closes by providing an overview of the structure of the study.

1.1 ZIMBABWEAN EDUCATION SYSTEM: RETROSPECT AND PROSPECT

1.1.1 Pre-colonial education

In contrast to Zimbabwe's colonial and postcolonial historical periods, what we know about the pre-colonial period is the result of academic theories and of ideas popularised by anticolonial movements. Their interest is to debunk existing stereotypes of African identity and situate the need for heritage-based curriculum reforms within the ideals of self-knowledge (Rodney, 1972; Raftopoulos & Mlambo, 2009). As a result of ongoing struggles for autonomy, the pre-colonial history of Zimbabwean education, like that of other African states, has been constantly reinterpreted.

The pre-colonial period in Zimbabwe was the period preceding the country's colonisation and lasted until the British government granted colonial status to Southern Rhodesia (modern-day Zimbabwe) in 1923. Although missionaries introduced formal education in the country prior to colonialism around 1859,¹ this study does not discuss the missionary education system as part of pre-colonial education due to the influence of missionaries in colonising the country and shaping the colonial and postcolonial education systems. Rather, the study considers missionary education to be a component of the colonial system (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011). In a study by Zvobgo (2003), it was established that both the missionaries and the white settlers (British South African Company 1890-1924) shared common goals and visions which were principally to inaugurate and strengthen British imperial hegemony.

According to Mpondi (2004), in pre-colonial Zimbabwean society, as in other Southern African societies of the time, the educational process began when a child was considered capable of understanding the importance of functioning in his/her physical and social environment. We have a remarkable summary of the goals of pre-colonial education in the writing of Fafunwa (1974, p. 20):

¹ The London Missionary Society led by Robert Moffat opened the first school for Africans at Inyati in 1859.

- To develop the child's latent physical skills;
- To develop character;
- To inculcate respect for elders and those in position of authority;
- To develop intellectual skills;
- To acquire specific vocational training and to develop a healthy attitude towards honest labour;
- To develop a sense of belonging and to participate actively in family and community affairs;
- To understand, appreciate and promote the cultural heritage of the community at large.

A unique feature of the goals listed above is that, though their *modus operandi* with the modern curriculum is different, there is resemblance to the goals, content and evaluation techniques of modern day schooling. According to Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2002), the primary principles and goals of pre-colonial education can be categorised into the cognitive, psycho-motor and affective domains, as found in modern day curricular practice.

Rodney remarked that the pre-colonial educational process was both formal and informal and, “there was no separation of education and productive activity or any division between manual and intellectual education” (Rodney 1972, p. 262). Initiation schools such as “*Chinamwari*”, “*UkuSoka or Umguyo*” were circumcision ceremonies for both genders where instruction and training came from specialized teachers/elders and there was a set place and period for the programmes which exposit formal schooling in pre-colonial Africa (Siyakwazi, 2012). Functionalism was the primary guiding principle of pre-colonial education (Fafunwa, 1974). Rodney (1972) and Parsons (1983) clarify that modern formal education/ schools catered mainly for the political and economic needs of state power, neglecting earlier purposes and modalities of formal education.

Examining earlier forms of formal education in pre-colonial societies, shows specific programme(s), which were restricted to certain periods in the life of an individual. There was also conscious division between teachers and pupils with learning directly connected to the purposes of the society (Rodney, 1972; Siyakwazi & Siyakwazi, 2013). The curriculum was integrated with the social, cultural, artistic, religious, and recreational life of the indigenous people (Seroto, 2011) with the aim of fostering learners’ holistic development. The existence of formal and specific programmes involved formal pedagogical approaches to teaching and learning and professional or specialised teachers in a particular area or practice. According to

Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2002) and Siyakwazi and Siyakwazi (2013), these teachers had the responsibility to teach a pre-determined curriculum in an organised sequence over a period of time and their payment was often in the form gifts from the parents of the children they were teaching.

In a study of the Lemba initiation school of Mberengwa district, Siyakwazi (2013) observed that the initiation school, like a modern school, had goals/purpose, curriculum content, methodology of teaching, and provision for graduation at the end of the initiation. As observed by Ocitti (1973) and Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2002), during the formal days of pre-colonial education learners were exposed to both theoretical and practical approaches of learning as they were expected to recite poems, riddles, and songs. However, to a large extent, pre-colonial African education was mainly informal, and activities of informal education included parenting, relations between siblings and extended family and community engagement, with special emphasis on the aged as repositories of wisdom, training in practices in the household, agriculture, hunting techniques, and apprenticeships in trades such as medicine, mining, and smelting (Parsons, 1983; Pandey & Moorad, 2003). Lurking behind the rigorous training in various aspects of life was the belief that society had an obligation to train useful citizens and prepare its youth for adult life by providing them with basic survival, production, and relational skills from one generation to the next. Henceforth, it should be noted that pre-colonial education had a crucial role of bridging the gap between the adult generation and the young, thus fostering intergenerational communication and learning.

Although pre-colonial education in Zimbabwe was largely informal with no writing taking place, the system of education was in tandem with the realities of the society it served (Rodney, 1972). It was also underpinned by the philosophy of the indigenous people. Moreover, because of its emphasis on the physical, social, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual development of the learner, the education enabled an all-round development of the learner in the context of the time. Thus, in the education process there was no separation between the learners and their daily experiences. Ordinarily, education was for purposes of induction into society and much of the educational experiences as mentioned earlier were designed to uphold socio-political institutional values.

According to Ocitti (1973), pre-colonial education was anchored on a sound philosophical grounding. The philosophical foundations of the education system were identified as preparationism, functionalism, communalism, perennialism and holicism. Preparationism

had a focus on making sure that the role of both formal and informal education was to prepare boys and girls with the skills appropriate to their gender as expected of their distinctive roles in society (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2002). The practice of pre-colonial education was therefore gender-based and aimed at helping learners fulfil their socially defined masculine and feminine responsibilities. Closely related to the principle of preparationism is the principle of functionalism (noted before) and it defined the utilitarian nature of pre-colonial education (Ocitti, 1973).

The principle of communalism signifies the communal ownership of property and things within pre-colonial societies. Here, it was believed that children belonged to the community; a child was ‘everyone’s child’, hence children’s upbringing was a responsibility of all community members. In this regard, even in the absence of the child’s biological parents, if a child misbehaved it was the task of an adult member there present to discipline and correct or guide that child on the spot. Children therefore were educated to be able to take part in sustaining the communal well-being of the society (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2002; Siyakhwazi, 2013). Here communalism acts like a sister cousin to the principle of perennialism which was the lens through which pre-colonial African societies perceived education as a means to sustain and safeguard community cultural heritage and the socio-political status quo. This signifies the root of the conservative character of pre-colonial education (Ocitti, 1973). Thus, in practice pre-colonial education restricted learners from experimenting with the unknown. In other words, the curriculum was both teacher-centred and community-centred with those who dared to experiment with the unknown/ unprescribed norms of the community being regarded as community rebels or outcasts.

While the four principles discussed above were common in most pre-colonial African communities, holism (the fifth principle) was mainly associated with communities that were economically and politically advanced like the Munhumotapa, Maphungubwe and Timbuktu (Thomas, 2019). The principle of holism in these advanced societies was marked by a high degree of specialisation in learning. For example, people would specialise in iron smelting, fisheries, animal husbandry and herbal medicines. According to Adeyemi and Adeyinka (2002), it was due to the holistic characteristics of pre-colonial education that young people were able to acquire a variety of skills that made them productive in many ways. Thus, for instance, learning to smelt iron was accompanied by skills such as learning to

survey for suitable areas where iron could be mined and the marketing strategies to support iron trading.

Despite its significance for the daily experiences and life-philosophy of the African child, pre-colonial education has derogatory connotations. For example, it has been regarded as a product of a primitive culture and a savage practice. As observed by Ezeanya-Esiobu (2019), the knowledges associated with African education are often repudiated for lack of ‘universality’, a term that Kiggundu (2007a) claimed is only associated with Western practices. Ordinarily, pre-colonial education has been said to be culture-specific with little scope for going beyond the clan or the tribe (Adeyemi & Adeyinka, 2002). In modern formal education as introduced by imperial governments, practices associated with pre-colonial education have been disdained as archaic, narrow in scope, and indicative of backwardness (Ezeanya-Esiobu, 2019). It has been argued that since the knowledges associated with pre-colonial education were mostly orally and practice based (ie.via folklore stories, folklore science, poems, imitation and demonstration) there was no textual documentation of these knowledges, making it difficult to transmit them to other regions and other generations.

In spite of the above mentioned shortcomings, pre-colonial education served the needs of the communities because it was concrete and pragmatic (Mpondi, 2004). Pre-colonial education connected the learner to the group and to the social environment in a mutually related manner. To reject pre-colonial education in favour of the colonially inherited formal education system is incongruous since what exists between them is a difference in approach, and scope and range of knowledges. According to Ezeanya-Esiobu (2019), it is the difference that arises from the discrepancies in socio-cultural processes and worldviews and documented scope that gives them their distinct identities. Henceforth, there is need for a more critical relational analysis of the two forms of education inorder to find a complementary balance, rather than to remain with contradictory comparisons and denigration of pre-colonial forms of education. In the next section, the focus is on the colonial system of education that was introduced in Africa (Zimbabwe included) by the imperial rulers in the colonial period (with neo-colonial continuities).

1.1.2 The colonial education system and its impacts

The discussion above indicated that in pre-colonial Africa there existed an education system that was both formal and informal. Walter Rodney clarified that,

The colonisers did not introduce education in Africa: they introduced a new set of formal institutions which partly supplemented and partly replaced those which were there before. The colonial system also stimulated values and practices which amounted to new informal education. The main purpose of the colonial school system was to train Africans to help man the local administration at the lower ranks and to staff the private capitalist firms owned by Europeans. (1972, pp. 263-264)

This explanation reveals that colonial education changed the approach to, and purpose of, education in order to suit the capitalist mode of production and the political system of the day. However, in comparison with pre-colonial education, one is likely to reach the same conclusion that was reached by Rodney that,

... the closer one scrutinises the educational contribution of colonialism even in purely quantitative terms, the more it shrinks into insignificance. (1972, p 267)

Rodney (1972) corroborated his arguments by citing the high percentage of drop-outs at primary school level for African students enrolled in colonial schools. In the next sections I take a closer look at the impact of colonial education in Zimbabwe. The burgeoning historiography on colonial education in Zimbabwe has focused on internal affairs (see Zvobgo, 1986, 2003; Mumbengegwi, 1995; Vengesai, 1995; CIET, 1999; Mpondi, 2004) with little scope of what was happening on the international arena. According to Matasci, Jerónimo, and Dores (2020, p. 2), the “educability” of the African as well as the “usefulness” of African indigenous education have been the subject of numerous debates in different international and colonial contexts. Lurking behind these debates has been the need to assess the impact of education on the global macroeconomic performances of African countries.

The first phase of colonial education in Africa occurred between 1900-1930, coinciding with the epoch of the scramble for Africa. Missionaries working on behalf of the colonial establishments dominated educational activities during this time period. According to

Matasci et al. (2020), missionaries carried more than a religious vision during this period because they embodied new ways of understanding sociocultural differences that were commonly associated with the idea of civilising the colonies. This reinforces my earlier objection to discussing missionary-led educational activities in Zimbabwe during this period as part of pre-colonial education, even though the country gained colonial status around 1923.

The end of the First World War in 1918 and the emergence of the concept of ‘trusteeship’ engrained within the League of Nations signalled a shift in educational objectives in the global arena [Zimbabwe included] (Pedersen, 2015). This period was marked by expansions in availability of formal colonial education to the rural masses, and saw curriculum reforms placing emphasis on inclusion of practical subjects steered by a developmentalist discourse (Matasci et al., 2020). The aim of a primary focus on practicals was on making improvements in health care provisions, facilitating expansions in infrastructure development and contributing overall to the possibilities of economic change in the interest of the colonial state and its economic expansion ideals (Pedersen, 2015). Commenting on the expansion of rural/village schools in Africa, Lord Lugard said:

... improve the village craftsmen and agriculturists, to raise the standard of life, comfort, and intelligence in the village community.
(1922, p. 444)

The salient notion in Lugard’s sentiments is that expansion of education in rural areas and its link to a practical orientation was aimed at making it easier to internationalise imperial rule, as it created conditions complimentary to new forms of labour extraction following the suppression of transatlantic slavery trade (Terreblanche, 2014). Moreover, this expansion in educational provision in African colonies was aimed at advancing Lugard’s policy of ‘indirect rule’ (Lugard, 1922). Increased access to formal imperial systems of education were directly linked with the economic and socio-political modernisation of African colonies (Hailey, 1938; Kallaway, 2020). To further support the project of civilising and modernising Africa, international organisations such the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) took the initiative to conceal the colonising mission of Western countries via formulating an educational doctrine couched within a ‘community development discourse’ specifically designed for countries in the Global South (Matasci et al., 2020).

In approaching the history of education in Zimbabwe, as is the case with many African countries, one cannot ignore the impact of transatlantic slavery trade, colonialism, and racism, for these give pointers to the roots of contemporary education policy. For example, Summers (2002, p. xiii) reasoned that “...Southern Rhodesia [*modern-day Zimbabwe*] was not simply a stark black and white world of deeping segregation, but a place where ideas, values, roles, identities, and material culture were negotiable within uncertain boundaries” (emphasis original). Following Summers’ (2002) remarks it should be noted that educational discourse as it played itself out in the context of colonial Zimbabwe is marked by wide ranging complexities. Lord Hailey, writing in 1938 (in the context of colonial ‘African Survey’ of education), postulated that:

Among the many problems of Africa there is none that has attracted more discussion, and indeed more controversy, than that of the type of education which should be given to the African. (Hailey, 1938, p. 1208)

Hailey affirmed that education in colonial Africa masterminded by colonial imperial powers, was to take a new direction, different from the pre-colonial education. Subsequently, the African’s definition of useful knowledge and ways of teaching the younger generation changed. As observed by Zvobgo (1986) and Shizha and Kariwo (2011), colonial education led to the perforce imposition of an imperial British hegemonic culture and world view. This was despite the fact that Hailey had earlier remarked that:

The African has his own method of education in the form of character training and instruction in crafts, or, in the case of girls, in the duties of domestic life. Initiation ceremonies or ‘regimental training are usually the culminating point, and the system is directed to fitting the youth to take his place in the traditional life of his group: ‘social obligations form the core of all teaching given by tribal elders. (Hailey, 1938, p. 1207)

Following the interests of colonial states, numerous policy positions and debates emerged within settler governments and the international community with regard to the role that

education was to play in the economic and social transformation of African societies (Matasci et al., 2020). For example, international missionary networks via the International Missionary Council (1921) led by Joseph Oldham, dedicated a number of their conference sessions to discussing the connections between education and welfare of African people. According to Matasci et al.(2020), it was during such conferences that it was agreed that the future of Africa be associated with “the moral, physical and intellectual development of the African peoples” (ibid., p. 13). In Zimbabwe at the dawn of colonialism, Europeans under the leadership of the British South African Company (BSAC) enacted educational laws that focused on the provision of education services for the white settlers (Zvobgo, 1986). This was after the establishment of the Education Ordinance of 1899 and following recommendations by the BSAC select committee of 1908 that government assume control of all primary education and that it start establishing secondary schools (Hailey, 1938; Zvobgo, 2003).

Voluntary white missionaries (particularly churches) could extend the provision of education to the indigenous African whom the colonial administration termed ‘Natives’ and a grant-in-aid to the missionaries was availed by the BSAC administration for this purpose (Zvobgo, 1986). It was during this period that Christian concepts and other European epistemological frameworks began to eclipse African values and the intellectual life of African peoples (ibid.; Siyakhwazi, 2012). Typically, the mission schools were established not only to facilitate the conversion of Africans to Christianity but also to produce a literate and useful functionary in the emerging imperial economy.

Vengesai (1995) reported that the European Administration became more directly and expansively involved in the affairs of African Education in the late 1940s. This involvement by the colonial administration led to disagreement. On the one hand, the colonial administration contested that an African educated beyond manual skills would be difficult to manage or control (especially for maintaining the colonial need for manual labour on farms, mines and in other exploitative/ extractive resource use contexts) and on the other hand, the Christian missionaries in their proselytising endeavours, wanted Africans to grasp reading skills so that they would expand their knowledge of the Bible and other religious texts.

The resultant conflict of interest between the colonial administrations and the Christian missionaries led to the enforcement of the 1912 Education Ordinance that was fashioned to put checks and balances on missionary activities in the development of African education (Zvobgo 1986; Vengesai, 1995). To clarify the claims on the standpoint of the colonial administration, I make reference to a speech by the Chief Native Commissioner for Matabeleland. In 1918 the Commissioner reasoned that: “The Native should be trained not so much as a competitor with the White man in the business of life but as a useful auxiliary [sic] to help in the progress of the country” (Zvobgo, 1986, p. 322). On this premise various laws and other policies shaping education as it is found today were enacted by the colonial administration namely the 1930 Educational Policy in which European education in Zimbabwe was made compulsory, the 1966 Education Policy following the 1962 Judges Commission, and the 1979 Education Act. These all had a direct impact on the curriculum content and methods of teaching in the present education system. As mentioned above, colonial education policies in countries such as Zimbabwe resulted in the displacement and repression of local knowledge and socio-political practices (Graness, 2015). In line with this O’Donoghue et al. (2019) observed that education in colonial southern Africa was steered by a succession of externally framed abstractions that have been implemented within the prevailing hegemony of Western modernisation that dominated and marginalised indigenous cultures.

Also as described by Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2012), one of the terrible consequences of colonialism was to destroy the full gamut of alternative modernities together with alternative imaginations of the world that Protestantism, the European renaissance, enlightenment, and the industrial revolution did not necessarily influence (De Sousa Santos, 2014). This concurs with Graness (2015) observation that for centuries African’s ability to philosophise has been denied, and African thinkers, traditions (Afrophia foundations) such as *unhu/ubuntu*, and African schooling and educational systems were not seen as part of world philosophy or educational thinking. Furthermore, the colonial education system regarded African indigenous knowledges as antiquated practices located outside the modern times (Gordon, 2012). This potentially led to the characterisation of Africa’s pre-colonial cultures and societies as “a-historical” and “primitive” (Graness, 2015). Thus, for African people and European people, colonial education represented a clash of traditions, pedagogies, and epistemologies.

Most notably within the colonial education system, as explained above, was a proviso that the indigenous African child was not to be trained in such a way as to enter into competition with Europeans (Hailey, 1938; Zvobgo, 2003). A more vigorous explanation of this position was offered by Prime Minister Godfrey Huggins (1933 – 1952) who was quoted saying:

The European in this country can be likened to an island of whites in a sea of blacks with the artisan and the tradesman forming the shores and the professional classes the highlands in the centre. Is the native to be allowed to erode away the shores and gradually attack the highlands? To do so would mean that the heaven of civilisation would be removed in this country. (Gray, 1960, p. 236)

Here, Huggins clearly affirmed the socio-political philosophy of separate, discriminatory, and unequal rule which was the foundation of imperial British education policy in Zimbabwe and in other colonies. The principle rule of this philosophy was that the indigenous Africans and the British settlers were to live side by side yet apart. Under this policy no African was allowed to enrol in Whites-only schools (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011). The only option for Blacks from influential and wealthy parents or those who showed exceptional academic performance was to enrol in privately owned church schools and one was supposed to be of the same religious denomination as the educational institute.

As a result, two separate systems of education emerged; one for Native education and the other for Europeans (Hailey, 1938; CIET, 1999; Zvobgo, 2003). This policy of two separate systems of education was to last until 1980. The curriculum for the African child was designed to produce an inferior second class citizen, one who would not compete with his or her European counterpart. Thus in the Education Ordinance of 1903 it was explained that African children were to be taught industrial work, receive a sufficient knowledge of the English language, and were to be trained in habits of discipline and cleanliness (Hailey, 1938, p. 1227). This also marked the displacement of the vernacular languages (heritage languages) in favour of the English language and other dominant languages that were considered to be union languages, ie. Shona and Ndebele (see Chapter Six, and paper 4 in Appendix A). Reflecting on this and the perforce imposition of imperial worldviews, Shizha and Kariwo (2011) drew similarities to a state of cultural imperialism which had the effect of causing psycho-cultural alienation of the Black child.

According to Shizha and Kariwo (2011), the colonial authorities ignored the indigenous culture and education systems and kept themselves blinkered by “their own ethnocentrism which prefaced their misinformation and misconceptions about African cultural lives” (ibid., 2011, p. 15). As a result, this narrowness in perspective produced and reinforced a knowledge myth that saw Eurocentric knowledges being ascribed both socio-cultural and political superiority (Kallaway, 2020). Henceforth, Eurocentric knowledges were positioned as a system of control with a major effect of dehumanising, de-Africanising, and or alienating the African child in education (Shava, 2008).

The New Education Plan of 1966 was ordained in order to enforce a pyramidal system of education (especially at secondary school level) that reduced transition rates and promoted dropout rates among indigenous students (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011). This system continued until 1979 when an Education Act was ordained under the Zimbabwe-Rhodesia government of Ian Smith and Abel Muzorewa. While the Education Act of 1979 was successful in facilitating a partial integration of the European and African education system, it failed to bring to an end the educational inequalities that existed as a result of the colonial segregative system. Consequently, it led to the manifestation of a three-tier system of education namely; group A, B and C schools. According to Atkinson (1982) and Zvobgo (2003), in the category of group A schools were those government schools previously attended by Whites-only and other high-fee paying private schools. Unlike low fee-paying group B schools that were in urban African residential areas and included mission schools and characterised by substandard infrastructure, group A schools were well resourced (Chung, 2006). Group C schools located in rural areas were the least resourced as they were non-fee paying (Atkinson, 1982). Following Hailey’s (1938) earlier explanation on village/rural schools, parents of children attending these schools contributed building material and paid for school uniforms, books, and stationery. As observed by Chung (2006), in all the three groups examinations were an instrument for restricting transition from one grade level to another level or most generally from primary school level to secondary school. This was in keeping with the bottleneck system that restricted access, transition and progression through various educational levels (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011). As a result, pupils had little time to develop a culture of learning in their desperation to pass the examinations.

From the forgoing discussions it could be noticed, as Walter Rodney claimed that

...colonial education was a series of limitations inside other limitations.
The first practical limitation was politico-financial, which means the

political policy guiding financial expenditure rather than the actual availability of money. (1972, p. 263)

This was revealed by the political decisions to limit financial expenditure for African education. According to Hailey (1938) earlier on African education was left in the hands of missions and in some cases it was subsidised by grants-in-aid that were made “on a per caput basis, increasing in accordance with the standard of the school” (Hailey, 1938, p. 1226). Given the asymmetrical system of education that existed during the colonial era, the financing of education was not a simple economic exercise; it also had social, racial and political implications in terms of equal access and equity. As a way of example while education was made compulsory and free for all European children between the ages 6 and 15 in 1930 under the Compulsory Education Act, the same did not apply for African children in the same age category (Zvobgo, 1981). The issues discussed here existed further than the colonial period as they modelled the foundation for postcolonial educational policies.

1.1.3 Contextualising the postcolonial Zimbabwean situation



Figure 1: Zimbabwe map showing Kwekwe district, the case study area

Rupert Cornwell wrote about the state of independent Zimbabwe: “it has experienced one of the most devastating collapses on a continent that has tasted more than its share of them. A country that set out life as a jewel of post-colonial Africa has become a basket case, a nightmarish kleptocracy sustained by violence, corruption, and reverse racism” (2008, p. 7). Indeed, recounting the events that occurred in postcolonial Zimbabwe, whether on the educational, economic, and or socio-political fronts, “requires a longer historical view, and the interrogation of a wider cast” (Bourne, 2011, p. xv). In this section, I attempt to provide context for postcolonial educational developments and reforms with a mordant reflective eye. Furthermore, I look into the emergence and condition of newly established resettlement schools in postcolonial Zimbabwe.

The impetus to education provided by the postcolonial Zimbabwean government is related to the foundation and infrastructure the government inherited from the colonial regime. All that the postcolonial government had to do was to implement the necessary reforms in order to care for the population that had previously been segregated by the colonial system. During

the formative stages of self-government (1980-1989), the Zimbabwean government adopted a scientific Marxist-Leninist ideology in both government policy and education. According to Makaye and Munhande (2013), the policy was predicated in response to the massive colonial racial and economic disparities between minority whites and majority blacks in all spheres of life. For example, in 1980 there were only 1,235,994 pupils and 28,455 teachers in primary schools; by 1990, the figures had risen to 2,281,595 and 58,501 respectively (Dzvimbo, 1991). This increase in demand for education was because of the anticipated nexus between education, national and economic development.

The government also managed to decentralise the education administrative and management structures, localise national examinations, and remove racial discrimination among other reforms aimed at decolonisation of the education system (Colclough et al., 1990). Special curriculum units were set up to facilitate the curricula changes in line with socialism. As part of the curriculum innovation plan, agriculture was made compulsory and education with production was declared the official basic policy at all levels of education (Gwarinda, 1985). The massive expansion in education was an indication that the postcolonial government was committed to providing education as a basic human right. As a result, the government committed to providing free primary education as well as subsidised secondary and tertiary education, along with many post-independent African states.

Gwarinda (1985) observed, however, that these reforms, particularly the quantitative expansions were not unrelated to new educational challenges. For example, massive enrollments in primary schools did not correspond to the number of teachers available. Despite the government's efforts to hire teachers from other Western countries, there was insufficient infrastructure to accommodate the large number of students. Again the decision to hire teachers from Western countries did not bode well for socialist policy because it implied the indirect importation of bourgeois ideology and as a result, cultural imperialism (Gwarinda, 1985). This essentially and paradoxically strengthened ties with imperialist countries, posing a challenge to socialist development.

Similarly, the postcolonial government inherited a political economy based on capitalist axis, which posed challenges to the socialist curricula innovations introduced soon after independence. By the end of the first decade of independence, it was self-evident that the socialist ideology was out of sync with the shifting constellations of the global economic axis. According to Shizha and Kariwo (2011), the substantial expenditure on social services imposed a significant financial burden on the government. To address this challenge, the

government instituted neo-liberal policies, the majority of which were dictated by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF), an issue that affected many other post-independent states and Latin America. For example in 1991, the government abandoned its socialist ideology and implemented the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) in order to obtain World Bank funding (Government of Zimbabwe, 1991).

In modern terms, neoliberalism refers to market-oriented reform policies such as eliminating price controls, lowering trade barriers and reducing state influence in the economy through privatisation. This includes reducing spending and removing subsidies for social programmes such as education and health care (Colclough et al., 1990, Shizha & Kariwo, 2011). David Harvey provided a more thorough explanation of neoliberalism, stating emphatically that it is

... in the first instance a theory of political economic practices that proposes that human well-being can best be advanced by liberating individual entrepreneurial freedoms and skills within an institutional framework characterised by strong private property rights, free markets, and free trade. (2005, p. 2)

There is substantive evidence to support that as a result of the implementation of neo-liberal policies, education has undergone significant change. For example, education is now viewed as a business operating in a competitive environment. As a result, high stakes testing and examinations that assess performance outcomes have become increasingly important in education (CIET, 1999). Shizha and Kariwo (2011) observe that due to implementation of neo-liberal policies education has become an investment for individuals rather than a right and a means to social transformation. Much recently the Zimbabwean primary and secondary education Minister has urged schools to commercialise and contribute to the country's gross domestic product (GDP). As seen in Chapter Seven, the move has resulted in learner dropouts because parents are unable to meet the high fee demands of schools that now compete for commercial activities.

This situation illustrates the complexities of education policy development in postcolonial Zimbabwe and Africa more broadly because of multiple factors such as political, historical, sociological, and economic, and global forces (Kallaway, 2020). A paradox arises when the same government that urges schools to commercialise and pay into the Better Schools

Programme in Zimbabwe (BSPZ) fund, which is set at US \$1per child per term, discourages schools from turning back students who fail to pay fees or levies. Commenting on the educational policy situation in postcolonial Zimbabwe, Chapman and Austin (2002) posited that

... there is a general tension and sometimes a direct trade-off between the political necessity to expand enrolments, the moral imperative to increase equity, the educational desire to raise quality and the overwhelming need to control costs. (p. 4)

Because of the country's turbulent economic and political situation, there is substantial evidence to support the notion that the current policy environment in postcolonial Zimbabwe is very fluid (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011). For example, the shift from socialist policy to neoliberalism posed a great financial burden on the Zimbabwean populace – the poverty situation became acute to the extent that most families found it difficult to afford tuition fees for their children. This, taken in conjunction with the Zanu PF government's fear of losing national elections around the millennium turn, prompted the government to make yet another drastic shift and implement the fast-track land reform programme, which was unplanned and marked by widespread violence.

The emergence of resettlement/ satellite schools (see Table 1.1 for statistical figures of the satellite schools) in all provinces, is a unique feature of the fast-track land reform in the education sector. These resettlement schools, the majority of which were established between 2000 and 2002, brought with them a litany of challenges in terms of providing quality education and access to education (Chimbunde, 2021). This is because the fast-track land reform has wrought changes to both the economic and political situation of the country. According to Hlupo and Tsikira (2012), education used to account for 22 percent of the national financial budget, but that figure has since dropped to less than 12 percent following the fast-track land reform programme. The primary cause for this decline was the Zanu PF government's shift in budget priorities from education and health care to political survival. This mandated a paradigm shift in the education sector, which was already underfunded and under-resourced prior to the reduction in budgetary funding.

Table 1.1: Number of schools by province

Province	Primary					Secondary					Grand Total
	Registered	Satellite	Registered Independent	Total	% Satellite	Registered	Satellite	Registered Independent	Total	% Satellite	
Bulawayo	126	6		132	4.55%	48	5	23	76	6.58%	208
Harare	223	5	2	230	2.17%	90	5	116	211	2.37%	441
Manicaland	795	76		871	8.73%	268	130	28	426	30.52%	1297
Mashonaland Central	390	105		495	21.21%	126	97	5	228	42.54%	723
Mashonaland East	611	83		694	11.96%	253	86	16	355	24.23%	1049
Mashonaland West	504	218	8	730	29.86%	172	184	20	376	48.94%	1106
Masvingo	693	173		866	19.98%	245	95	8	348	27.30%	1214
Matabeleland North	459	129	16	604	21.36%	115	65	4	184	35.33%	788
Matabeleland South	444	67		511	13.11%	121	39	1	161	24.22%	672
Midlands	667	131	2	800	16.38%	241	97	16	354	27.40%	1154
Grand Total	4912	993	28	5963	16.65%	1679	803	237	2719	29.53%	8682

Source: MoPSE 2014, p. 1

According to the statistical figures in Table 1.1, the country has 1.796 satellite (resettlement) schools for both primary and secondary schools; however, this figure could be higher as more people continue to be resettled. An added complication for these resettlement schools is that the Senate Thematic Committee explained in 2012 that the schools are only makeshift because they were never intended to be schools (Hlupo & Tsikira, 2012).

The situation deteriorated further in 2008, when Zimbabwe experienced a large-scale collapse of education, particularly of schools in the rural and resettlement areas (Bourne, 2011). These schools were by far the most affected because, apart from the economic catastrophe, they were being used as torture camps by supporters of the Zanu PF political party. In 2002 the Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum noted that:

The Zimbabwean Government has consistently targeted schools as a locus of anti-government sentiment. There has been a campaign of terror and intimidation against teachers and principals at schools countrywide. ...Groups of teachers and students have been abducted and forced to attend pungwes for political re-education. Victimised teachers and students have fled the schools in terror. Reports indicate that schools shut down by the government are often re-purposed as militia bases and torture centres. Militia bases have been reported at more than 30 schools nation-wide. (ibid., 2002, p19).

Consequently, the attacks and closures of schools disrupted schools and displaced numerous teachers and their families. In principle the closures deprived the Zimbabwean children of

their rights that are allowed for in the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child, both of which Zimbabwe has signed and ratified. Teachers' salaries tumbled to the point where most schools were deserted as teachers returned home or sought greener pastures in the diaspora (Hlupo & Tsikira, 2012). As a result, in addition to a scarcity of teaching and learning resources, there was also a severe scarcity of teachers. Again, resettlement schools were the most affected, with some schools having only three teachers teaching grades one through seven, due to enrolment and staffing requirements.

Following the chaotic 2008 national presidential elections, a Government of National Unity (GNU) was enacted in 2009 as a stopgap solution to the post-election conflict between the main political parties Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) and Zimbabwe African National Union- Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) via the Zimbabwe's Global Political Agreement (GPA) (Bourne, 2011). Efforts to get a grip on the educational crisis in the middle of 2009 revealed that the Ministry building in Harare was in disrepair, with computers that were not operational and water shortages. Furthermore, it was discovered that, in addition to the teachers who had already deserted the Ministry, there was an absence of 20,000 teachers across country. Here it has to be noted that resettlement schools were severely affected as the Ministry was transferring teachers from resettlement areas to well established urban schools so as to mask the acute teacher shortage from the international media that have minimum access to resettlement areas.

According to Bourne (2011), notable positives were recorded by the middle of 2010 when most of the schools which had been closed were reopened, and exams were sat and marked on time. During the GNU, education minister David Coltart confirmed the return of at least 1,500 of the 20,000 absent teachers in November 2009, while by the end of 2010, 15,000 teachers ² had been reinstated on compassionate grounds. Furthermore, an international programme to provide textbooks, and the disbursement of the Schools Improvement Grant (SIG) to schools, including those in resettlement areas, gave hope for gradual improvement

² The teachers who were reinstated into the teaching fraternity on compassionate grounds after they had deserted the Ministry in 2008 were referred to as 'Amnesty teachers'.

(Hlupo & Tsikira, 2012). Despite efforts to improve, the fact that a majority of parents were unable to pay tuition and schools levies remained a major challenge.

In 2012, a Zimbabwe parliamentary committee noted that infrastructure in resettlement schools was so poor that classrooms were mostly converted tobacco barns and animal feeding houses, teachers' accommodation was scarce and sanitation facilities were almost non-existent (Zimbabwe Government, 2012; Mwiinde & Muzingili, 2020). This was consistent with observations made by the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) (2009) that Zimbabwe's resettlement schools lacked adequate water and sanitation facilities, posing a health risk to both learners and teachers.

The resettlement schools, as explained by Mavundutse et al. (2012), are officially unregistered and as such have limited access to official support (with the exception of SIG) by the government. In addition Mavhunga and Mazodze (2014) clarified that resettlement schools with a population of children whose parents had a poor peasant background could not meet the Ministry of Education registration requirements and for this reason a majority of resettlement schools remain unregistered. As explained earlier Zimbabwe's 'fast-tracked' land reform necessitated the need to hastily constitute the resettlement schools.

This is so as it was politically inexpedient not to accommodate the demands for education for the new farmers' children (Mavhunga & Mazodze, 2014). As a result, the schools serve a sparsely populated community whose numbers cannot match with those required for single grading; this entails that composite classes dominate the cluster. Nyoni and Nyoni (2014) concluded that composite classes in Zimbabwe are associated with poverty, and grossly under-resourced schools, most of which are characterised by pole, dagga [mud] and grass thatched structures. In the case study area, some classes learn under trees. Due to poor enrolments, the schools are generally understaffed with most of the teachers being fresh graduates from teacher training colleges with "weaker practical instructional skills" (Chitumba, 2013) which are essential for proper management of composite classes. The context of resettlement schools is further discussed in the next section.

1.2 CONTEXTUAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

I am a teacher in a primary school in the Sebakwe resettlement area in postcolonial Zimbabwe. All the Sebakwe primary schools are in Sebakwe Resettlement Area (SRA) east of Kwekwe City in the Midlands Province of Zimbabwe. Sebakwe resettlement area is located in the Chirumhanzu-Zibagwe political constituency, which was formed from the old Chirumhanzu constituency. Mining and agriculture are the main economic activities in the constituency, with farming being practised at both commercial and subsistence levels. According to the 2011 statistics, there are at least 10,246 households in the constituency with ward one (my study area) having the highest number (Parliament Research Department, 2011). I chose this resettlement area, which is home to speakers of ChiShona, IsiNdebele and ChiTonga and falls under the control of Zibagwe Rural Council (ZRC), not only because of my situatedness in the area but because there is little published research on resettlement schools in Zimbabwe. This influenced the decision to conduct the research by publication as well.

Zazu (2007) and Mukwambo (2013) concurred that Sebakwe community can be described as a ‘community in the making’ because the community is composed of people from diverse cultural origins and ethnic groupings bringing a range of different cultures, knowledge systems and practices into interaction. Having worked and lived in the case study area for more than 13 years, I have observed that the area is a rich ground for the practice of indigenous knowledge systems (i.e. knowledge of food preservation and indigenous adaptation strategies to environmental and health risks inherent in the area). Hence, an education system inspired by heritage knowledge embedded in the practices of the people and at the same time encouraging them to incorporate sustainable means of living drawing on wider knowledge systems, is worth cultivating and supporting educationally.

The Sebakwe schools cluster comprises of Sebakwe primary (the mother school), which is the only registered school in the cluster, and Tagwirei, Gutsaruzhinji and Kaguvi, all of which are annexed to Sebakwe. These schools are among the 15 satellite schools that make up Chirumhanzu-Zibagwe’s 37 primary schools. The ownership of these schools is as follows: two are mission schools, four are private schools, one is a farm school, one is government school, and the rest are Chirumhanzu-Zibagwe council schools. Even though satellite schools are not registered, they are considered council schools. This discourages other organisations, such as mines and churches, from taking over ownership and considering registering the satellite schools.

According to the Parliament Research Department (2011), there were, at the time, 292 teachers and approximately 24,041 learners in Chirumhanzu-Zibagwe's primary schools. Mathematically, this represents a 1:82 ratio, which is significantly higher than the national 1:34 teacher/ learner ratio. As a result, the area is distinguished by composite classes, in which teachers teach two or three grades at the same time. Secondary school enrollments have declined significantly, with approximately 2,887 learners and 112 teachers in the area's 13 secondary schools (Parliament Research Department, 2011). All of these schools and residents in the Chirumhanzu-Zibagwe area rely on 11 health facilities.

Wards one and two contain the four schools mentioned above that are directly involved in the study. According to a study by Zazu (2007), these schools are undeveloped and frequently lack adequate teaching and learning support materials. As previously stated, composite classes distinguish the satellite schools, including the mother school. Henceforth, due to the shortages in teaching and learning support, the schools perform poorly in the national examinations, a situation that is considered a sign of poor education standards in the area. Most of the parents of the pupils enrolled are former farm workers and veterans of the Zimbabwe liberation war with little or no formal education experience.

The schools' management structure comprises of School Head and Deputy Head at the mother school and Teacher-In-Charge (TIC) at the satellite schools (also see, appendix A2, 3, 4 and 5). All teachers in the three satellite schools appear on the payroll of the mother school and this entails that the Head and Deputy at the mother school oversee the management of all the Sebakwe schools. Following this, Tarisayi and Manhibi (2017) argued that satellite schools are generally an extension of the mother school. In terms of the national examination registration, each school is now a registered examination centre. Because there is no government policy guiding the setting-up of satellite schools as well as their interaction with their mother schools (Tarisayi & Manhibi, 2017), their relationship is mainly dependent on the school's social capital. Here, social capital signifies "the norms and networks that facilitate collective action" (Woolcock, 2001, p. 2) within these schools.

1.3 RESEARCH INTEREST AND PROBLEM

In 1998, the President of Zimbabwe established the Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (CIET). The aim of the commissioned body was to develop a well-balanced and broad-based curriculum that promotes the learner's spiritual, moral, cultural, intellectual, and

physical development at school and in society in general (MoPSE, 2014). The case study area, along with other resettlement schools, are unique as the schools in the resettlement areas were not included in the Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training's (CIET) study of 1999 as they were not yet established. As alluded to in the above section, the schools come into being because of the Zimbabwe fast track land reform process that took place during the period 2000 – 2005.

Because of this, Mahoso (2014) contended that the CIET (1999) could not have pre-empted the challenges experienced in the resettlement schools. However, some of the major findings of CIET (1999) are relevant to schools in the case study area. For instance, CIET (1999) observed that the existing curriculum is examination-driven and does not develop national values mostly due to an absence of an underpinning philosophy of education. CIET (1999) further recommended that among other reforms, the indigenous philosophical foundations of Zimbabwe should underpin the curriculum citing *unhu/ubuntu* as a worthy philosophical concept (Curriculum Review Handbook, 2014; Chitumba, 2013). This recommendation, among other recommendations made by CIET, is of interest to me as I explored how a Community of Inquiry (CoI), a pedagogical intervention, could be interwoven into a curriculum undergirded by an Afrophilia lens of learning that is largely embedded in *unhu/ubuntu* philosophy. I explored if the intervention made it possible for parents and educators in the case study area to address the problems already mentioned above and through this enhance commitments to learning in the study site.

In this study I responded to the issue that the current curriculum is far removed (highly abstracted) from the needs and experiences of the learners as it enlightens mainly by alienating learners from their life circumstances offering very difficult epistemic access options (Lotz-Sisitka, 2009). Such a curriculum is deficient in heritage knowledge/local wisdom and situated intelligences which, as De Sousa Santos (2014) noted, tends to reflect an 'abyssal' form of thinking which emerged via modern educational institutions modelled on the colonial system (Shava, 2008). This is further reinforced by Siyakhwazi (2012, p.1) when he said, "one of the major problems in Zimbabwe's education is that it inherited a system of education that ignored the African culture". Thus, more generally the Zimbabwean education system lacks local social relevance. Chitumba and Chingombe (2013) also spoke in favour of the assumption articulated in this study when they said, "the pedagogical underpinnings of

schooling invoke an epistemology of knowledge consumption rather than knowledge creation”, thus inhibiting development of critical reflexive thinking skills.³

1.4 RESEARCH GOALS AND QUESTIONS

1.4.1 Research aim

The main aim of this research was to explore how the establishment of communities of inquiry (CoI) at Kaguvi (Sebakwe Annex) Primary through the introduction of a Philosophy for Children Afrophilia curriculum intervention, could contribute to curriculum changes that are oriented towards development of critical reflexive thinking skills amongst learners. Through use of theoretical lenses from postcolonial and decolonisation theory, sociocultural theory, and curriculum theory, I generated ideas that could be used to re-orient current educational practices at primary school level towards incorporating and working within a broader conception of African heritage knowledge/cultural wisdom without losing the contribution of other non- indigenous knowledges and practices.

1.4.2 Research goals and questions

1) To examine current barriers (historical and contemporary) affecting the promotion of a culture of learning in resettlement schools in Zimbabwe, especially related to under-development of critical reflexive thinking skills in pupils.	What historical and contemporary barriers are limiting the promotion of a culture of learning in Zimbabwe's resettlement schools, particularly as it relates to the underdevelopment of critical reflexive thinking skills in learners?
2) To examine how the Sebakwe community can participate, with primary school educators, in developing an understanding of the Philosophy for Children domain (focusing on knowledge and experience of Unhu/Ubuntu) and apply it in schools via a community of inquiry curriculum intervention.	How can the Philosophy for Children Afrophilia curriculum intervention help promote a culture of learning in Zimbabwean resettlement schools that focuses on developing critical reflexive thinking skills in learners?
	What would it mean if Sebakwe resettlement communities used <i>unhu/ubuntu</i> to leverage their knowledge, and how could this apply to primary school?

³ By ‘critical reflexive thinking’ I mean capability to think critically with reason and practice through meaning making, reasoning, challenging assumptions, seeking truth, interpreting, and evaluating evidence, and engaging critically with evidence and counter-arguments (see Appendix A).

3) To examine how the Philosophy for Children Afrophilia curriculum intervention responds to barriers identified in goal 1, and how this could inform evaluation of ‘fitness for purpose’ of the curriculum intervention.	What role(s) does socio-cultural learning theory play in bridging the gap between community-based and school-based learning? How can <i>unhu/ubuntu</i>-based Afrophilia epistemologies help children develop critical reflexive thinking skills? How will the Philosophy for Children experience influence the attitudes of learners, teachers, and parents on learning/what learning is, and how will it contribute to development of critical reflexive thinking skills in learners?

1.5 AFROPHILIA LEARNING LENS

The body of knowledge framing an Afrophilia anchored Philosophy for Children programme in Zimbabwe is still under construction, or to borrow from Peters (1963), the ‘logical geography’ of concepts, content and practice of Philosophy for Children in Zimbabwe has not yet been fully mapped, thus providing the scope for this study. My main intention in contributing to the construction of knowledge on such an Afrophilia learning lens was to explore indigenous discourses of knowledge in the Sebakwe resettlement, with particular interest on how they generate reflexivity, express critical thinking, and self-awareness in the study area (Kresse, 2002).

Since Afrophilia is a key concept in my study, I need to be clear about what I mean or refer to as Afrophilia. Approaching the word etymologically, it consists of the prefix Afro- and the stem –philia. Hence, literally speaking, the abstract noun Afrophilia would mean ‘love for Africa’ or African people or as Ekpo (2018) posited, it is a preoccupation with defending Africa against the legacies of imperial colonial Europe. Ekpo (2018) went on to say:

...Afrophilia is a deliberate cultural protectionism towards Africa, an obsessional care for her global image. ...the genealogy of Afrophilia reveals that the most active element in it, the determinative force operating in it was not really love for Africa, but hatred of colonialism, mistrust of colonial Europe and perpetual suspicion of modernity. (p. 4)

However, Ekpo’s (2018) idea of Afrophilia is very much divorced from my research goals because Ekpo’s exhortation that Afrophilia is “largely an inverted hate of colonial Europe”

(p. 5) is misleading as it proposes that the Afrophilic mindset is affixed to a political and ethnological belief rather than diversity in rationality (see Appendix A, paper 1). Again, if we follow Ekpo's (2018) elucidation of Afrophilia, we could ask whether the Afrophilia project could be captured by the phrase "the critique of Eurocentrism". Though Afrophilia learning foundations labour under the continuity of coloniality marked by the denigration of Africanness and more accurately Africa's "inclusion as the negative "other" of reason and of the Western world in the major traditions of modern Western philosophy" (Eze, 1997, p. 14), its inclusion in this study is not to be described in the form of Ekpo's political and ethnological essentialism. Afrophilia in this study is a 'metonym' (Prinsloo, 2014) far from a vengeance against imperial European colonisers. For this study, Afrophilia foundations are regarded as "the discourses that are the medium of philosophical reflexion" (Rettova, 2004, p. 4) in each African society.

The term "Afrophilia learning lens" therefore designates those discourses that fulfil the function of philosophy and are reflective of the local learning processes and culture in the case study area – the Sebakwe Resettlement community (Kresse, 1998; Rettova, 2004). Such discourses include African proverbs, poems, stories, folktales, and practices such as use of *mitupo* (totems) and *ukama* and they lay emphasis on the use of language in learning communities. It is appreciated, however, that such discourse may influence the development of the highlighted meaning of the abstract noun 'love for Africa'. Hence, my articulation of Afrophilia learning lens gravitated towards the use of the learner's home language. This opened discussion on *unhu/ubuntu* as a modern African narrative on cultural expression discussed in the next section (see Appendix A, paper 1). It also includes cultural enquiry. It also involves the application and analysis of *unhu/ubuntu* epistemologies (herein Afrophilia learning lens) and *unhu/ubuntu* logic.

1.5.1 *Unhu/ubuntu* as modern African narrative on cultural expression

There is substantial evidence that inside evolving African cultures, there are resources that could offer useful curricula content and pedagogical tools. These cultural resources can be harnessed in conducting research that involves indigenous participants as embodiments of the indigenous philosophy that nourishes such resources. In this study *unhu/ubuntu* as a framework has several features which make it a possible candidate for cultural expression⁴ in

⁴ In this study, cultural expression refers to expressions with cultural content that result from the creativity of individuals, groups, and societies these may include music, dance, art, names, handicrafts, narratives, folklore, and proverbs.

indigenous learning settings. One of the features that make *unhu/ubuntu* an ideal frame for cultural expression is that the philosophy is complex and is embedded in rapidly changing cultural experiences (Chinouya & O’Keefe, 2006). Here, as seen by Danielle Alyssa Bowler,

[unhu]Ubuntu has been a site of rearticulation and reinvention ...far from being an immobile notion of community, ... *Ubuntu* has continually re-emerged, not as a repetition, but as a translation. ...In translation, *Ubuntu* has been contextually reconfigured in the way that community is formulated in terms of contextual and subjective needs. (2014 , p. 200)

Unhu/Ubuntu then is not static but dynamic (it is both a historical and contemporary concept) and it is adept at contextual/ cultural mobility created by the same. Henceforth, it seems that the philosophy can make its contributions in and to culture and as an expression of culture if it does not limit the scope of issues that matters to it nor the methods it employs in the pursuit of knowledge about culture (Eze, 2008).

Cultural expression includes African heritage languages, knowledges and practices that have informed ways of being and meaning making, since before the time of colonisation. Typically, with the advent of colonial education, these practices and knowledges were demeaned and devalued (Ndofirepi, 2011). For example, colonial education altered the African knowledge base, and *unhu/ubuntu* African epistemologies are now in critical dialogue with the introduced imperial hegemonic systems that oppressed them (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011)

UNESCO defines culture as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, that encompasses, not only art and literature, but lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs (UNESCO, 2009, p. 9). Ramose, (1999) has offered an understanding of ubuntu that embodies the UNESCO definition of culture. According to Ramose,

Ubuntu is the root of African philosophy. The be-ing of an African in the universe is inseparably anchored upon *ubuntu*. Similarly, the African tree of knowledge stems from *ubuntu* with which it is connected indivisibly. *Ubuntu* then is the wellspring flowing with African ontology and epistemology. (1999, p. 49)

Ramose’s intention was not to get the reader caught up in semantics of whether *unhu/ubuntu* qualifies as a framework for African cultural expression, because by stating that “[*unhu*] ubuntu is the wellspring flowing with African ontology and epistemology” he demonstrated

that the philosophy embodies African culture(s) and thus has the capacity to communicate it (Ramose, 1999). *Unhu/ubuntu* therefore is more than simply an African philosophy; it is an ethic representing tenets of relationality of African traditional life. In the next section I traverse the *unhu/ubuntu* logic.

1.5.2 Traversing *unhu/ubuntu* logic and rationality

Unhu/ubuntu philosophy has been written separately from logical thinking since the beginning of the development of the corpus of African philosophy via *unhu/ubuntu* (Tempels, 1945). It is fascinating starting and traversing *unhu/ubuntu* logic in the context of claims made primarily by Western scholars that because Aristotle's laws of thought are not formulated and do not appear to be observed in African languages, therefore African culture is prelogical. According to Chimakonam (2020), the prefix 'pre' in prelogical could imply that one has not yet attained the capacity to reason logically. Chimakonam (2020) went on to argue that it is fallacious to conclude that because a group of people has not developed a system of logic, they lack such capacity. This appears to be an open invitation to tread with mordant reflective caution the various forms and paths logic and rationality, as doing so would help debunk the idea of a monolithic logical framing that characterises Western philosophical thought, itself emergent from more ancient established sources. According to Jaja and Badey (2012) and Chimakonam (2020), logical reasoning can take many forms. However, the point I would like to emphasise here is that when considering logic and rationality, we should consider the diversity of human experience and systems of representation (Eze, 2008). This is attributable to the fact that these factors influence decision making and problem solving and thus cannot be overlooked when analysing people's rationality.

Barnes (1965) and Eze (2008) were of the view that every culture is rational from its perspective and as a result can develop its philosophy and produce its logics and epistemologies. Henceforth, the logic of *unhu/ubuntu*, according to Ramose (1999), is distinctly rheomodic in nature. This is a logic that is opposed to the fragmentation of being through language because "it is the logic of and for the preservation of being as a whole-ness" (ibid., p. 57). This quotation would lead us to the conclusion that logic in *unhu/ubuntu* philosophy is linked with the study of reality because it will lead us to an understanding of the metaphysical and ontological components that help us to preserve the whole-ness of being. As a result, logic is a dependable variable modelled on the nature of reality which diverges from one culture to another. Following Barnes (1965) and Ramose (1999), it can therefore be stated that logic can both be contextualised and culturally situated. Thus, the

whole-ness of being in *unhu/ubuntu* philosophy manifests itself in the fact that African philosophy accepts that logic is not monolithic but is founded on the coexistence of seemingly opposing realities which however complement and relate to each other (Ijiomah, 2020). This logic in question involves the application of the thinking process on the African world, language, culture, and objects (Chimakonam, 2020). In accepting the coexistence and relationality of opposing realities *unhu/ubuntu* vetoes absolutism and affirms that everything including humans actualises itself only when it absorbs what it is not (Ramose, 1999).

Aware of this, the first generation of African philosophers mined the orature of their cultures, which were both unmistakably African and recognisably, demonstrate that African philosophy (herein *unhu/ubuntu*) is not lacking in rationality to support genuine philosophical thinking (see the works of Mogobe Ramose, Paulin Hountondji, Henry Odera Oruka, Ali Mazrui, Kwasi Wiredu, and Kwame Gyekye). A noticeable argument in the works of these philosophers and many other African scholars is that “philosophy being always a corollary of a culture presupposes that no philosophical theme or problem can completely be understood and handled without familiarity with the culture and language from which it originated” (Oruka, 1990, p. 90). Following in the footsteps of these African philosophers were postcolonial African leaders such as Leopold Senghor, Nyerere, Nkrumah, and Azikiwe, who hoped that discovering authentic African ideas through concepts such as Ujaama, Negitude, and African Socialism would solve Africa's problem of culture, logic, and rationality (Adie & Effenji, 2018). In this study, I draw on these philosophers, postcolonial thinkers, and philosophers and scholars in relation to, and potentially to imbue the Philosophy for Children tradition within an Afrophilia learning lens which can promote critical reflexive thinking development.

1.6 HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN

Philosophy for Children was popularised by Matthew Lipman in the 1970s as an educational approach centred on nurturing philosophical enquiry in children. According to Lipman (2003), fostering good thinking in pupils occurs as a means of praxis, as learning that occurs during “situated joint activity” through the means of philosophical dialogue. Lipman suggested a philosophy-based approach to fostering critical thinking (Daniel and Auriac, 2008) in pupils without opposing traditional philosophy as a way of transmitting intellectual knowledge to individuals who are mature and already capable of complex thinking. Although the Socratic method of systematic questioning and dialogue (Gur, 2011) influenced Lipman, he drew up inspiration from Dewey’s pragmatism and Vygotsky’s cultural-historical

psychology. In their analysis of Philosophy for Children, Reed and Johnson (1999) subdivided the history of Philosophy for Children into a first and a second generation.

1.6.1 First generation Philosophy for Children

The intellectual troika of John Dewey (pragmatism as the forerunner to Philosophy for Children), Matthew Lipman and Ann Margaret Sharp is base to the 1ST generation Philosophy for Children. The 1st generation Philosophy for Children was popularised by Lipman as a curriculum intervention to help children develop critical thinking skills. Lipman and his colleagues developed children's novels depicting the various fields of philosophy such as epistemology, metaphysics, logic, ethics and aesthetics and teacher's guides on implementing the Philosophy for Children curriculum (Daniel & Auriac 2009). Matthew Lipman's goal through introduction of the Philosophy for Children intervention was to question the traditional discourse of school-based teaching and move to focus on thinking, judgment, and reasonableness in education. By basing the implementation of the programme on novels and teachers' manuals, the 1st generation Philosophy for Children has been generally critiqued for being mainly content based.

1.6.2 Second generation Philosophy for Children

The second-generation Philosophy for Children departs from an over-reliance on philosophical content-based classroom activity to a more pupil centred way of doing philosophy with children in classrooms. It aims to provide a more flexible approach than Lipman's original Philosophy for Children curriculum (Makaiau & Miller, 2012). Second generation Philosophy for Children originates from the works of Ann Margaret Sharp, David Kennedy, Karin Murris, Walter Kohan, Michel Sasseville, Joanna Haynes, Jen Glaser, Oscar Brenifier, Michel Tozzi, Marina Santi, Barbara Weber, and Philip Cam (Vensielegheem & Kennedy 2011), and its object of critique is Lipman's strong emphasis on analytical reasoning as a guarantee for critical thinking (ibid). The move from the Lipmanian 1st generation Philosophy for Children to the 2nd generation allows teachers to teach across grade levels and within different content areas. Thus, the 2nd generation is most appropriate in this study, as teachers must teach within and across different content areas and grade levels in a composite class. By considering the child's thoughts, ideas, and questions, the 2nd generation Philosophy for Children helps in responding to the cultural, emotional, and intellectual needs of the child (Makaiau & Miller, 2012). Vensielegheem and Kennedy (2011) are of the view

that while dialogue, viewed as the best platform for modelling and coaching of an ideal of analytical reason in the 1st generation Philosophy for Children, the 2nd generation views it as what generates communal reflection, contemplation, and communication.

1.6.3 Reasons for the establishment of Philosophy for Children

Philosophy for Children like other educational approaches has its aims and goals. Considering the 1st and 2nd generation of Philosophy for Children one can see that the aims and goals of the approach stems from the general global need to teach children to think well and participate equally in their communities as responsible citizens (UNESCO, 2015). Gur (2009) posits that Philosophy for Children aims to help children to learn the skills necessary to develop their thinking towards the big issues that relate directly to their past, present and their future. This concurs with Vansieleghem (2005) who elucidates that the Philosophy for Children initiative facilitates the attainment of knowledge and enables participants to take decisions autonomously. Through pupils' capabilities to construct arguments and collaborate with others, Philosophy for Children aims to foster higher-order thinking skills, it helps children gain proficiency in reasoning through practice (Lipman 1988). Hence a postcolonial praxis of Philosophy for Children in Africa has potential to help pupils in seeing things from perspectives other than their own and envisioning the likely consequences of their position (Ndofirepi, 2012; Letseka, 2013). The underlying notion of the Philosophy for Children programme is teaching thinking skills at school level through the medium of philosophical dialogue. This is also the main interest of this research, with emphasis on how the Philosophy for Children approach anchored on an Afrophilia foundation could potentially strengthen development of critical reflexive thinking skills.

1.6.4 Philosophy for Children as a means of developing critical reflexive thinking skills in an educational environment

Critical reflexive thinking is a "cognitive activity" related to the use of reason (Slameto, 2013, p.16). The skills are an essential component in education especially considering the ever-changing socio-economic needs of the global world and the widening demands for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) for which critical reflexive thinking skills are a prerequisite (O'Donoghue et al., 2019). Through a community of inquiry, Philosophy for Children has the potential to provide ground on which pupils can extensively practice core critical thinking skills as well as "reasoning and making or analysing arguments" (Lipman, 2003).

This makes Philosophy for Children a key element in education and Education for Sustainable Development as it stimulates pupils to ask questions, analyse, think critically, and make decisions (UNESCO, 2012). Education for Sustainable Development is a contestable concept (O'Donoghue et al., 2019) hence it falls within the practice of philosophy. Williams (2012, p. 5) states “an important part of the practice of philosophy is to reflect systematically on contestable concepts in light of their applications in life and their implications for action”. Philosophy for Children, particularly the second generation, often draws upon the arts using drama, play, music, design, and drawing to stimulate creativity and imagine alternative futures and through this, involve the pupils in the practice of philosophy.

In support of the claim that Philosophy for Children tends to help improve critical thinking, Lipman (2003) is of the view that taxonomically, critical thinking seems to be best placed under the rubric of ‘applied philosophy’. A summation of Fisher (2001) reveals that Philosophy for Children as an interdisciplinary approach fosters among other skills, information-processing, reasoning, creative thinking, and evaluation skills and arguably, these are part of the skills necessary for lifelong learning and the concept of ‘critical reflexive thinking skills’ which I am exploring in this study.

Philosophy for Children as a dialogical educational programme engages pupils in dialogue, the dialogue which Freire (1970) argued cannot exist unless it involves critical thinking. He went on to define critical thinking as thinking which perceives reality as process and transformation, rather than as a static entity. This reinforces the idea that Philosophy for Children has potential to improve critical reflexive thinking as it engages pupils in the practice of reasoning and reflection on own life and context. I will use the construction of critical reflexive thinking analytically in this study and will develop an analytical tool from the above descriptions of critical thinking as they apply to my own life and practice (see Appendix A, papers 4 and 6).

1.7 PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN AND COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY (COI)

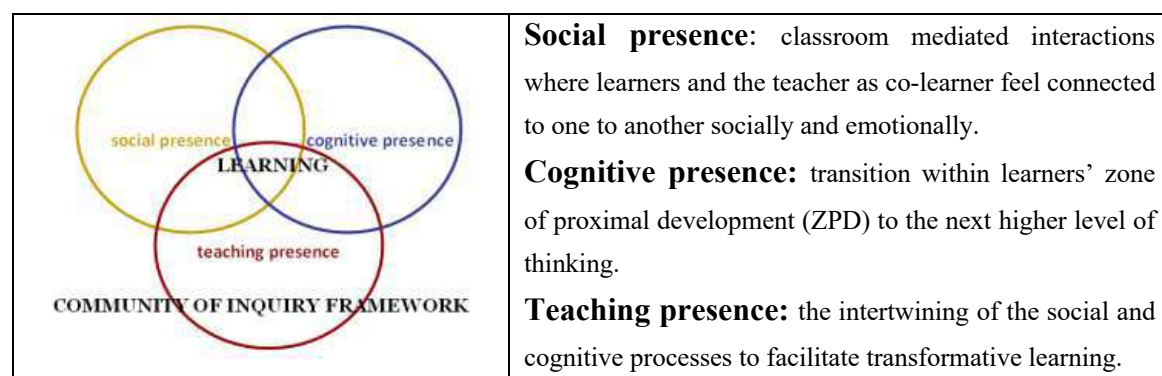
The community of inquiry concept of Philosophy for Children has its orientation in social constructivism and is originally located within Socratic philosophy which values sustained reflexive thinking and dialogue in learning (Swan, Garrison & Richardson, 2009). Dialogue in a community of inquiry is aimed at helping children gain an understanding of their context

by solving problems and finding possibilities and limitations to different situations (Cassidy, 2006; Ndofirepi, 2011).

Modern community of inquiry has its point of reference in John Dewey's (1938) concept of practical inquiry and was popularised by Mathew Lipman with the intention of turning classroom mediated activities into a reflective community in which pupils could recognise their interdependence and interconnectedness with others through engaging in philosophical dialogue (Lipman, 1988). Insights summed up from Lipman (1988), Ndofirepi (2011) and Lambert and Fisher (2013) reveal that the community of inquiry concept of Philosophy for Children invites learners to bridge the gap between their minds through dialogue, critical questioning of ideas around them and potentially they can "pursue knowledge with the intent of keeping alive the learning process" (Gupta, 2006, p.25) by being active participants in classroom activities.

Furthermore, the community of inquiry pedagogy is anchored in the assumption that learning experiences arise from the intercommunication of the social presence, the cognitive presence, and the teaching presence (Swan et al., 2009). The three presences potentially help the learners to be involved, informed, and empowered. This is because the presences encourage teachers/educators to de-role from transmitters of information to learners, and instead to act as co-inquirers and resources for deliberation (Lipman, 1988; Swan & Ice, 2010; Paine, 2012). Figure 1 below offers an illustration of the community of inquiry framework, which I will also use analytically in the study (see also Appendix A, papers 2 and 4).

Figure 1.1: Community of Inquiry Framework (Swan & Ice, 2010)



1.7.1 Community of inquiry – the Afrophilia connections

Emerging insights from Ndofirepi (2011) and Letseka (2013) reveal that the concept is not new in the African context as Africans have a strong cultural history of and proclivity to join with or relate to other persons and to participate in the life formed together as is also reflected in the *unhu/ubuntu* concept. Hence, it is envisioned in this study that a community of inquiry is potentially compatible with African cultural histories of inquiry particularly when one considers the role of the concept *padare* in shaping communities of practice. Bartoli (2011) defined *padare*, a Shona term, as a meeting place where ideas are generated and exchanged. The modern understanding of *padare* in the VaShona, Ndebele and VaTonga people located in the study site is that it takes the form of a village council in which members exchange views on important issues or problems encountered in the village. This understanding of *padare* is in line with the description of the concept given by O'Donoghue, Shava and Zazu (2013) who referred to *padare* as a community meeting place which could be explored as a site for heritage engagement and innovative learning interaction in schools.

Thus, though crafted in different locations with a different historical background and tonality, lines of congruence could be drawn between *padare/dare* as an African mode of inquiry and the community of inquiry pedagogy embedded in Philosophy for Children. As an example, a common thread evident in the two is that while learners/participants co-engage in learning that encourages critical reflexive thinking, 'egalitarian relations' are also built (Dominelli, 2008, cited in Bartoli, 2011). Also, *padare*, as with a community of inquiry, involves a process of peer support and mentoring aimed at achieving positive change in learning situations. Furthermore, the concepts exemplify shared 'learning spaces' (O'Donoghue et al., 2013) whose envisioned vantage point is in helping learners pool intellectual and pedagogic resources that will help them be successful in their learning (Madzima, 2010). Moreover, making connections between the two has a potential vantage point of bringing the participants together (social presence) as it would potentially also be embedded in the world view (*unhu/ubuntu*) and dialects of the learners involved in the practice and create open boundaries between children's everyday knowledge and school specialised knowledge.

1.7.2 The epistemological grounding of a Philosophy for Children afrophilia curriculum

The Philosophy for Children Afrophilia curriculum intervention that I develop across this study draws on socio-cultural learning theory originating from Vygotsky (1987) and it gives attention to culture, language and meaning making in pedagogical interaction. As noted above, Philosophy for Children has roots in Dewey's pragmatist epistemology which renders all knowledge as fallible, provisional, and contingent (Paine, 2012). Vygotsky and Dewey are

of interest in this study as their ideas are fundamental in the shaping of the philosophical community of inquiry embedded in Philosophy for Children. Popkewitz (1998) described Dewey and Vygotsky as ‘quintessentially modern’, theorists who “...saw all teaching and learning as conditional and contingent” (ibid., p. 538).

While I recognise that there are fundamental differences between their work, a shared epistemological principle of Dewey and Vygotsky involves the role of inquiry and how through dialogue learners could be helped to attain the next level of intellectual development (Hannu, 2007). This links the practice of Philosophy for Children as a dialogical educational activity to Vygotsky’s Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) which I will work with in this study as it gives stronger attention to culture and language than Dewey’s theoretical work which emphasises action and experience. Popkewitz (1998) and Hannu (2007) both provided a detailed homology of Dewey and Vygotsky’s work which I also considered in more depth in the study (see Appendix A, papers 2, 4 and 6).

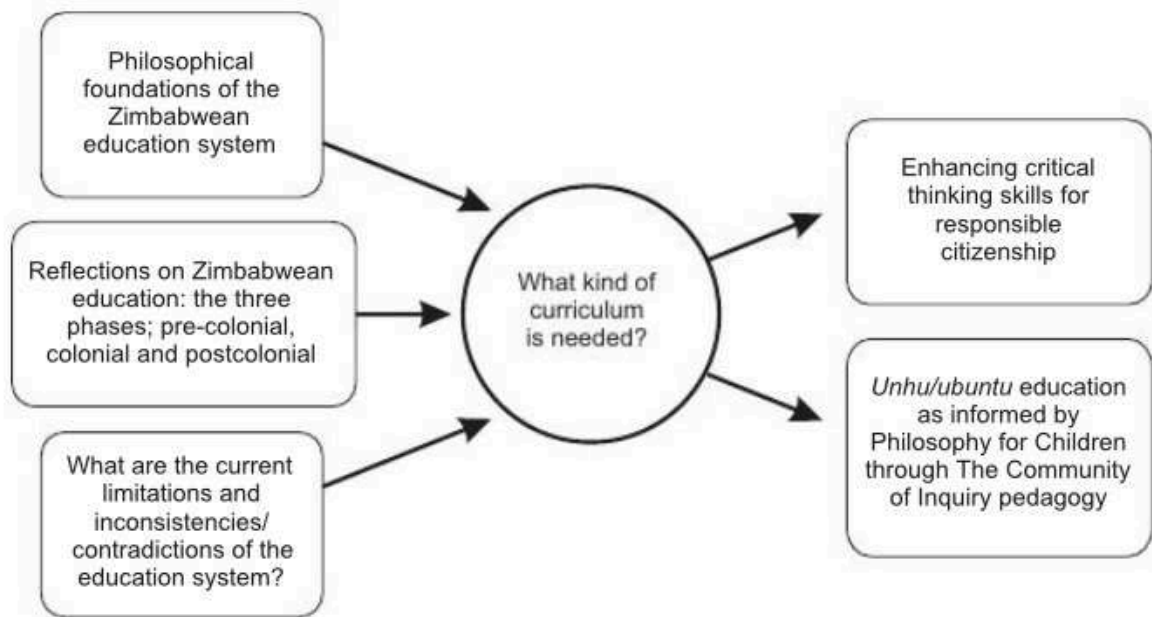


Figure: Summary of the study’s conceptual framework

1.8 RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

Research on Philosophy for Children in Zimbabwe exists but no work on this approach has been done to date in the resettlement primary schools in Kwekwe district in Midlands Province of Zimbabwe. The research motivation above outlines mainly how Philosophy for Children is used in other parts of the world and how it could be used for critical reflexive

thinking skills development but does not inform us how Philosophy for Children could be anchored in an Afrophilia foundation. Green's initiative in introducing Philosophy for Children in South African primary schools in the Western Cape Province (Letseka, 2013) is in settings that are far from Kwekwe district and have different learning conditions. It became the goal of this study to focus specifically on resettlement schools in Kwekwe district to find out how children in this area could be actively engaged in critical thinking, and to develop curriculum interventions in this direction.

Studies of Philosophy for Children in Zimbabwe have not been very popular with teachers because teachers lack knowledge of this philosophical domain; therefore, there is limited literature available. As a researcher, I aim to contribute to the bank of Philosophy for Children literature in Zimbabwe. In short, the body of knowledge of an Afrophilia anchored Philosophy for Children programme in Zimbabwe is still under construction, or to borrow from Peters (1963), the 'logical geography' of concepts, content and practice of Philosophy for Children in Zimbabwe has not yet been fully mapped, thus providing the scope for this study. Moreover, this, research has the capacity to contribute valued information necessary for the introduction of Philosophy for Children in areas with learning conditions similar to those of the area under study. Generated information on Philosophy with Children within an Afrophilia framework could potentially therefore also act as an item of reference for various scholars undertaking similar studies in similar or diverse contexts.

1.9 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

The study aimed to explore aspects of Community of Inquiry (COI) in Afrophilia learning processes for transformative education using a 'Philosophy for Children' approach by means of a case study of Sebakwe Resettlement Primary Schools in the Midlands Province of Zimbabwe. A general overview of the study is shown in Figure 1.2 and the chapters are briefly outlined after the figure.

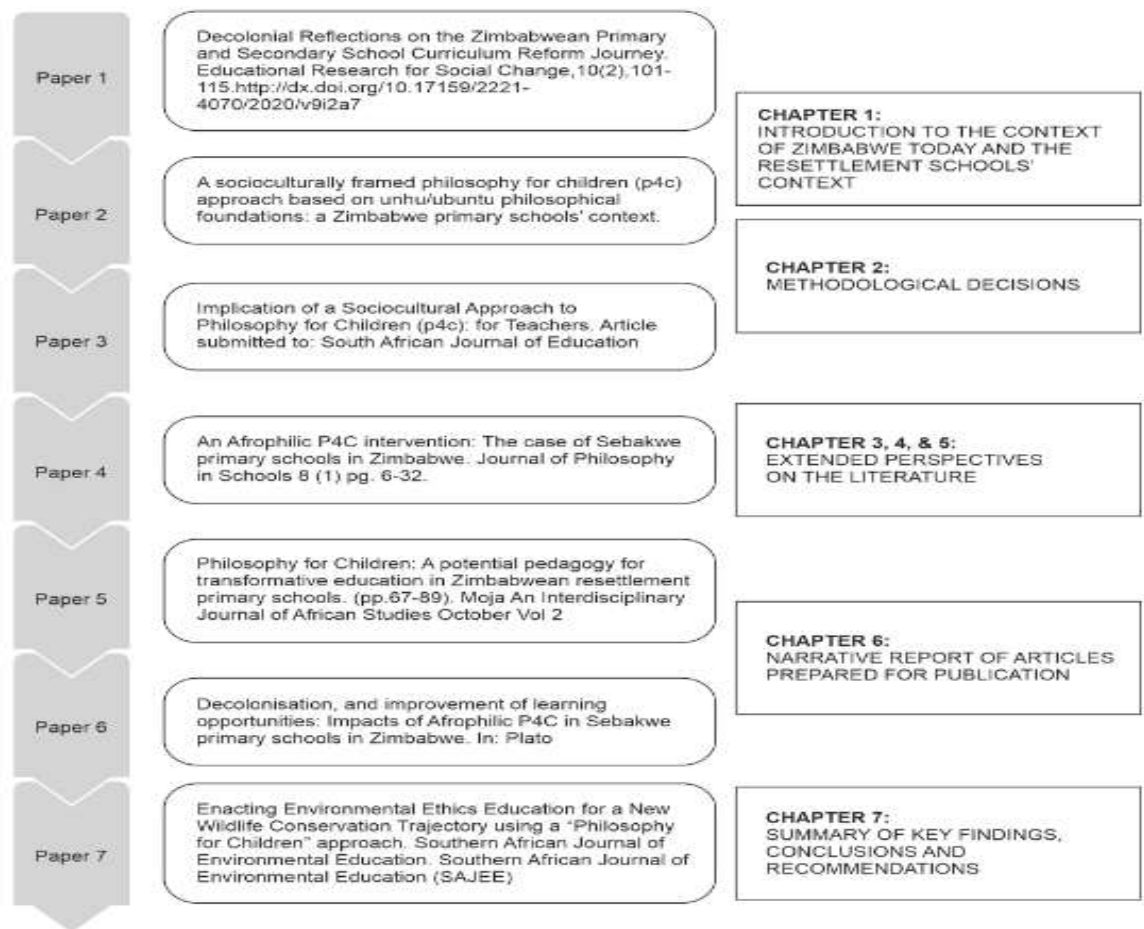


Figure 1.2 Outline of the study (Source: Primary)

Chapter One: Introduction to the context of Zimbabwe today and the resettlement schools' context

This introductory chapter has provided an orienting framework to the research project. The chapter outlines the aims and goals of the study. It also introduced the context of the Zimbabwe education system and the key concepts used. More generally, the chapter serves to give the reader an overall sense of the research project conceptualisation and purpose. In essence, this chapter sets the tone and the framing argument for the study. It provides detailed reflections on the three epochs of the Zimbabwean education system: the pre-colonial covering the period before 1890, the colonial period between 1890-1980, and the current postcolonial times. The main point emphasised with regard to the discussion on pre-colonial education was that correlated well with the life-world of the indigenous people. This contrasted with colonial education which was found to be an “education for subordination,

exploitation, the creation of mental confusion, and the development of underdevelopment” (Rodney, 1972, p. 241). A point was made in the discussion of colonial education in the country that the first years 1890-1923 fall within a period before a colonially responsible government and these form the period when the colonial masters were in search of an administrative philosophy with the missionaries managing the education affairs. The second phase of the colonially responsible government starting in 1923 saw the colonial administration beginning to implement various aspects of policy such as labour, education and development health and land. Following the discussion on colonial education, the chapter offers some views on the nature of the current postcolonial trajectory which is over-burdened by the continuities of coloniality and in need of more effective decolonial reform. The chapter continues to discuss *unhu/ubuntu* as a modern African narrative on cultural expression together with a discussion on *unhu/ubuntu* logic to demonstrate that the philosophy is not devoid of logic and is compatible with pedagogical approaches that foster development of critical reflexive thinking. The chapter also offers a brief history and development of Philosophy for Children to orient the reader to the educational approach I used in the study as an intervention to foster development of higher order thinking skills in children and the creation of a culture of learning in Sebakwe resettlement primary schools.

Chapter Two: Methodological decisions

Chapter Two discusses the relevant research methodology decisions made for the study. It discusses how I worked with the methodology and methods. The study provides an orientation to qualitative research processes, decolonial approaches to research, community accessibility, data collection in indigenous settings and ideas on data analysis processes (constituting a process of developing philosophy for children process based analytical tools). I also discuss the postcolonial/ decolonial discourse analysis approach to data analysis and the trustworthiness of the study. In essence, Chapter Two provides a deepened explanation on how the data presented in the papers prepared for publication (see Appendix A, papers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7), summarised in Chapter Seven, was generated and analysed.

Chapters Three, Four and Five: Extended perspectives on the literature

These chapters discuss the theoretical frameworks relating to development of an Afrophilic Philosophy for Children generative curriculum in more depth. Throughout, an attempt is made to locate, justify and develop an in-depth argument for conducting this research. In

Chapter Three the focus was on the sociocultural learning theory; here I discuss the Vygotskian Zone of Proximal Development and its implications for learning. The chapter also considers sociocultural learning in relation to a community of inquiry, coherence in principles of learning as a community from a sociocultural perspective, and reviews how sociocultural learning theory and a community of inquiry provide an opportunity for learning within the context of culture and utilisation of the heritage languages.

In Chapter Four, I discuss postcolonial and decolonial theory in more depth. For purposes of conceptual clarification, the chapter juxtaposes decoloniality and postcolonialism. This is followed by highlighting the main perspectives on postcolonial theory which also feature African driven thoughts for postcolonial futures. The chapter also discusses the concept of coloniality which is embedded in decolonial thinking. Reviews of major decolonial theories are presented for their contribution to an understanding of education, and decolonial futures in education more specifically. The chapter closes with a reflection on the use of Afrophilia heritage knowledges and learning processes in the study.

Chapter Five closes the extended perspectives on literature section. In this chapter the focus is on curriculum theory and Philosophy for Children. The chapter opens with a deliberation on coherence and consistency in defining concepts and makes a distinction between curriculum and education. Furthermore, it reflects on topical issues in curriculum theory such as curriculum in context and curriculum as a political text and why understanding such topical issues is important for this study. The chapter includes a discussion on the development of a generative curriculum model and how it shapes teachers and learners' roles.

Chapter Six: Narrative report of articles prepared for publication

Chapter Six offers a narrative report of my publication journey and is informed by the outline offered in Figure 1.3, which outlines an initial mindmap of articles that I planned to prepare for journal publication.

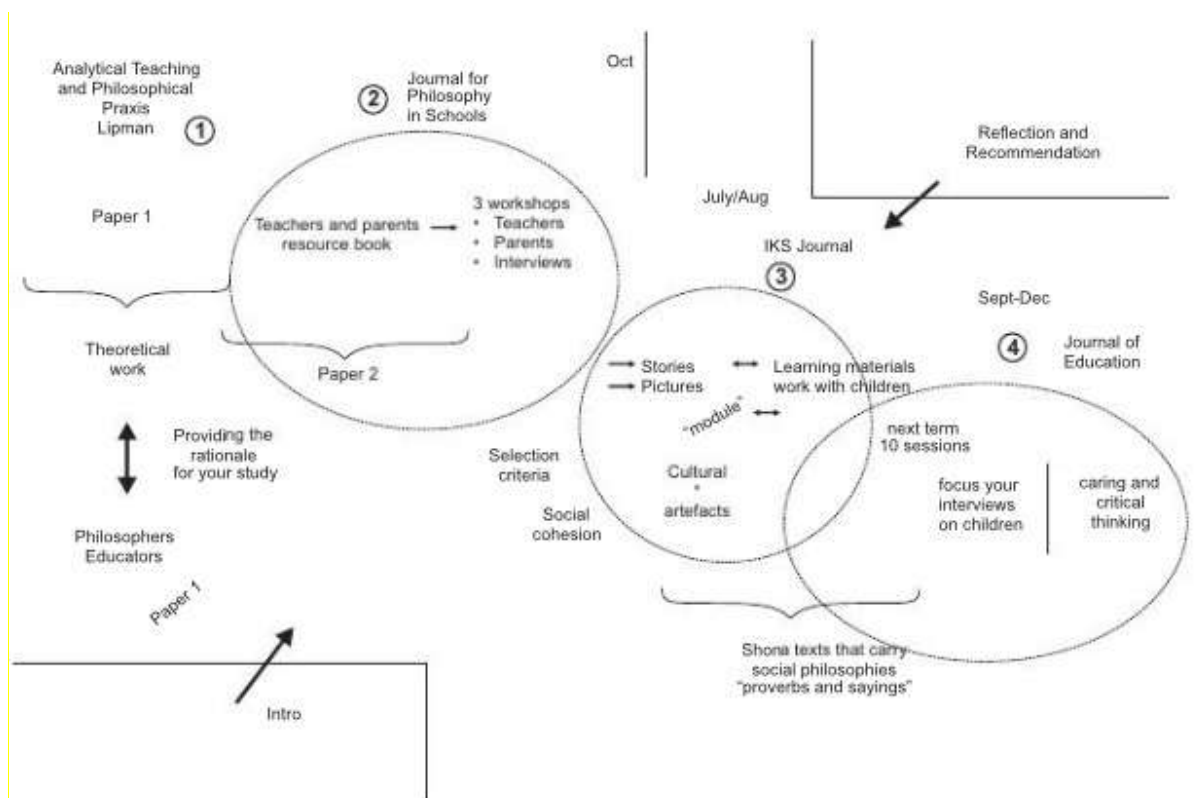


Figure 1.3: Initial mindmap of articles planned for publication (Source: Primary)

Figure 1.3 mirrors the initial mind map that guided the development of the seven journal articles that form the main focus of my thesis as a thesis by publication. Initially I planned to prepare four papers as shown in Figure 1.3, but ultimately, I ended up producing seven papers (cf. Appendix A). These consist of one conceptual article that has already been published by the *Journal of Education Research for Social Change (ERSC)* (paper 1), and six empirical articles of which three have already been published in the *Journal of Philosophy in Schools* (paper 4), in *Moja: An Interdisciplinary Journal of African Studies* (paper 5) and one that has been accepted for publication *Southern African Journal of Environmental Education (SAJEE)* (paper 6); the remaining three papers (Paper 2), are in the final stages of peer review with different international journals, as reported in Chapter 6. In this chapter the abstracts of the articles are presented followed by a discussion on the type of article and engagement with the reviewers in the case of articles where reviewer feedback has already been received. A discussion on the value of the article to my scholarship and to the entire study is also provided to demonstrate the contribution and uniqueness of each article to the study. The chapter closes by offering technical practical lessons learned on journal publication via this study.

Chapter Seven: Summary of key findings, conclusions and recommendations

This is the final chapter of the thesis in which I offer in-depth discussions in summary of the key findings of the research. In essence, the chapter shares the processes of data interpretation and how I made use theory to generate new insights (knowledge) related to Philosophy for Children with an Afrophilia learning lens extant in the Sebakwe Resettlement Area. The study sought to develop practical recommendations for the possible utilisation of the Philosophy for Children approach in education transformation in resettlement schools in the Sebakwe resettlement area. Thus, the chapter provides a discussion on the implications of the approach that I used for policy and practice within the Zimbabwean education context. Chapter Seven offers recommendations for supporting and promoting use of the Afrophilic Philosophy for Children approach in transforming education in Zimbabwean resettlement primary schools.

1.10 CONCLUSION

This chapter has provided a detailed overview of the Zimbabwean education context within which the research was designed and conducted. The chapter further provided the background conceptualisation, and rationale of this research. The chapter has briefly introduced the reader to the Afrophilia learning lens and the Philosophy for Children approach that I used in the research as an approach for transforming education. A philosophical account for using *unhu/ubuntu* as a modern narrative for cultural expression and well as arguments for utilising *unhu/ubuntu* logic has been offered. In the next chapter I provide a detailed analysis of the research methodology that informed the study.

CHAPTER TWO

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter, which discusses an open and participant driven exploratory case study aimed at transformative curriculum development and learner's development of critical reflexive thinking, has three aims. The first aim is to orient the reader to the qualitative research, postcolonial and decolonial research methodology and the exploratory case study research design. Choice of the methodology and framework considered the formative interventionist intents of this study and the role of multi-voicedness in exploring aspects of Community of Inquiry (COI) in Afrophilia learning processes for transformative education using a 'Philosophy for Children' approach. Here multi-voicedness and voice are considered as essential dimensions of the Afrophilia sociohistorical context for communication (see papers 4 and 5).

The second aim is to provide insight into the data generation and analysis plan. This study was constructed using a four-phased data collection framework: Phase 1 – document analysis, Phase 2 – formative intervention workshops, Phase 3 – Philosophy for Children session observations, and Phase 4 – reflexive interviews. To guide data analysis, I developed analytical tools that allowed for rigour and distanciation from the data and process (see papers 2, 4 and 5). This enabled reflexivity and ways to manage my own subjectivity since I was an insider- formative interventionist researcher. I drew on key discursive elements of postcolonial theory (representation, identity, and agency) in tandem with the key elements of critical research: insight, critique, and transformation (Braun & Clarke, 2006) situated within a postcolonial/decolonial discourse analysis framework. The main intent in doing this was to provide the backdrop or the contextual insights that were necessary for the interpretation of the sociocultural Philosophy for Children activity process and for the analysis of discourse emerging from the workshops and reflective interviews.

My third aim is to provide an account of the specific details of the empirical research design, which includes a discussion on the ethical considerations of this study. This chapter provides a broader methodological discussion as a backdrop to the more summatively reported methodological aspects of the articles that I have submitted to journals for publication (see

Appendix A, papers 1-7). Methodological aspects were also informed by peer review of papers (see Chapter 6).

2.1 QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

According to Bulmer (1986), qualitative methodology evolved in the early days of social science research, when research by the Chicago School of Sociology was flourishing. This was the period between 1915 and 1930. Emphasis by the sociologists of the Chicago School was on direct participation in observing the lives of the researched in order to be able to accurately capture and understand problems. Creswell (2005) captured this sentiment and viewed qualitative research as a process of inquiry undertaken to understand a human problem or phenomenon. The intention is to gain insight into social situations through examining the meanings which participants attribute to them. Qualitative research viewed from a post-positivist epistemic paradigm is guided by

...a relativist ontology, where there are multiple realities. Realities are in the form of multiple, intangible mental constructions, socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature, and dependent for their form and content on the individual person or groups holding the constructions. (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, p. 206)

In terms of this view, scholars have found it difficult to offer a universally agreeable definition of qualitative research. According to Trochim (2006), qualitative research uses general descriptions of a phenomenon by words rather than by statistical explanations. This is consistent with Merriam (2009, p. 13) who stated that qualitative research is synonymous with

... an umbrella term covering an array of interpretive techniques which seek to describe, decode, translate, and otherwise come to terms with the meaning, not the frequency, of certain more or less naturally occurring phenomena in the social world.

Hence, qualitative research produces more descriptive data which, in this study, was helpful for describing how aspects of a Community of Inquiry (COI) in Afrophilia learning processes are suitable for establishing transformative education using a Philosophy for Children approach in resettlement schools in Zimbabwe. Qualitative research focuses on social processes and how individuals shape and give meaning to the social world. There are five distinctive aspects that characterise qualitative research, that have relevance to this study, discussed below.

2.1.1 Five aspects of qualitative research

Qualitative research is characterised by five distinctive aspects: firstly, the methodology makes it possible to conduct qualitative research in naturally occurring and on-going situations (Creswell, 2009). By way of example, for this study I was able to gain access in the Sebakwe schools to interview and observe participants in their own environment and to interact with the context. This is consistent with the ideas of Picciano (2004) and Sowell (2001) who concurred that in qualitative research, the researcher directly experiences and/or learns about social phenomena as these occur in their natural environment. In this way Hammersley (1992) reasoned that the data gathered is also naturally occurring and not forced or manipulated in experimental settings.

In addition, the researcher's immersion in the context enables her or him to capture and understand the historical, cultural, and socio-political factors that shape human action in that context. Creswell (2003) supported the notion that close personal interface with the participants in natural settings enables the researcher to access perspectives and knowledge that cannot easily be expressed in propositional and verbal form, thus enriching the data in diverse ways. Here, the qualitative researcher's emphasis is on understanding the insider's views as opposed to outsider's perspectives on the situation. From Litchman's (2010) perspective, this will enable the researcher to find solutions to the problems drawing from a deep understanding of the specific context, and relationalities as experienced and expressed.

Secondly, unlike other research methodologies that focus on studying isolated elements of interest to the researcher(s), qualitative research focuses on studying social phenomena in their entirety. According to Corbin and Strauss (2008), lurking behind this holistic approach to research is the understanding that social worlds are complex and closely integrated systems

composed of co-influential and interdependent elements. Researchers working with qualitative methodology, as I did, should take cognisance of the fact that social phenomena are complexly made of factors that are multi-layered and closely and intricately bound together in multifaceted relationships; because of this they cannot be understood in isolation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In my study I was able to gain in-depth understanding of the ways in which Philosophy for Children could contribute towards fostering transformative education in resettlement schools in their full complexity and subtlety through understanding offered via the holistic orientation of the qualitative methodology. Based on a holistic understanding of the Sebakwe resettlement schools, I was able to proffer recommendations on what could be done to minimise the barriers that affect establishment of a culture of learning in these resettlement schools (see Appendix A, papers 1-7 and Chapter Seven).

The third aspect of qualitative research of relevance to this study is rooted in how it adopts an inductive process to data analysis. According to Creswell (2005), the researcher who adopts a qualitative approach does not enter the field with any preconceived ideas or theories as the theory emerges as the research progresses. Generally, the inductive process entails that explanations move from data to theory as one generates relevant themes (Babbie, 2005). This therefore enables the development of a context embedded body of knowledge that accurately captures what will be going on the study area, which is enriched and reflexively engaged via abductive approaches to engaging with data.

Abductive capability to acknowledge the value-laden nature of social inquiry is the fourth aspect of qualitative research. O’Leary (2004) reasoned that researchers are socially located being capable of bringing into the study values and assumptions from within their social class, gender, cultural and racial background, as well as theoretically and contextually informed analysis. As a result, Creswell (2005) contended that the generated data will only become meaningful after the researcher ‘sieves it’ by way of applying his or her value-frameworks and or theoretical or contextual framings to guide his or her meaning-making and analytical processes of sense-making in the research. This is germane to the participants one will be working with as they also bring with them values, assumptions, theories, and world views rooted in the context of the study and their cultural historical understandings of the world (Ary, Jacobs & Sorensen, 2006), hence the abduction process is not only one that the researcher engages in.

Ordinarily, qualitative researchers are aware that values play an integral part in their research, hence they are less concerned with objectivity as it is difficult if not impossible to attain. The fact that they downplay objectivity does not mean that they subscribe to pure subjectivity which may be blinkered by an inaccurate and narrow perspective of the social world and which can have negative effects on the credibility of the research findings. Seeking to understand the research process from the participants' worldviews and data, naturally, as well as abductively and reflexively, helps the researcher to capture social phenomena in their complex and multi-dimensional nature.

This raises the need to deal with personal values, and positionality via critical reflexivity (see Appendix A, papers 4 and 6) as this helps the researcher to remain alert to how values and world views may influence the way the research is conducted. According to Morrison (2007, p. 32), reflexivity is "the process by which researchers come to understand how they are positioned in relation to the knowledge they are producing". Crucial at this point is how the researcher identifies, documents, and monitors their subjectivity and role and how they potentially affect the research process as this will help them establish a basis for reflexively considering the findings in their appropriate context. Social research is not value neutral and, in this study, it explicitly and consciously draws on Afrophilia values in education. However, my intention was not to offer objective truth about these Afrophilia learning processes; rather, my intention was to seek ideas on how an Afrophilia lens could be viably and effectively used as start-up capital in a community of inquiry during Philosophy for Children sessions, in order to make education more relevant and meaningful to the learners concerned.

The fifth and last aspect of qualitative research of relevance to this study is that it has antecedents in ideographic approaches to research. By this I mean that qualitative research places emphasis on depth and intensity of focus rather than concentrating on research generalisability. Instead of seeking to generalise the elicited data, qualitative researchers are concerned with a need for depth understanding of the collected data and aim to generate new knowledge out of it (Morrison, 2007). Qualitative researchers, however, can potentially extend the range of application of their findings through utilisation of terms such as transferability, translatability, fuzzy generalisation, and naturalistic generalisation (Yin, 2004). In line with Yin (2004), Mertens (2005) argued for transferability of the findings to

cases of homogeneity for policy formulation, implementations, and monitoring purposes. This does not take away the fact that of special interest to qualitative researchers is the uniqueness of each context and how effort must be made in finding solutions that are unique to the needs and expectations of each context.

Motivation towards use of the qualitative research in my study aligns very well with the purpose of the study's inquiry, namely exploring aspects of Community of Inquiry (COI) in Afrophilia learning processes for transformative education using a Philosophy for Children approach in resettlement schools in Zimbabwe. The research questions, goals, and the resources available to me as 'formative intervention researcher' (see Sannino & Engestrom, 2019) also influenced my decision to use a qualitative methodology. Moreover, the decision is also consistent with my epistemological and ontological position that reality is socially construct in multi-layered ways and therefore it does not create a single truth. Since I was working with indigenous communities⁵ in the Sebakwe area, I adopted this decolonial approach to qualitative research.

2.2 DECOLONIAL APPROACHES IN QUALITATIVE METHODOLOGY

This research applies the concept of decoloniality as a way of finding an indigenous framework for learning and centring of local heritage-based knowledges and practices. Thus, in line with decolonial research scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999), I view the term decolonisation in educational research as a process for conducting research with indigenous communities that place indigenous voices and epistemologies at the centre of the research process. This aligns with Mignolo (2000) who claimed that the aim of decolonial research is to de-link from Eurocentric thought toward an alternative that gives voice to the expression of different cultural, epistemic and social memories. In the study, decolonial thinking was engaged to create space for a formative curriculum intervention using multi-actor groups or diverse participants from the school and its community (see Appendix A, papers 2, 4, 6 and 7). According to Datta (2017), decoloniality could be engaged in qualitative research so that the research can potentially create an impact in the participants' communities.

⁵ The concept indigenous community is elusive and hard to define, however *participants in the Sebakwe community are considered indigenous because, as explained by one key informant, most of the people resettled in the area once lived there under traditional Chief Ruzane before being relocated in 1952 during the establishment of commercial farms.*

Creating an impact in the participants' communities through engaging decolonial approaches is possible because the approach works toward recovering the lost identities of colonised people by championing self-determination and empowerment. In the context of my study, it has been evidenced that the participants' ways of knowing and their cultural histories of practice have been marginalised and colonised by discourses that favour coloniality (see papers 1 and 7) – hence the need to recover lost voices and practices. Decolonial approaches, especially in qualitative research, achieve this by creating spaces that enable the research process and subsequently the reshaping and transformation of the researchers' identities (Keikelame & Swartz, 2019). It follows then that the lens that researchers opt to work with should be compatible with the theoretical frameworks and methodologies used at every stage of the research with the potential of translating the findings into action.

Keikelame and Swartz (2019) mentioned five tensions and structures that are critical in decolonial qualitative research. One of these is **power**, which they claim can be influenced by the researchers' outsider-insider positions as well as researcher and the researched experiences of coloniality. Ordinarily, there are invisible power dynamics in qualitative research, and these, according to Thambinathan and Kinsella (2021), are clearly discernible in studies involving disadvantaged populations, such as the resettlement school children in the context of this study. Thambinathan and Kinsella (2021) went on to suggest that there is a need to critically examine the roles that researchers play because they may have unequal power to define, label, and alienate disadvantaged populations and communities. In light of this, Keikelame and Swartz (2019) proposed reconsidering the concept of 'power with' rather than 'power over', arguing that when working with marginalised groups, such as the resettlement primary schools in my study, it is critical to ensure equal power sharing between the researcher and the participants. In practice, this rebalancing of power relations could be done through recognising participants as knowledge holders (Thambinathan & Kinsella, 2021). The benefit of doing this is that both actors will recognise that the researcher is not the sole producer of knowledge because they will have both made an equitable and valuable contribution to the research process. This helps researchers embrace what Thambinathan and Kinsella (2021, p. 5) referred to as 'Other(ed) ways of knowing'. In my study, issues of power emerged from examining teachers' roles as characterised by their practices and competences in the classroom (see Appendix A, paper 2 and 3 for in-depth discussion on this).

The second factor is **trust**, which according to Keikelame and Swartz (2019), is a critical indicator for mutual relationships in a research process. This study established that trust was critical in research because participants' consent was based on trust and they expected the trust to be reciprocal. According to Liamputtong (2010), reciprocated trust in decolonial research, and protecting the vulnerable from exploitation in research go hand in hand. Use of decolonial approaches to research in the Sebakwe resettlement community that could be identified with the *unhu/ubuntu* philosophical values implied that trust in the research process was to be shaped along the values of respect, reciprocity, collaboration, and co-operation.

Culture and cultural competences are listed as the third tension and structure in Keikelame and Swartz's (2019) list of important tensions and structures in decolonising research methodologies. Citing the fact that culture is neither static nor homogeneous, the authors recommend engaging in rational reflection when examining social, political, and historical issues. Though this is critical in decolonial research, I have learned that it is also critical to devote time to continuous engagement with participants and the context in order to gain a deeper understanding of the communities involved in the research (see papers 2, 3 and 6). Another way of gaining a deeper understanding of the way of knowing the participants in the study is to make use of cultural insiders (Thambinathan & Kinsella, 2021). In my case however, I was an insider formative interventionist with insight and familiarity with the Sebakwe resettlement community and the primary schools in the area.

The fourth tension and structure is **respectful and legitimate research practice**. In decolonial research this includes centring participants' voices and epistemological perspectives throughout the research process (Keikelame and Swartz, 2019). It entails making an ethical commitment to respecting the participants' worldviews; in my study I remained respectful of the Sebakwe community's *unhu/ubuntu* worldview. Respectful and legitimate practices are intended to protect ethical practices among the communities involved in research. This aspect of tension and structure falls in line with Thambinathan and Kinsella's (2021) concept of reciprocity and respect for self-determination which places emphasis on issues around consent and autonomous decision-making in research. Thambinathan and Kinsella (2021) concurred with Datta (2018) that the principle of reciprocity should be used to drive collaboration from the beginning of a study to the end, and to establish collective ownership over the entire research process. Collaboration and collective ownership were fostered in my study at all stages of the research, including formative intervention workshops, community of

inquiry sessions, reflexive interviews, and during publication, as some participants assisted in clarifying the translation of the Afrophilia artifacts.

The last item is the **recognition of individual and communities' assets**. While in Keikelame and Swartz's (2019) study, these included any factors or resources that enhance individuals', communities', and populations' ability to maintain and sustain health and well-being and assist in reducing health inequalities. In this study these assist in reducing barriers to learning opportunities for the children in the Sebakwe resettlement area. According to Vaandrager and Kennedy (2017), such assets (in this study Afrophilia learning lens) are critical resources as they have the potential to foster engagement of individuals, communities and societies in actions for social justice. In this study these assets in the form of Afrophilia learning lens were found to be important to foster learner agency and a change in teachers' roles as characterised by their practices and competences (see Appendix A, papers 3 and 6).

2.2.1 Three colonialities to be aware of in qualitative decolonial research

Beyond the tensions and structures, researchers must be aware of three colonialities hidden in institutions and discourses that have long governed research especially in the global south (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). The colonial powers used colonialities of power, knowledge, and being to control "how people perceived themselves and their relationship to the world" (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986, p. 16). As a result, being aware of these colonialities will provide the researcher with knowledge of the discourses that are most likely to emerge from research with a specific group of people or within a given community. Ordinarily, as explained by decolonial scholars, these colonialities have been used as tools to advance the obliteration and devaluation of indigenous peoples' social practices, particularly in the fields of religion, culture, history, literature, and education (Ngugi wa Thiong'o, 1986; Mignolo, 2005). According to Maldonado-Torres (2007, p. 243) these aspects of coloniality are "maintained alive in books, in the criteria for academic performance, in cultural patterns, in common sense, in the self-image of peoples, in aspirations of self, and so many other aspects of our modern experience". The three colonialities shown in Figure 2.1 below were critical in my research because schools, particularly in postcolonial countries like Zimbabwe, are part of the institutions that reproduce coloniality (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013).

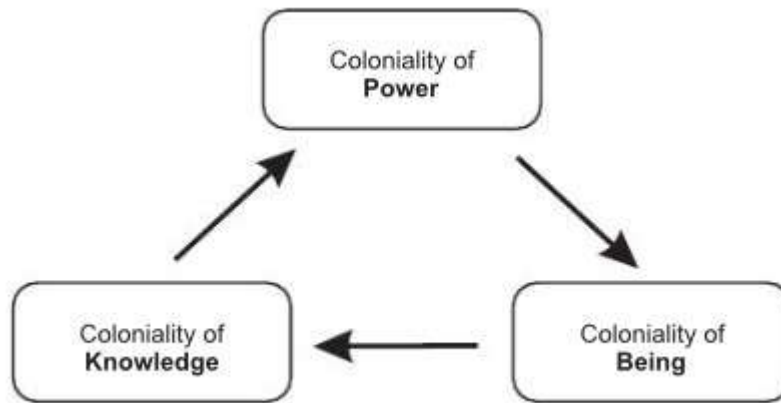


Figure 2.1: Grosfoguel's model of coloniality (Grosfoguel, 2007, 203–246)

From the model in Figure 2.1 it could be inferred that research that has been referred to as controversial in indigenous communities has used the three colonialities of power, knowledge and being to perpetuate what Césaire (2001) called processes of formulated “thingfication”. Arguably, researchers have used formulated thingfication processes to reinforce the dehumanisation of the disadvantaged and justify their treatment as objects or animals by society's powerful (Thambinathan & Kinsella, 2021). Each aspect of the model depicted in Figure 2.1 is described below.

Coloniality of power is normally associated with asymmetrical power structures that exist in postcolonial countries as a result of patriarchy, capitalism, and Euro-American-centrism (Seroto, 2018). In this study, I used the concept of coloniality of power to examine how the imperial colonial empire and postcolonial political elites used racial hierarchies and state monopoly to determine the schools' curriculum content. According to Fricker (2007), coloniality of power occurs when "a socially situated capacity to control the actions of others" is used "to create or maintain a given social order." (ibid., p. 13). This is especially true in schools, where for instance teachers can use their pedagogical power to influence or maintain the status quo.

Coloniality of knowledge focus on the impact of colonialism on various aspects of knowledge production (Seroto, 2018). According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) and Seroto (2018), the concept, in addition to posing epistemological questions related to the politics of knowledge generation, also interrogates the relevance and irrelevance of knowledge. Essentially, the concept explains how the empire promoted its own knowledge and ways of

meaning making in order to devalue and erase other knowledges and ways of meaning making. According to Grosfoguel (2013), the colonality of knowledge compels researchers, particularly in the global south, to understand how and why indigenous heritage knowledges, such as the Afrophilia learning lens, were pushed to the marginal side of society. According to the findings of this study, some institutions continue to promote Eurocentric knowledge (Appendix A, paper 1, see also Chapter 7). As qualitative decolonial researchers, we must take note of these issues and take corrective action to overcome “inferiority and superiority complexes” (Fanon, 1986) as well as the epistemic silences, conspiracies, and epistemic violence (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013) hidden in the colonality knowledge.

Coloniality of being arose from discussions about the implications of colonality of power in various areas of society, and it is primarily concerned with the lived experience of colonisation and its impact on language (Maldonado-Torres, 2007). The main point here is that knowledge and ways of making meaning cannot be disconnected from language. Language, according to Mignolo (2007), is more than simply a cultural heritage and a signifier of a people's identity; it is also the location where knowledge is inscribed. Thus, coloniality of being in qualitative research enabled me to thematise issues relating to the effects of coloniality in lived experience rather than only have them in mind (Mignolo, 2007). According to decolonial scholars, the concept entails notions of restoring denied self-pride and sovereign subjectivity for former colonised people, which in the context of this study, is Sebakwe resettlement primary school children. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013), coloniality of being enables researchers to reconsider how humanity is portrayed for indigenous peoples, a phenomenon that, if perceived in the context of this study, led to the exclusion of indigenous peoples' heritage-based knowledges and the devaluation of their languages in the education system.

2.3 THE STUDY AS AN EXPLORATORY CASE STUDY

The study is an exploratory case study aimed at transformative curriculum development and considering learners' critical reflexive thinking. In the context of my study, transformative curriculum development entails how participants were empowered to engage in dialogue to co-construct a curriculum framework that transcends traditional forms of curriculum development that silenced the voices of other stakeholders, particularly children, and considered only the voices of the ruling or privileged elite. According to Burns and Bush

(2006), the exploratory research framework denotes a projected and an accidental manner of gathering information. Henceforth, the research is open, and participant driven, taking into consideration the role of multi-voicedness. By multi-voicedness in this research, I make firmer the point that the research considers “difference and diversity within groups as a resource for meaning generation” (Akkerman et al., 2006). This further affirms that the perspectives presented in this research stem from more than one person and different sociocultural backgrounds. Important for the study design is the commitment to decolonial research and sociocultural theory which both support collaborative effort in the construction of reality as a social entity.

Yin (1994) classified case studies into three categories namely, multiple case studies (comparative), qualitative or quantitative case studies, and evaluative (exploratory) case studies. The exploratory case study as utilised in this research is an enquiry into educational events, projects, or programmes to determine their worthwhileness, as judged by analysis by the researcher(s). Though Yin (1994) made insightful classifications, it has to be noted that case study is a generic term for the investigation of an individual, group or phenomenon. This concurs with Stake’s (1995) description of a case study as the study of the particularity and complexity of a single case, coming to understand its activity within important circumstances. I chose the exploratory case study framework as it seemed to relate well to the data generation methods and the formative interventionist intentions of this study (Appendix A, papers 4 and 6). Moreover, choice for the exploratory case study framework was necessitated by the fact that the research context (Sebakwe resettlement schools) in which I operated had no known existing research on the subject area.

In other words, the exploratory framework was ideal as the purpose of my study was ‘geared to that which is discreet, elusive, endemic, obscured, intrinsic, and ingrained in *curriculum and pedagogical theory and practices*’ (Nind, Curtin & Hall, 2016, p. 207; italics added). This resonates with Burns and Bush’s (2006) elucidation that the exploratory framework is ideal especially in research contexts where there is uncertainty and lack of knowledge about a phenomenon, resulting in the research problem becoming less understood. Arguably the exploratory case study was viable as I explored aspects of community of inquiry in Afrophilia learning processes for transformative education, using a Philosophy for Children approach as argued for in Chapter 1. This is because it worked as a means of finding out what is happening in schools, thus giving me new insights and clarification to my understanding of

a problem explained in the previous chapter (Robson,1993). This is consistent with Bassey's (1999) elucidation of an educational case study regardless of the classification in which it falls. According to Bassey (1999), an educational case study is

An empirical enquiry which is conducted within a localized boundary of space and time (i.e., a singularity); into interesting aspects of an educational activity, or programme, or institution, or system; mainly in its natural context and within an ethic of respect for persons; in order to inform the judgments and decisions of practitioners or policymakers; or of theoreticians who are working to these ends. (ibid., 1999, p. 58)

Here, it should be noted that my use of the exploratory case study arose out of the desire to probe and gain a deeper understanding of a complex social phenomena, such as the Afrophilia learning lens constituted in the Sebakwe community (Janse van Rensburg, 2001). According to Yin (2009), a case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and within its real-life contexts. In line with Yin (2009) is Janse van Rensburg (2001, p. 16) who argued that the case study enables a researcher to look at individuals or small groups in a naturalistic setting and be able to generate rich and detailed qualitative data on a phenomenon of interest.

The definitions above and Yin's (2009) elucidation that the case study is used especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are blurred, have convinced me that case study was an appropriate study design for my research context and questions. In this study, the case is a curriculum formative intervention process focusing on development of critical reflexive thinking skills of primary school children using an Afrophilia orientation to Philosophy of Children pedagogy. This constitutes the boundaries of the case. As argued before, however, this phenomenon cannot be considered without critical analysis of the historical and cultural context, including the existing primary school curriculum. It also requires specific consideration of teaching and learning strategies, artefacts used, the classroom setting and the learners, teachers, and other contributors' experiences of this formative curriculum intervention. The physical setting of the case is Kaguvi Primary School where I teach, which as mentioned in Chapter 1, is a resettlement school in the Sebakwe district in Zimbabwe. Details of participant selection are discussed below.

PARTICIPANT SELECTION

Philosophy for Children sessions were conducted with 16 grade 3 learners enrolled at the school. There were six community elders and six teachers from the Sebakwe cluster together with three other senior Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education officials working in the district and province. The selected participants from the community and the education sector took part in reflexive interviews and formative intervention workshops (phase 2 and 4) and were also invited to participate in community of inquiry sessions (Appendix A, paper, 7). The 16 children were involved in the workshops and in dialogues in the ten Philosophy for Children lesson activities (Appendix A, paper 2, 3, 4 and 6).

The selection criterion of the key informants was based on their proficiency in one of the following languages: ChiShona, IsiNdebele and ChiTonga, and their understanding of African cultural learning heritage as expressed in the Sebakwe community through these languages. More generally, the community elderly people were perceived as potential repositories of indigenous knowledge with the potential of generating rich data on the research interest, I selected senior teachers with more than five year's teaching in the case study area for they were perceived to have a fuller understanding of the customs and cultural values of the people they work with. For the teaching staff, the criteria were also not to select those in charge of grades preparing for national examinations in the fieldwork year. For the pupils involved, the selection was motivated by them being in the grade that marks entry into the Zimbabwe junior primary level. Preliminary consent seeking from children and parents of the grade three class led to 100% consent from both the parents and the learners themselves. Furthermore, the class was representative of all the languages mentioned above. The other three participants were chosen for being well versed with the education system of Zimbabwe as they are in senior positions in the education system.

Apart from the considerations discussed above, the smaller number of participants was selected because it was easy to manage during the formative intervention workshops. The class that took part during the community of inquiry sessions was relatively small to allow for efficient video recording during the lesson observations. The nature of the research and the method of sampling used in this study (purposive also known as convenience sampling) meant that I worked with the number of participants whom I thought were capable of providing the best information. Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) are of the view that

working with a minimum number of 12-15 participants for most qualitative interview studies works well. Thus, I worked with a minimum number of participants who could give enough insight for the study. Also as highlighted above I am a full-time teacher and the research participants also had responsibilities, hence there were time constraints for data collection; hence the small number of participants selected allowed me to effectively manage time with minimum inconvenience.

Participant confidentiality and anonymity in this research was ensured from the start. I was aware that some of my respondents may be traceable by their position in the Sebakwe community or in the nation at large (i.e Provincial Education Director {PED}/ District Schools Inspector {DSI}). Their contributions were valuable, but their identity was not revealed unless they were willing for it to be revealed. Some of the participants did not object to their names appearing in the study report but I did not use their names if they were reflected in a bad light. Drawing on Smith (1999) and Bassey (1999), I ensured that the participants were well informed about their rights to withdraw from the study at any time. Data was made available to the participants for verification (see Appendix A, papers 3 and 6).

2.4 RESEARCHER POSITIONALITY- REFLEXIVITY

This section elaborates how decolonial theory helped me think through, using formative intervention approaches (Sannino, Engeström and Lemos, 2016) in research, multi-voicedness and researcher distancing from the data and process. I consider it important to provide an account of my positioning in relation to my research because my positionality opens a path to the main factors influencing my research decisions such as choice of field of study, research topic, methodology, approaches and methods. According to Wellington et al. (2005, p. 99) “the methodology and methods selected will be influenced by a variety of factors, including: the personal predilections, interests and disciplinary background of the researcher”. My decision therefore to explore issues centred on Afrophilia learning processes for transformative education using a Philosophy for Children approach was influenced by my historical and cultural context as well as my personal and professional interests. For example, I grew up living with my grandparents, who exposed me to Afrophilia learning methods such as storytelling, signing, and taking care of the environment by “observing and pitching in” (Rogoff, Mejía-Arauz, & Correa-Chávez, 2015, p. 2) with the daily activities of rural life. Winter (2000) proposed that historically and culturally inherited values have a great impact

on one's ontological and epistemological standpoint because one's personal values "are inevitably embedded within the research and play a significant role in shaping it" (ibid., 2000, p. 129). A discussion on my positionality is therefore important as it helps to authenticate my research findings.

Thus, here I reflect on contradictions connected to research notably decolonial research, which Huante-Tzintzun (2016) posited cannot happen if it is framed from within institutional boundaries. An immediate example is the fact that I am a graduate student for Rhodes University and a teacher in my area of research where I work with teachers, learners and parents. Often during my engagement with participants I felt that I could share and relate my own personal memories of my experience with schooling and structural inequalities deep-rooted in the Zimbabwean education system. However, this feeling of connectedness fades with my dual identity of teacher-researcher which is more aligned with the institutional boundaries. It was under such circumstances that I found myself walking on a tightrope. Reflecting on my role as a formative intervention researcher helped me fragment oppositional lines such as researcher/subject and it illuminated the values that inform this research (Villenas, 1996).

It was necessary for me to re-think my positionality as a formative intervention researcher working with African philosophy which, according to Eze (1997), has been subjected to an ethnological reductionist discourse that entrenches African traditions and identity into culture (resulting in what has been termed the 'mystification' of African traditions) with culture being perceived as folklore. My intent in this research was to show that traditions evolve and survive by acclimating themselves to contemporary historical situations (Eze, 1997). Thus, my desire to work with a broader conception of knowledges that exhibits the diversity that is inherent in African communities. However, in doing so I did not want to make African heritage knowledges (as practised in the Sebakwe area) an instrument at the disposal of those pushing for Eurocentric hegemony/ British imperial hegemony and supremacy for them to gain better control over the education of the African child. I also did not wish to make an Afrophilia learning lens transparent to those pushing for coloniality.

In this research there is great appreciation of the researcher as an interactive part of the formative intervention process. Thus, since I was actively involved as a formative interventionist researcher having worked for 13 years in the Sebakwe communal area, it was

imperative that the implications of my active role were addressed. According to Rousseau and Fried (2001), the presence of the researcher together with the axiological and ontological position he/she brings into a study has capacity to interact and influence other elements of the study. This is common in qualitative research where Dwyer and Buckle (2009) observed that one must play “a direct and intimate role in both data collection and analysis” (ibid., 2009, p. 2). The positioning of the researcher could not be overlooked as it was an ever-present feature of the research.

Within this formative intervention study my position was that of an insider during the focus group workshops, Philosophy for Children session observations and reflexive interviews as these were done with colleagues, parents, and children I work with every day. This position shifts to that of an outsider as I critically reflected on the data as well as evaluating the adequacy and inadequacy of the programme. The pendulum shift was possible as I had developed analytical tools that allowed for rigour and distancing from the data and process. My first position as a primary school teacher undertaking research in the area in which I teach with my colleagues and parents of the children I work with, means that I could be identified as someone who shares roles, identity, experiences with the participants (Asselin, 2003). This position could be an edge of the coin positioning as it has capacity to bring to light both limitations and benefits (Dwyer and Buckle, 2009).

2.4.1 Reconsidering community, accessibility, and qualitative research

According to Cochran, Marshall and Garcia-Downing (2008, p. 22), “researchers have a responsibility to cause no harm, but research has been a source of distress for Indigenous people because of inappropriate methods and practices”. This could be because research and learning has often been removed from the reach of indigenous people mainly through a stripped-out curriculum without the foundation of a relevant philosophy (Chigora, Mahomva, & Lunga, 2018). As I was conducting my study I had to ask myself, did my engagement with the people in Sebakwe resettlement community leave them with better questions to ask and a framework to continue to improve their quest for understanding their heritage-based learning processes and their environment better? How would such an understanding change the fate of their children?

The questions guided me to consider whether my research engagement with teachers, parents, and learners in the Sebakwe community led them into a rigorous inquiry process that yields culturally appropriate ways of teaching and learning for their children and future generations. In the section above I highlighted issues to deal with my privileged position as insider formative interventionist. This privileged position has an impact when discussing questions of accessibility (Villenas, 1996) especially for work published in international journals as with some of my thesis chapters/papers. Here, I considered the following question very critically: how I was to close the gap between learners, parents, and teachers I work with in the Sebakwe community and the graduate students and professors with whom I attend conferences and have access to journal publications in terms of the accessibility of this research. Patai (1991) addressed this issue by asking “how is the research returned?” (p. 147) This challenged me to think of how to include members of the Sebakwe community as part of the audience of the international journals in which I had selected to publish my articles. Correspondingly, who was I writing back to, or for Spivak (1988), are my publications going to be reports on how the Sebakwe community participated in transforming their school curriculum or are they tools for educational transformation – if so, whose tools? Are my publications not going to be a beneficial only to the elite? The questions expands into a discussion of ethics which elaborated further in Appendix D on the ethics form.

2.4.2 Negotiating access

As researcher, I negotiated access to the Sebakwe schools cluster by first seeking approval from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education. This was formalised through writing a letter together with the ethics considerations to be followed for my proposed study. I personally delivered the letter to the Ministry head office in Harare and collected the letter of approval a month later (see Appendix D for the letter). Then I had to seek approval for researcher entry into the province from the Midlands provincial head office in Gweru, where I also secured the Midlands Provincial Education Director’s (PED) support for the research project (see Appendix D for the letter of approval). After obtaining the two approval letters, I approached the Kwekwe District Schools Inspector (DSI) and briefed him about the research and the approval from the Ministry and asked for the District Inspector’s consent to participate in the study. For the four schools in the Sebakwe resettlement schools cluster (Tagwirei, Gutsaruzhinji, Kaguvi and Sebakwe), I approached the school Head and the Teachers in Charge (TIC) and presented my intention to carry out a study in the area. After

getting approval from the Head and the TICs, I then approached teachers with my consent form and a letter explaining my research project and the terms under which I requested their involvement (see Appendix D).

Since my aim was also to involve parents and children from the community in participating in co-designing a generative curriculum with an antecedent towards their local heritage, I approached the Headman and the Traditional Chief seeking their approval so as not to be involving parents in clandestine meetings and activities. Having secured support and approval, I then approached the parents and the children explaining my intent to involve them in a study that would involve audio and video recording of some sessions and notebook writing to keep records of selected sessions. In terms of the children who were involved in the study, I gave their parents' consent forms and then the child also had to sign his or her own consent. In both cases, the participant and the researcher would read together the consent form and the letter that explained my study and I explained the terms for their consent in the participant's home language (see Appendix E for consent form and letter that was written to participants). To construct this exploratory case study, I adopted a four-phased data collection framework explained in detail below.

2.2.2 Decolonial research in curriculum transformation

Decolonial research as discussed above invites researchers to re-negotiate/ re-imagine alternative methodological tools available within the educational terrain. Decisive in embarking on this journey of re-imagining alternative methodological tools is the researcher's ability "to shake up what is known to reveal the unknown" (Huante-Tzintzun, 2016, p. 102). In the context of this study, I hoped to explore the traditional teacher-centred pedagogies that have been identified as barriers to creation of a culture of learning in schools and to demonstrate how Afrophilia learning lens could foster learner agency in learning activities. In essence the focus of the study and the approach of the study allowed multiple perspectives to be listened to and engaged with to give voice to local knowledge and the 'Afrophia foundations of knowing and meaning making', with the focus being on the relationship between culture and reasonableness (Kayira, 2015).

For decolonial research Tuhiwai Smith (2012) gets inspiration from a wide range of philosophical foundations that emanates from works of postcolonial theorists (mentioned

above). Moreover, the approach made it possible for me, as researcher-participant to report the research findings in a way and manner that is also attuned to the concrete situation of participants in the Sebakwe resettlement area (Freire, 1970; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). Of key interest to me in using decolonial methodology is the possible social action and transformation at individual and or at institutional level that comes with applying decolonial and postcolonial lenses in research (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). It is hoped that individuals in this research, including myself as the participant researcher, will achieve some kind of transformation as we engage in communities of inquiry and a Philosophy of Children pedagogy anchored in an Afrophilia learning lens.

2.5 DATA GENERATION AND ANALYSIS PLAN

This study was constructed through utilisation of a four-phased data collection framework, involving document analysis (phase one), workshops (phase two), Philosophy for Children session observations (phase three) and interviews (fourth and final data generation phase). Figure 2.2 that follows represents the generation strategies of this project. Here data can be ordered into three sets. The first set is concerned with the curriculum documents and the writing thereof (conceptual pre-understanding), the second set is concerned with the systematisation of collaboration and involved the formative intervention workshops (selection of Afrophilia reflective artefacts) and co-designing the teacher training booklet, the third set was collected from ten Philosophy for Children lessons and reflective interviews with teachers, parents, and learners (refinement of systematisation). The diagram shows different data generation strategies as these are linked to the co-designing of a generative curriculum model for heritage-based learning underpinned by *unhu/ubuntu* philosophy.

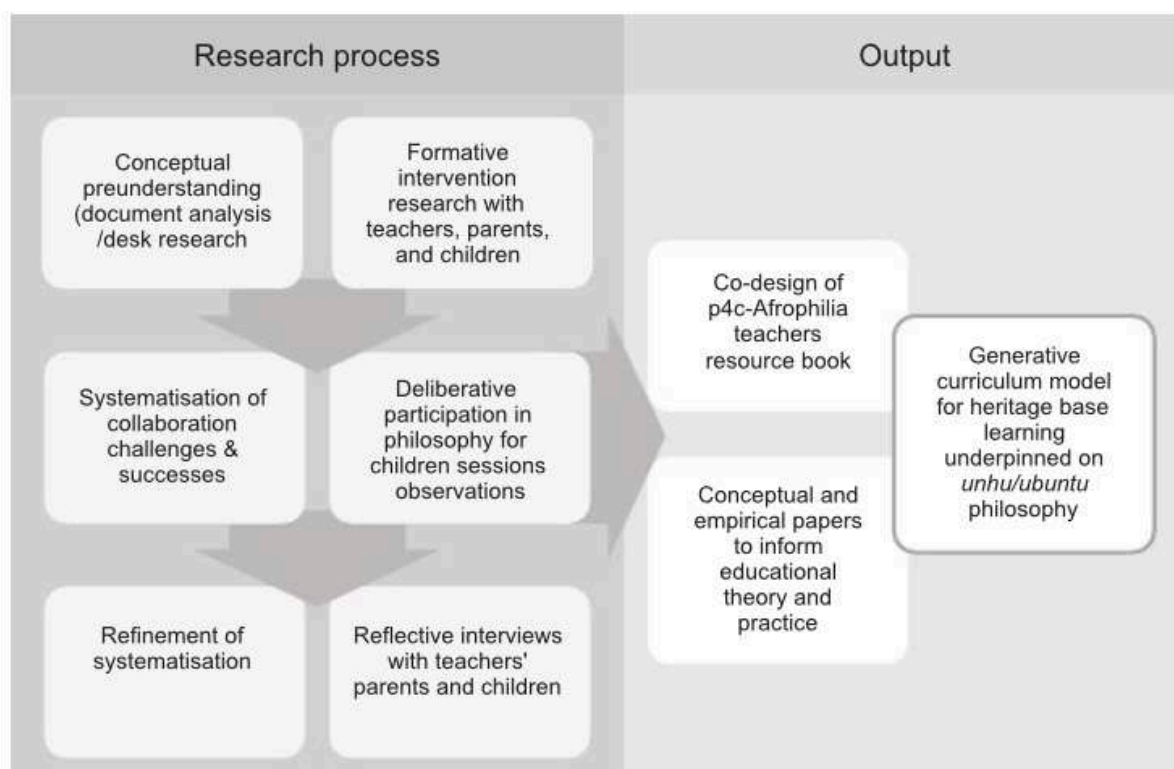


Figure 2.2 Summary of the research data generation process and the emergent output

As can be seen in Figure 2.2 the study utilised a variety of data collection methods. This triangulation of data collection made it possible for me not only to collect information that is more comprehensive and relevant but also to crosscheck my consistency to enhance the robustness of findings (Patton, 2002). The data generation methods are described in detail below.

2.5.1 Phase One: Conceptual pre-understanding (document analysis)

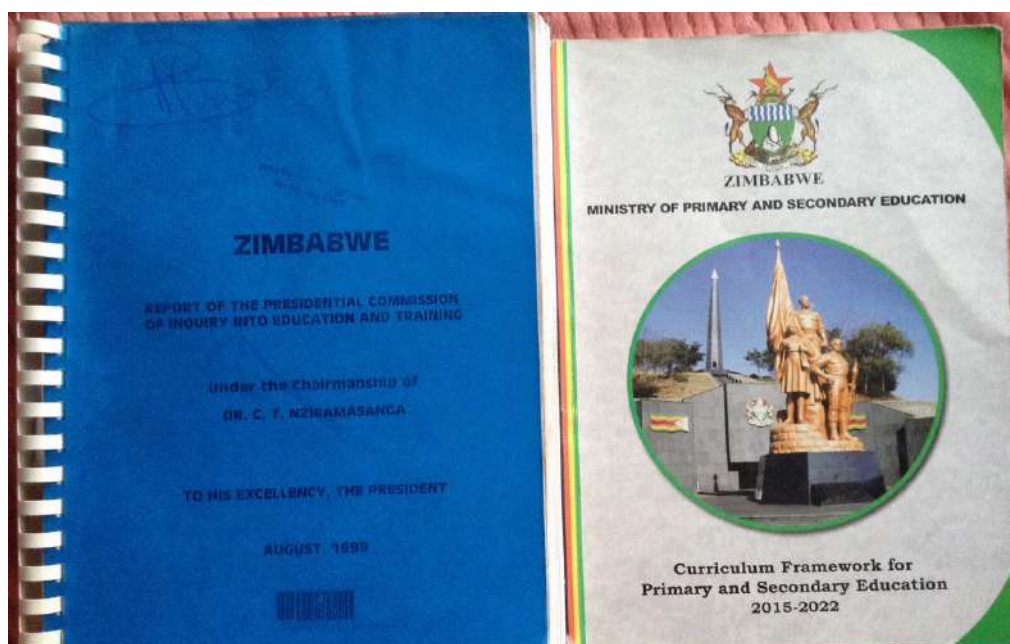


Figure 2.3 Curriculum documents analysed for conceptual pre-understanding

Two curriculum documents were analysed. According to Magwa and Magwa (2015), documents comprise a wide range of written materials that a researcher can cross-examine for qualitative information. Ordinarily, these could be in the form of policy documents, reports, mission statements, minutes of meetings, codes of conduct and case notes. According to Mertens (1998), these documents can be grouped in two, namely primary (unpublished) and secondary (published) documents. In the case of this study, all documents analysed were secondary documents.

According to Zazu (2007), document analysis is a technique for generating data around a particular focal concern. Document analysis in this research was aimed at gaining initial insights into the history, aims, purpose as well as organisation and structure of the Zimbabwean primary education curriculum. Reviewing of documents in this study was done as an unobtrusive method to supplement and extend the participants' workshop feedback and interviews.

The curriculum documents that were identified as essential for analysis are shown in Figure 2.3 above and these are: 1) Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training Report [CIET] (1999), which made the recommendations that motivated me to embark on this study, and the 2) Zimbabwe Ministry Educations' Curriculum framework for Primary and Secondary Education [MoPSE] (2014), which outlines how some of the

recommendations made in the CIET (1999) report are to be initiated. It also explains the expected exit profiles of the curriculum graduates. Moreover, the 2014 MoPSE Curriculum Framework describes the purpose and objectives of the heritage-based education programme and the central learning categories through which the set objectives are to be achieved.

As explained in the previous chapter, the CIET (1999) recommended underpinning the Zimbabwean education system on *unhu/ubuntu*, or an African worldview. Paper 1 prepared for this study offers an in-depth discussion of the two documents and is entitled “Decolonial Reflections on the Zimbabwean Primary and Secondary School Curriculum Reform Journey” (see Appendix A). This paper is constituted as a critical macrohistorical political sociology of the colonial history of curriculum and how it has influenced pedagogy in Zimbabwe.

Document analysis at the stage of conceptual pre-understanding is also a philosophical approach that aims to provoke thought through inquiry rather than halting inquiry by finding answers (Barrow & Woods, 2001). This is because it allows one to think through the dominant concepts used in the document(s) or broadly speaking, the field of study. In this study I also used it to study technical terms (such as *unhu/ubuntu*) that have become common sense due to their ordinary usage. In doing so I knew that much of the concepts or terms used in specialist documents such as CIET (1999) and MoPSE (2014) carry complex meanings and relations with other terms. In analysing these two documents, particularly the discourse carried in these texts (see Appendix A, paper 1), I wanted to make sure that “we must be clear about its intent, *the language used* [original emphasis] and meaning and not be swayed ... by its imagery and poetry” (Soltis, 1978, p. 88). My analysis was focused on getting a clearer idea of the educational terrain in which this study is located.

2.5.2 Phase Two: Systematisation of collaboration (formative intervention workshops)



Figure 2.4 Participants during the first formative intervention workshop

Two formative intervention workshops were held with participants, the purpose being to identify teachable Afrophilia objectives, reflective artefacts, stories, and other tools that could potentially correlate with the formal school curriculum objectives (see Engeström & Sannino, 2011; Paper 2). The expected outcome of the two workshops was a Philosophy for Children (Afrophilia) generative curriculum intervention and/or module. Thus, in my initial workshop plan I stated that,

A one-day workshop involving the 15 community participants, parents, education officials and teachers will be held to surface indigenous knowledge(s) related to matters of interest and concern in the Sebakwe community context. This will be captured as stories, poems, songs, or artefacts that could be used in the classroom as material for Philosophy of Children lessons.

Lupele (2003) posited that workshops have become a productive and engaged data collection tool in educational research as they allow for multi-perspectives to be generated via various interactions. In this study, the two workshops were conducted with purposively selected participants (see details in the ethics application attached) including children, parents, and other member of the school community. Due to the nature of the study my workshops were inquiry-based; this was in keeping with the nature of community of inquiry (see Appendix A, papers 2 and 4). Thus, the workshop participants made up the first community of inquiry group.

Unlike focus group interviews, the workshop format allows for deeper probing of emerging issues and open access to undermined and oppressed voices in society or in an organisation (Yin, 2004). To achieve this, I created an enabling environment to allow for maximum participation of all research participants involved (Lupele 2003; Zazu 2007). I was also careful in selecting participants from diverse backgrounds and social status as this allowed me to gain access to multiple perspectives without partiality. Because of the ongoing preliminary document analysis and review of literature on the macro-historical political sociology of the Zimbabwean education system (Paper 1), the workshops also become beneficial as they allowed me to verify, get clarity and deepen understanding of the issues at play. Specifically, I was able to elicit clarity on the educational challenges extant in resettlement schools through engagement during the formative intervention workshops. The outcome of the workshops led to the development of the tools, artefacts, stories and/or and approaches that were used in the Philosophy for Children pedagogical process, which led to Phase Three of my data collection, which is lesson observation.

2.5.3 Phase Three: Philosophy for Children lesson observations

The ten Philosophy for Children sessions which I observed were conducted with 15 grade 3 pupils at Kaguvi primary school whose age range was from 8-11 years. The chosen grade forms the base for junior primary education in Zimbabwe. According to Paton (2001), observation is a process of gathering open-ended, first-hand information by observing people and places at the research site. This is in line with Best and Kahn (1998) who posited that observation consists of detailed notations of behaviour and events, and the contexts surrounding the events and behaviour. In addition to this, Bricki and Green (2007) elucidated that to understand fully the complexities of many situations, direct participation in, and observation of, the phenomena of interest may be the best research method. As a full-time teacher, I was a participant observer: this is in line with what Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2010, p. 404) call ‘complete participant’ and I participated in the activities that were observed. Observation in the context of this study focused on, *inter alia*, the naturally occurring behaviour of learners and events during the unfolding of the community of inquiry sessions. For example, I observed how the learners related, and communicated with each other and with the teacher during the inquiry sessions, the nature of the classroom, and the appropriateness of the Afrophilia artefact/lens selected as start-up capital for the session. Best and Khan’s (2003) advice was considered throughout the observation. They advised that the

following standards should characterise observations:

1. Observations should be carefully planned, systematic and perceptive;
2. Observers should be objective. They should recognise likely biases and strive to eliminate their influence on what they see and report; and
3. Observations should be checked and verified, whenever possible by repetition or through member checking.

To be able to do the above, and to be able to reflexively ‘observe myself in action’, and to capture the dialogical interactions and processes of the ten lessons as they unfold, I asked for permission from the school head, district office, parents of the children as well as from the children to have the sessions video-recorded (see Appendix D). The video-recorded sessions made it possible for me to correlate the video observations with the diarised lesson observation notes that I jotted ‘in process’. I also considered Wellington’s (2000) idea of a participant observer role. According to Wellington (2000, p. 18), “a participant observer is an observational role adopted by researchers when they take part in activities in the setting they observe”. Thus, as an insider formative interventionist (Engeström and Sannino, 2011), I was engaged in the community of inquiry activity while also recoding observations. I also invited the school community participants from Phase Two to participate in the lesson observation process and I enquired their views of the process afterwards via reflective interviews, which made up Phase Four of the data generation.

2.5.4 Phase Four: Refinement of systematisation (reflective interviews)



Figure 2.5: Reflective interview: Researcher and Mr Musaengana at Musaengana's homestead

I conducted reflective interviews with the children as well as other participants involved in Phase Two and those who observed the process in Phase Three to elicit information on their experiences and views of the Philosophy for Children pedagogical intervention, thus eliciting their views and opinions on the curriculum intervention (Schulse, 2001). I arranged for the reflective interviews with each participant and would visit them at their most convenient time and place. The time, duration and content of actual interviews were determined by the logic and direction of naturally occurring exchanges, but basically no interview was conducted for less than 15 minutes and I was careful not to prolong the interview sessions. A reflective interview schedule to probe the community participants, teachers, and education officials was prepared and it included the following broad areas for questioning:

- The current school curriculum and their understanding of the current educational philosophy;
- The educational policy that suggests that there is a need to base education on the *unhu/ubuntu* philosophy;
- Their reflections on the workshop which surfaced local indigenous knowledge and artefacts for possible use in teaching lessons;
- Their reflections on the lessons if they observed any (they were also invited to view some of the videos if they were not able to attend the

lessons);

- Their reflections on the study's purpose and intent; and
- Any other reflections on the curriculum intervention.

Following these broad areas for questioning, neither the exact wording nor the order of the questions and issues, were predetermined. For the reflective interviews with children, I was mainly interested in eliciting information on:

- Their reflections on the workshop which surfaced local indigenous knowledge and artefacts for possible use in teaching lessons; and
- Their reflections on the lessons and the Afrophilia knowledges that were utilised during these lessons (including use of the heritage 'indigenous' language as medium of instruction).

Table 2: A list of interviews conducted for this study (additional interviews are included in papers 3, 6 and 7 - see Appendix A)

Interviewee				Venue	Date
Parent	Teacher	Education Inspector	School child		
Mbuya VaChihera				At her homestead	June 26, 2018
Mr Kandimire				At his homestead	July 3, 2018
Mr Musavengana				At his homestead	July 3, 2018
Mrs Musaengana				Kaguvi Primary School	July 5, 2018
Ms Madimbe				Sebakwe Primary School	July 5, 2018
Mr Sibanda				At his homestead	April 4, 2019
Ms Mubaiwa				At her homestead	July 17, 2019
			child 1	Kaguvi Primary School	January 29, 2020
			child 2	Kaguvi Primary School	January 29, 2020

			Merriam	Kaguvi Primary School	January 29, 2020
			Farai	Kaguvi Primary School	January 29, 2020
		PED 1		Midlands Provincial Education Offices	January 15, 2018
		PED 2		Midlands Provincial Education Offices	March 9, 2019
		DSI 1		Kwekwe District Education Office	January 29, 2020
	Mr Amos			Sebakwe Primary School	February 10, 2019
	Ms Tendai			Sebakwe Primary School	February 10, 2019
	Teacher 1			Kaguvi Primary School	January 29, 2020
	Teacher 2			Kaguvi Primary School	January 29, 2020
	Teacher 5			Tagwire Primary School	July 5, 2018
	Teacher 7			Gutsaruzhinji Primary School	July 5, 2018

In all the interviews, my emphasis was that I was not looking for specific ‘true’ answers. All interviews with parents and children were conducted in their mother tongue and these were translated as accurately as possible (for example, see papers 3, 5, 6 and 7). This created a hybrid space for the participants to express themselves unreservedly, allowing me to capture their perspectives.

An agenda for each interview was sent to the interviewees at least a week before the actual interview date. All interviews involved an interactive space between me and the participant, and only one interview included two participants who were travelling, and a joint interview was the only possibility (Mrs Musaengana and Ms Madimbe on July 5, 2018).

Ordinarily, the reflective interviews made it possible for me to develop a deeper level of reflexivity on the initiative. Moreover, in collecting data using reflective interviews, I managed to record direct words of the interviewees. The direct quotations from the interviewees were considered a basic source of raw data in this study. This is because they could reveal participants’ depth of emotions, the ways they have organised their world, their

thoughts about what was happening, their experiences and their basic perceptions on the unfolding of the community of inquiry sessions. Ary et al. (2006) reinforced the above viewpoint as they emphasised that:

We interview people to find out from them those things we cannot directly observe. We cannot observe feelings, thoughts, and intentions. We cannot observe behaviours that took place at some previous point in time. The purpose of the interview then is to allow us to enter into the other person's perspective. (ibid., 2006, p. 72)

A unique feature of reflective interviews is that they predominantly utilise open-ended questions for purposes of allowing participants to express and fully elaborate on their perspectives (Schulse, 2001). All interviews were audio recorded and then transcribed and to ensure trustworthiness with the use of interviews, I made sure that the techniques used were reproducible, systematic, credible and transparent (Zireva, 2012, Schulse, 2001).

2.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Though I am presenting these two sections (data collection and data analysis) separately for purposes of distinctly communicating design issues in the study, in essence the two overlap substantially, with the researcher iteratively moving back and forth between data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2007). As noted above I was actively involved in this formative intervention research process, therefore I developed tools for analysis that allowed for rigour and 'distanciation' from the data and process. This was done in order to be reflexive of the process, and to manage my own subjectivity. Furthermore, since qualitative research typically generates large quantities of data that must be analysed for meaning-making, the tools that I developed helped me reduce and organise the data. This also involved synthesising, searching for significant patterns, and abstracting what was most important for the study. My actions were consistent with Blatchfield (2005) who avowed that organising the data, summarising the data, and interpreting the data are the most basic steps that qualitative researchers follow during data analysis stage. This concurs with Mouton (2002, p.108) who reasoned that "... analysis involves breaking the data into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships".

Data analysis calls for critical reflection on the data for purposes of describing and developing themes that enable the research questions to be answered (Creswell, 2007). In this regard, data analysis could be deemed a process of abstracting quintessential viewpoints and concepts from the mass of raw data to describe and explain the phenomenon under study. I was careful during the data analysis to make sure that I closely observed and listened to the audio/video tapes several times, before transcribing them verbatim. Moreover, I personally undertook the task of transcribing the interviews, workshops, and lesson recordings to ensure that I captured all words and expressions. There was a dual effort: firstly, all data from interviews and workshops conducted in indigenous language was transcribed to the lingo, sent back to the participants to check for accuracy and coherence (Yin, 2011). Then the lingo was converted to English for purposes of preparing for journal articles and the entire thesis completion. Since the study involved lesson observations, I developed data analysis tools that allowed for process-based analysis.

2.6.1 Process based tools for observations and reflection

The Community of Inquiry framework (Swan et al. 2009; Appendix A, paper, 4) requires one to consider and critically describe:

Social presence: Classroom mediated interactions where learners and the teacher as co-learners feel connected one to another socially and emotionally.

Cognitive presence: Transition within learners' zone of proximal development (ZPD) to the next higher level of thinking.

Teaching presence: Inter-twining of social and cognitive processes to facilitate transformative learning.

The community of inquiry approach was used specifically in education by Mathew Lipman. In its broader context, a community of inquiry comprises individuals bound together by “similar interests, aims, purposes, intentions or beliefs” (Sprod, 2001, p. 139). Since I was working with individuals who might not naturally share similar interests all the time, I paid particular attention to how participants (during formative intervention workshops) and then learners (during Philosophy for Children lessons) become either more involved or less involved in a community. I also considered how members accommodated their cultural

diversity. The community of inquiry framework was an ideal framework because it offers ‘an exemplary setting’ for the sociocultural learning theory that I used in this study (Sprod, 2001; Paper, 4). Sociocultural theorists, specifically Vygotsky, from who I drew my motivation for working with children asserted that the verbal engagement that children get involved in aids them with forms of reasoning that are not yet available to them individually, and later it is that engagement that enables them to eventually use those forms of thought.

The community of inquiry framework was aided by the Jackson’s good thinker tool kit (<https://www.creighton.edu/ccas/philosophyforchildren/toolkit/>), which I used for the classroom lesson observations and reflections (see Paper 4). This tool is particularly useful for developing analytical descriptions of the Philosophy for Children lessons, and how they contribute to the development of critical reflexive thinking. This framework requires Philosophy of Children teachers to consider the following dimensions of the Philosophy for Children lesson process which assists in generating and supporting the development of critical reflexive thinking skills: 1) Meaning(s), 2) Reasons, 3) Assumptions, 4) Inferences, 5) Truth, 6) Evidence / examples, and 7) Counter evidence / counter examples (see Appendix A). Drawing on sociocultural learning theory, these processes can potentially also expand learning in the Zone of Proximal Development and as a result they were socioculturally informed and interpreted. I therefore considered *if and how* the Afrophilia-based artefacts and contributions (generated in Phase Two) produced dialogue and engagement with learners around meanings, reasons, inferences, truth, evidence, and counter evidence, and how this could extend their learning in the Zone of Proximal Development (Appendix A, papers 2 and 3).

2.6.2 Postcolonial/ decolonial discourse analysis

In addition to the process-based analysis tools, I used a decolonial discourse analysis approach in data presentation and analysis, while borrowing some aspects from postcolonial theory, particularly for document analysis and the analysis of discourse emerging from workshops and reflective interviews (Mignolo, 2011; Tuhiwai Smith, 2012). Both theories have a specific intellectual and political agenda, which makes them appropriate to inform the discourse analysis in this study as I worked to inform decolonising the curriculum through the inclusion and re-centring of Afrophilic learning processes (Tuhiwai Smith, 2012; Paper 1). I chose the decolonial/postcolonial discourse analysis approach after realising that the three colonialities discussed earlier still exist in postcolonial Zimbabwean education and

cannot be ignored (Paper 5). Ahmed (2021) contended that decolonial analysis broadens the scope of critical discourse by incorporating coloniality of power, a central theme in all postcolonial nations, into the analysis. As a result, because critical discourse analysis has long been used in education research (Wodak and Meyer, 2016), the value that decoloniality adds to critical discourse analysis is also applicable to education.

The gap created by the exclusion of the Afrophilia learning lens and the impact of coloniality in the analysis of educational discourse in resettlement areas, as noted in this study, has impeded the analysis of the role of cultural historical practices that underpin indigenous learning processes in postcolonial education. For a more in-depth discussion of the theories, see Chapter Four of the thesis, as well as Appendix A, which contains the papers for publication.

One thing I have noticed while using the concept of discourse analysis is that it is elusive and difficult to define (Fairclough, 2015). The connections between discourse and power, as well as the interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches associated with discourse analysis, may be lurking behind the difficulty. According to Ahmed (2021), discourse analysis gains its guaranteed rigorous analysis through making use of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches, rather than being purely linguistic. In this study, I made use of knowledge from other fields such as curriculum studies, history, sociology and philosophy.

Having done as mentioned above, I used postcolonial / decolonial discourse analysis in the sense that Sawyer (2012) used postcolonial discourse, stating that “postcolonial theories adopt the concept of discourse to examine how modern thought, which is understood as ‘the complex of signs and practices that organize social existence and social reproduction within colonial relationships’” (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin, 2000, p. 42), resisted decolonisation. The focus was more on the macro elements of discourse and the politics of discourse, rather than the micro linguistic type of discourse analysis (Paper 1). The goal was to learn how the current educational situation in Zimbabwe, with a focus on Sebakwe resettlement primary school, came to be, and then to consider what the future might hold for children in these resettlement schools. Henceforth, in my conceptual papers (Papers 1 and 5) I provided the context and background of Zimbabwe’s educational discourse.

To develop a postcolonial discourse analysis framework, I used the key discursive elements of postcolonial theory (representation, identity, and agency) in tandem with the key elements of critical research, (insight, critique, and transformation). According to Braun and Clarke (2006, p. 8), these six principles of postcolonial research present “a qualitative analytic method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data”. As a researcher, I sought to identify all the issues that recur in coding of the data, and group them according to themes and categories that summarise the collected data, informed by the above-mentioned six principles of postcolonial research. These six principles of postcolonial research provided guidance on the process of discourse analysis. As noted above, this discourse analysis work offered the ‘backdrop’ or the contextual insights necessary for the interpretation of the Philosophy for Children activity process which I analysed (see Papers 1, 2 and 5 for further details).

2.7 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF THE STUDY

In qualitative research, the term ‘trustworthiness’ is preferred to the terms “reliability and validity” (Zireva, 2012). According to Yin (2011), trustworthiness signifies the process of assessing the quality of a qualitative inquiry. The latter terms are considered to be more inclined to quantitative methodology (Schule, 2002). In general, there is no single commonly accepted standard for judging trustworthiness in a qualitative study (Leedy, 1997). Put differently, there is nothing like a singular, static, and impartial reality or truth.

In this study, credibility was ensured through the researcher’s familiarity with the research site, and through the strategies used for collecting and analysing data as discussed above (see the ethics form, Appendix D). I also kept a detailed case record, and through this, provided substantive evidence of what Mertens (1998) referred to as prolonged and substantial engagement and persistent observation. Furthermore, to achieve ‘trustworthiness’ I made use of data triangulation, “this entails the use of ... multiple data collection methods, data sources, analysts, or theories to check the validity of the findings” (Leedy, 1997).

Effort was also made to ensure that the techniques I used were capable of being reproducible, systematic, credible, and transparently used and deployed. As discussed above, I also ensured reflexivity through using data generation and analysis tools that allowed for a ‘distantiation’ from the data, even though I was involved in producing it. Observations and reflections by participants on the lessons conducted also helped to ensure reflexivity and

helped me to see the data through the eyes of the participants, not only my own. I was also careful to take account of my role in the research, and I wrote careful notes on my own practices, reflections, and thoughts throughout the research process to aid with reflexivity.

2.8 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter has considered issues connected to the empirical and analytical procedures that were utilise in order to achieve the reseach goals. In the opening section I discussed the qualitative methodology and the five aspects that characterise it. Through this I was able to rationalise my choice for utilising a qualitative approach in the study. As part of the methodological plan, an exploratory case study was adopted. The decision was justified in terms of its potential to help gain a deeper understanding of a complex social phenomena. In line with the qualitative research tradition, formative intervention workshops, document analysis, lesson observation and reflective interviews were presented as the methods for data collection. The chapter concluded with a discussion analysis and trustworthiness of the study and how I utilised multiple data collection methods and data sources to ensure quality and rigour. In the next chapter I reflect on the extended literature on sociocultural learning theory.

CHAPTER THREE

EXTENDED PERSPECTIVES ON THE LITERATURE: SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY

3.0 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter focused on articulating the methodological approach I used to make this study multi-voiced and participant driven. In brief, the kind of researcher positionality which I utilised had pressed my mental horizons making me and the participants more open to and appreciative of the possibility of developing a generative curriculum from our co-creative engagement toward education reform. Henceforth, the experience of it, as I explained in Chapter Two, had a dialectical relationship with the theoretical lens I adopted in the study. This chapter contributes to the extended perspectives on literature section which is concerned with a need to give the tripod theoretical lens I worked with a sense of shimmer – in relation to the study context. This chapter is an extended perspective on the literature and theoretical framing as illuminated in the publications or manuscripts under peer review. The extended perspectives on the literature chapter series describes and explains the sociocultural theory (Chapter Three), the postcolonial and decolonisation theory (Chapter Four) and the curriculum theory and Philosophy for Children (Chapter Five). Here, I also borrow and add to the literature that was reviewed in the articles prepared for publication and in the p4cAfrophia- teachers' resource booklet (Appendix A and Appendix B).

3.1 SOCIOCULTURAL THEORY

Sociocultural theory also known as 'sociohistorical' or 'cultural-historical' theory by Lev Semyonovich Vygotsky was developed as a practical tool, and the theory has an inherent focus on practice (Zaretskii, 2016). Sociocultural theory has emerged as a departure from the two traditional approaches that were dominant in psychology. On the one hand, there was a group that focused more on application of objective methods with an inclination toward low mental functions, and on the other hand, a group advocated introspection with a focus on higher mental functions (Bodrova & Leong, 2015). As a new approach in psychology, sociocultural theory as developed by Vygotsky, focuses on studying how higher mental functions originate both in phylogeny and in ontogeny (Bodrova & Leong, 2015; Zaretskii, 2016). Henceforth, even during Vygotsky's times, the theory continued to extend and deepen

its scope of practical application and the theoretical aspects embedded in it. Thus, the theory is important in that its promoters provide us with tools and artefacts which we can utilise both in creative social science and in heritage-based learning reforms. Vygotsky, the main proponent of the theory, is regarded as “the first modern psychologist to suggest the mechanisms by which culture becomes a part of each person's nature” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 6).

As a psychologist and social constructivist, Vygotsky's conceptualisation of learning differed from other theorists, especially the work of Piaget (Mooney, 2013), as noted below:

Unlike Piaget, who viewed children essentially as solitary figures involved in the construction of knowledge, Vygotsky believed that the child's social environment was an active force in their development, working to mould children's growing knowledge in ways that were adaptive to the wider culture in which they grew up. Vygotsky's perspective on development is often referred to as a sociocultural theory because of his emphasis on the child's culture and the social environment as forces which shape development. (Keenan, Evans, & Crowley, 2016, p. 138)

From the quote above, one may surmise that the sociocultural theory articulated by Lev Vygotsky offers an alternative solution to the long-standing conflict between traditional teaching methods that stresses the teacher-led curriculum and progressive approaches to learner-centred curriculum (Wells, 2004; Appendix A, papers 2 and 3). Here, sociocultural theory offers the idea of a collaborative community between teachers and learners, which recognises the role of learners as co-creators of knowledge in learning situations with teachers. Thus, sociocultural learning theory points toward a multi-layered approach to research and teaching. Henceforth, through a collaborative link between teachers and learners, the notion of semiotic mediation emerges, in which more knowledgeable members scaffold less knowledgeable members to support finding solutions to problems by allocating existing cultural resources to the situation (Wells, 2004). Ultimately, the teacher (more knowledgeable member) and the learner (less knowledgeable member) will learn from each other while engaging in collaborative inquiry.

Even though sociocultural theory generally accepts children as subjections of perception, the theory is significant to all humans, as humans paying little heed to age are able to utilise and create instruments in a joint effort with others. Vygotsky emphasised that the mechanical and

psychological tools developed by people in the public arena have a fundamental part in sociocultural investigations, and as indicated by him, individual and social experience cannot be isolated (Mooney, 2013). Behind this is Vygotsky's disputation with views claiming "processes of child development are independent of learning" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 79). Vygotsky contended that learning and development are a dialectical unity in which learning doesn't follow but drives development (Vygotsky, 1978). This research situates sociocultural theory as a tool for mediating further understanding and action in educational theory and pedagogy (Vygotsky, 1978). The following sections describe the Vygotskian Zone of Proximal Development (section, 4.2.1), which offers a deepened exploration of sociocultural learning influence that resonates with a community of inquiry (4.2.2). In working with sociocultural theory, I am aware that educational reforms in Zimbabwean primary schools are sustained by sociocultural learning theory. Henceforth, my explaining them will potentially help educators to apply sociocultural principles and know what is expected of them in their everyday practice. This leads to a discussion on the coherence in principles of learning as a community: the sociocultural perspective (4.2.3) before offering an open-ended conclusion (4.2.4). The next section is particularly important for me as in my study I was concerned with how the Zone of Proximal Development could be created within community of inquiry and the kind of implications for curriculum transformation that would emerge thereafter.

3.2 THE VYGOTSKIAN ZONE OF PROXIMAL DEVELOPMENT

According to Zaretskii (2016), Vygotsky's concept of the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is a major methodological principle in neuropsychology, developmental education, and special education. In primary school contexts, the ZPD can be used to indicate the realisation of the learner's inner potential and the process of internalisation (Zaretskii, 2016). According to Yang (2015), internalisation signifies a process of ingrowth or reflexivity that leads to personal transformation which is often marked by attainment of individual autonomy. Internalisation is not unidirectional as it is always in a discursive dialectical relationship with the process of externalisation. Ordinarily, this is when semiotic material is conveyed from the public arena for personal reflexivity and then is transferred back into the social amphitheatre in the process of externalisation (Lantolf & Thorne, 2006). In this manner, the Vygotskian ZPD is positioned as the forerunner to the development of communicative learning pedagogies in formal schooling. In a community of inquiry, attainment of the proximal level is possible via the learner's capability to internalise the

mediating Afrophilia artefacts from his/her participation in a dialogical inquiry with the teacher/facilitator and other learners.

This study uses the Zone of Proximal Development to explore both teacher and learner agency (see Appendix A, papers, 2, 3 and 6). In both cases the ZPD is viewed as a space where the potential skills of teacher/ learners develop in collaboration with a more experienced person (Goos, 2005). Thus the conceptual mediation and material (Afrophilia reflexive artefacts) are used to form a new object of inquiry and the quality of 'philosophical progress' (P4C Afrophilia booklet, Appendix B) within the community of inquiry determine the extent of both teacher and learner agency.

Emphasis within the ZPD is that learning precedes development, hence, Vygotsky's metaphor that a step-in learning may lead to many steps in development (Vygotsky, 1978; Zaretskii, 2016). It is important to note Vygotsky's articulation that development is set in social processes, of which social communications fashion an indispensable share of cognitive development (Keenan, Evans, & Crowley, 2016). Here, Vygotsky also foregrounded the aspect of language use as children learn to do something from collaborating and communicating with others before they can do the activity on their own. However, it is not any kind of learning that is most likely to bring about development; learning needs to be performed or practised in a way that facilitates development. Henceforth, this kind of learning is learning in which the role of the learner is made significant or, in other words, learning that foregrounds learner agency. Zaretskii (2016) clarified Vygotsky's point noting that,

Learning a new method of thinking or a new type of structure produces a great deal more than the capacity to perform the narrow activity that was the object of instruction. It makes it possible to go beyond the direct outcome of learning. (Zaretskii, 2016, p. 152)

Viewed in this way, the ZPD is understood as a complex multidimensional space that offers deeper operational meaning. The multidimensional model of the ZPD was developed initially to support children's development in ways that allow them to overcome learning difficulties. Here, the learning challenges are viewed in my study as start-up capital for learner development and these include but are not limited to academic failure and educational neglect.

At least six conditions have been distinguished as fundamental conditions for encouraging learner-teacher collaboration out of which the “step in development” emerges (Zaretskii, 2016). Especially interesting for my study, as is also reflected in my papers prepared for publication, is that the reason for using the ZPD is to assist children to develop their full potentialities. According to Wertsch (1985, p. 67), the idea of the ZPD is focused on “how a child can become ‘what he/she not yet is’ can be traced”. Therefore, in order for one to help learners to build up their potentiality, one needs a deep comprehension of six key aspects: “the importance of assistance; the importance of mediation; the importance of cooperation; the importance of imitation; the importance of target; the importance of crises” (Silalahi, 2019, p. 175), discussed further below.

3.2.1 The importance of scaffolding/ assistance

Vygotsky strongly believed that “cognitive development involves the internalization, transformation and use of routines, ideas and skills which are learned socially, from more competent partners” (Meadows, 2018, p. 106). The assistance that is applied in order to help the learner develop their Zone(s) of Proximal Development is also known as ‘scaffolding’ (Wood, Bruner, & Ross, 1976, p. 90). Scaffolding can be described as:

...support that teachers provide to the learner during problem solving – in the form of reminders, hints, and encouragement – to ensure successful completion of a task. An important feature of scaffolding, especially in authentic, apprenticeship contexts, is keeping the task whole – controlling those elements that are beyond the learner's capacity. (Shepard, 2005, p. 1)

Essentially the teacher/ the more knowledgeable person has to know the learner’s actual development level prior to deciding the forms of assistance to offer during the learning process. In other words, the teacher/ more capable person has to continuously revise the kind of scaffolding he/she will be offering and be in tune with the learner’s emerging capabilities (Rogoff, 1990). Often, the learner’s imperfect proficiencies could be evidence enough to prompt a revision/ scaling up of the scaffolding process. To achieve this, the teacher/more knowledgeable other must first establish meaningful and emotional contact with the learner (Wertsch, 1985). As a result, the learner has to gain confidence and a feeling of protection, support and acceptance. This helps the learner to understand the meaning of the activity and

also the role and involvement of the teacher. Emphasis here is on Vygotsky's affirmation that "children learn the most and contribute to their development through the assistance of the more capable others" (Silalahi, 2019, p. 170). In the community of inquiry process, the teacher/faciliator is supposed to reimagine him/herself as a critical change agent assisting the child to assume a new role as co-producer of knowledge (see Appendix A, paper 3).

McKenzie (1999), cited in Turuk (2008, p. 252), listed eight advantages of scaffolding:

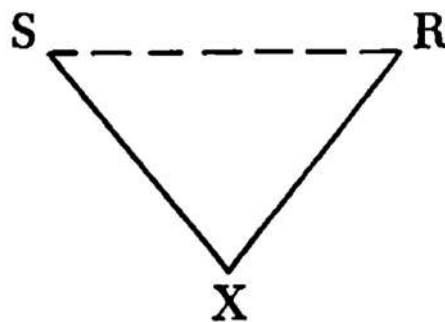
- a) It provides clear directions for students
- b) It clarifies purpose of the task
- c) It keeps students on task
- d) It offers assessment to clarify expectations
- e) It points students to worthy sources
- f) It reduces uncertainty, surprise and disappointment
- g) It delivers efficiency
- h) It creates momentum

In line with the advantages offered by McKenzie (1999) in Turuk (2008), one may surmise that scaffolding and scaffolded competences are engrained in dialogue. Here, the dialogue assumes the form of an interpsychological tool that has the capacity to stimulate internalisation of the knowledge that was co-created between the learner(s) and the teacher (Wertsch, 1985). Similarly, in a community of inquiry, the shared outcome of the philosophical inquiry provides the same prospect for scaffolded competency as in skilled-amateur connections in the routine Afrophilic experiences. Here, scaffolding is perceived to be a hallmark of the community of inquiry process.

3.2.2 The importance of mediation

Sociocultural theory is based on claims that the human mind is sign-mediated (Lantolf, 2000). According to Cole and Engeström (1993) who were advancing Vygotsky's work, in sociocultural theory, mediation plays a key role in regulating the relationship between the subject and the sociocultural setting; while also underpinning the socio-cultural account of self-determining human agency. Advanced here is the affirmation that humans act directly on the physical world to develop their knowledge activity and cultures without the support of tools, signs and artifacts. As expressed by Vygotsky (1978), tools, signs and artifacts serve as mediators, assisting humans in mastering higher mental functions. The implication of this

affirmation for education is that “people educate each other through the mediation of the world” (Freire, 2005, p. 32). As the child grows in the sociocultural world, he/she is presented with tasks and demands and the child, according to Vygotsky (1978) cited in Lantolf (2000), can only engage with these through utilisation of tools/mediators. These mediators (for example, language, writing, works of arts, and maps) are at the disposal of humans in order for them to act on their external and internal worlds. Vygotsky (1978, p. 40) summarised the complex mediated act in diagrammatic form.



Source: Vygotsky, 1978, p. 40.

S is the primary stimulus in this case. The X factor is the auxiliary or secondary stimulus used by the subject to secure the response R during mediation.

Figure 3.1: Vygotsky’s summary of stimulus-response-mediation

According to Daniels, Cole, and Wertsch (2007), the availability of mediation⁶ for collaboration between the learner and the more knowledgeable other via the medium of language or speech (as cultural historical tools) facilitates cultural development processes. To be more specific, it calls for development of “new culturally-elaborated organisation of behaviour” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 39). Collaboration in this case entails that other people can be treated as mediators; this point was reinforced by Vygotsky when he posited that “it is

⁶ By mediation in this chapter, I mean a well-thought-out collaborative process (such as a community of inquiry in philosophy for children) where technological and psychological tools are utilised in a problem-solving process. During this process learners attain a new positionality as they shift from the position of being peripheral members to being active participants whose agentive action is valuable in transforming the object of the activity. There is no commonly agreed upon definition of the concept ‘mediation’ but frequent in the diverse definitions is the aspect of scaffolding which I discussed earlier on. Kozulin (2002), cited in Rahim, Hood, and Do Coyle (2009, p.2), defined mediation as “human or symbolic intermediaries placed between learners and the object to be learned, enabling them to achieve higher mental functions so that they will be able to later transform their learning”.

through the mediation of others, through the mediation of the adult that the child undertakes activities” (Silalahi, 2019, p. 176). It should be noted that sociocultural theory places a premium on semiotic mediation, with a particular emphasis on speech (Daniels, Cole & Wertsch, 2007). Vygotsky (1978), for example, explained that the development of speech in children is intended to help them join the social conversation through the mediation of others. Henceforth the supposition that the child’s way of thinking is substantively, if not completely, patterned through the experiences of social conversation and social interaction.

Scholars have identified two forms of mediation resonate with the sociocultural theory of learning and they have been nuanced and developed in the works of Hasan (2005) and Wertsch (2007). These are **metacognitive mediation** which relate to learners’ attainment of semiotic tools for managing their emotional astuteness and behaviour in relation to the demands of the situation and in a manner that is socially tolerable. **Cognitive mediation** denotes mental processes that take place because of presentation of a stimulus/ cognitive tools necessary for solving subject-domain problems (Karpov & Haywood, 1998).

In all forms of learning that emerge in or via social interaction in Zone(s) of Proximal Development, language has been viewed as an essential element for mediating learning. Actually, it is the presence of language⁷ or speech in humans that allows them to develop higher mental functions (Vygotsky, 1978). Concept formation, as it is understood in sociocultural theory, emerges as a result of the child’s ability to make use of words or other signs (here in Afrophilia reflexive artefacts) in a specific instrumental function (Kozulin, 2004). As an example, through the medium of language learners are capable of internalising forms of mediation provided in sociohistorically situated contexts (Daniels, 2001). Thus, literacy acquisition as a cultural competency has the capacity to influence the way in which children use words and other cultural tools available to them. In Vygotsky’s elucidation language, acquisition is pivotal in ensuring intellectual development in children as it is the conduit through which they can communicate with other members of their society (Karpov & Haywood, 1998). Thus, language as a tool exerts an influence on the individual learner as it

⁷ My use of ‘language’ in this chapter also includes sign language as it also has its own grammar and lexicon and is recognised among other formal languages in Zimbabwe.

builds bridges between the previously unknown activities and the previously unknown ways of understanding phenomena in the world and the learner.

3.2.3 The importance of cooperation

Active participation especially in communities of inquiry that foreground the ZPD builds cooperation since it is axiomatic that the learner and the more capable other need to work together in order for the learner to reach his/her target (Holzman, 2017). Zaretskii (2016) and Meadows (2018) agree that even those fundamental skills such as observation and imitation that are a necessary condition for child development develop well under the nurturing of social interaction. In philosophy for children as elucidated in the P4CAfrophia booklet (Appendix, B), the teacher/ facilitator is recognised as a co-inquirer their the community of inquiry process is regarded as the “co-creative activity” (Zaretskii, 2016, p. 156) of the whole group or classroom. In Vygotskian terms, learning related development is a manifestation of the internalisation of collaborative action. As an example, through cooperation with the more capable other the learner builds confidence and begin to understand the role of the knowledgable other and also the tasks they do autonomously. Moreover, learners exposed to cooperation within the ZPD are likely to develop “mutually generative bonds with others” (Wall, 2010, p. 152). Here, as the generative bonds are developed, the success or failure of the community of inquiry within the sociocultural theory context is rooted in the expansion or shrinkage of ‘generativity’⁸(Wall, 2010). In this case, the more participants begin to appreciate the pluriversal nature of the community and embrace ‘diversity in reason’

⁸ According to Wall (2010) who interpreted generativity in terms of its ethical sense, the term entails developing worlds of meaning with others. Here, generativity includes making use of Afrophia reflexive artefacts as cultural-historical tools for reflecting one’s life-world. Moreover, generativity has mutual connections with the principle of intergenerational learning (papers 5 & 6) which mirrors how local heritage knowledges (in the study area) are transferred from one generation to another. This reflects how adults and children form learning communities that are dynamic and reflective of each member’s responsibilities. As an example, in this ‘intergenerational-generativity’, adults play an essential role in broadening the children’s capacity to develop worlds of meaning with others and children in turn are responsible for expanding this ‘intergenerational-generativity’ toward family members, schoolmates and others in the entire society (cf papers 2 and 5). Henceforth, generativity foregrounds the creative experience of “growing in other-responsiveness” (Wall, 2010, p. 146) throughout the shifting constellations of time spaces.

(Appendix A, paper 1), the more the heritage knowledges they work with can potentially find meaning and its relevance to their life-world, and enhance their higher order knowledges and language skills (see Appendix A, papers 2, 4, 5 and 6).

3.2.4 The importance of imitation

Imitation is an essential creative social activity in the conception of the Zone of Proximal Development (Silalahi, 2019). By imitation I am not suggesting aimless/ mindless replication actions but rather an understanding of the fundamental connections within a problem that are to be resolved (Kozulin, 2002). Much of our learning as human beings is done through imitation. For example, the ability to learn words is through imitating their sounds like we do in phonic reading, based on my observation as a primary school teacher for more than a decade.

Humans have a distinctive advantage of language and speech therefore they can imitate almost anything situated within the proximity in their Zone of Proximal Development (Holzman, 2017). It is our ability to imitate as human beings that forms a strong foundation for a subjective ZPD. Speech is essential as it is the path through which humans can imitate or access aspects such as ideas that cannot be observed while abstracted. The learner's imitative capacity has its own limitations which can make it difficult for children to solve any problem presented to them even with scaffolding from the more capable other. For example, if something is beyond the learner's ZPD, then they cannot effectively imitate it.

Evident here is the idea that imitation is possible only to the extent and in those practices in which it is supplemented by understanding: "the child is most successful in solving problems that are closer to those solved independently; then the difficulties grow until, at a certain level of complexity, the child fails, whatever assistance is provided" (Vygotsky, 1986, p. 187). In practice, the more knowledgeable other tactically shifts responsibility and creates space for the learner to be more responsible and gain autonomy in solving the problem.

3.2.5 The importance of target

In conceptualising the Zone of Proximal Development (see Appendix A, papers 2 and 3), I advance the point that “the zone of proximal development could be perceived as a metaphor of a moving target” (paper 3, p. 4). Thus, the teacher/ more knowledgeable other should teach content or a skill that is ‘below’ the learners’ ZPD but must always aim at stretching the potentiality of learners. Here, the more knowledgeable other presents a challenge that is a little beyond the learner’s zone of proximal development but something not too far from the actual development level of the learner. Thus,

psychologist [/the more knowledgeable other in community of inquiry] must not limit his [or her] analysis to functions that have matured. He [or she] must consider those that are in the process of maturing. If he [or she] is to fully evaluate the state of the child’s development, the psychologist [more knowledgeable other] must consider not only the actual level of development but the zone of proximal development. (Holzman, 2018 p. 27)

3.2.6 The importance of crisis/conflict

According to Silalahi (2019), is it the presence of a crisis that signifies development in human beings. In most cases, in any community there are bound to be differences in opinion, and these often result in a crisis/ conflict (Rogoff, Turkans, & Bartlett, 2001). Likewise, as the object of the activity shifts to focus on the child’s next level of development, new and sophisticated competences are expected of the child and hence a crisis emerges. In practice, it is apparent that humans try to manage crisis so that they learn something from an encounter with a crisis rather than getting muddled by the crisis (Rogoff et al., 2001). Ordinarily, crises act as stimuli for the child/learner’s next activity – they are a catalyst for personal transformation. This is relevant as the Afrophilia reflexive artefacts that we used in the study were aimed at connecting home and school, thereby enhancing learning for personal and curriculum transformation. The changes and differences in opinion in selecting the artefacts were themselves a call for development of new competences and roles for every participant including learners. Silalahi (2019) used the concept of ‘context’ to stress the point that one’s exposure to the social life, culture and the environment determine one’s Zone of Proximal Development as the crisis within different contexts is also different. Salalahi (2019) proposed that one of the reasons why people of the same age have different Zones of Proximal Development is context and they will respond differently to different kinds of crisis.

3.3 SOCIOCULTURAL LEARNING INFLUENCE IN RESONANCE TO COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY

A deepened understanding of the six aspects presented above influences the role one would take when assisting learners to attain their Zones of Proximal Development. For the learners themselves, a step in learning that foregrounds these aspects may result in the expansion of the limitations of the zones of their actual and proximal development (Zaretskii, 2016). Furthermore, the knowledge of the ZPD is important in education as it helps in the assessment of the child. Lantolf (2002) and Wertsch (1985) concurred that assessment of the child's intellectual abilities was one of the reasons why Vygotsky formulated the concept of the Zone of Proximal Development. Vygotsky was dissatisfied with the shallowness of the techniques of testing that he said were only capable of determining the child's actual zone or level of development instead of measuring the learner's level of potential capabilities (Wertsch, 1985). As a result Vygotsky explored three theoretical frontiers.

1. The evolutionary and historical frontier (change and evolution of the child and individual, of the species, of cultures).
2. The identity frontier (the view of the functional system as shared, of functions as socially distributed).
3. The ecological frontier between the internal and external, the mental and the material, the organism and the medium. (Adapted from Pablo & Álvarez, 2007, p. 276)

Sociocultural theorists who work from Vygotsky's foundational thesis e.g. Rogoff (1992) and Wertsch (1993) regard humans as "creatures who have a unique capacity for communication and whose lives are normally led within groups, communities and societies based on shared ways of using language, ways of thinking, social practices and tools for getting things done" (Mercer & Littleton, 2007, p. 4). With regard to children's development of reasoning, Vygotsky believed that children could be exposed to forms of reasoning (higher mental functions) that are not yet available to them as individuals through verbal participation in social groups (Sprod, 2001). Underlying this belief was the conviction that by engaging in these social groups, children are capable of putting to use the newly acquired forms of reason. Lipman elucidated the sociocultural viewpoints that underlies the community of inquiry approach:

A community of inquiry attempts to follow the inquiry where it leads rather than being penned in by the boundary lines of existing disciplines. A dialogue that tries to conform to logic, it moves forward like a boat tacking into the wind, but in the process its progress comes to resemble that of thinking itself. Consequently, when this process is internalized or introjected by the participants, they come to think in moves that resemble its procedures. They come to think as the process thinks.

Here Lipman made clear the sociocultural idea of internalisation of social thinking or ‘socially mediated practices’ which, according to Sprod (2001), opens space for learners “to engage reflexively with others and with issues” (ibid., p.79). Thus, following Lipman (2003) and Sprod (2001), one may surmise that reflexiveness is essentially a condition embodied within social process (Mead, 1934/ 1962). Ordinarily, participation in community of inquiry processes tend toward strengthening intersubjective interdependence of learners, thereby deepening in them capabilities of autonomy since a hybrid space for multi-layering and collaboration exists within the approach. Thus, a community of inquiry approach within the sociocultural theory framing affords a context of shared interaction in which other participants are useful as mediators of meaning (Vygotsky, 1978), which later become internalised by individual learners as part of their “critical independent development achievement” (Helou & Newsome, 2018, p. 348).

Vygotsky made reference to egocentric speech which he believed has strong connections with children’s social speech and is often utilised when the child encounters problems which they can only solve with help from a more competent other (Juuso, 2007). Here the child begins to use language as a tool for problem-solving via the internalisation of socialised speech that was previously directed at the more competent other. Gradually the child will learn to make the most of the intrapersonal function of language which allows them to organise their activities according to social forms of behaviour (Vygotsky, 1978). Influencing the learner’s capability to apply a social attitude to him or herself happens to be one of the achievements of the community of inquiry as this later function as an object of critical reflexive thinking skills development (Juuso, 2007). In line with this, it could be reasoned that dialogue within a community of inquiry approach supports development of “culturally elaborated organization of the learners’ behaviour” (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 39).

The fact that epistemology-based inquiry is a normative practice for sociocultural learning theory and the associated community of inquiry pedagogical approach is evident in this discussion. Philosophy for Children scholars working with the community of inquiry approach explored how the pedagogy nurtures the “development of epistemically virtuous agents” (Gregory, Haynes, & Murrells, 2017, p. 101). This is evidenced in the pragmatist leaning of Philosophy for Children which specifies that meaningful learning has an antecedent towards inquiry-based pedagogy. In sociocultural theory Vygotsky provided a broad conceptual framework to guide an inquiry-based pedagogy.

3.4 COHERENCE IN PRINCIPLES OF LEARNING AS A COMMUNITY: THE SOCIOCULTURAL PERSPECTIVE

The main purpose for developing the P4C-Afrophia teachers resource pack (Appendix B) was to develop and make known (to the wider Zimbabwean community of educators) the learning principles in the sociocultural approach to Philosophy for Children formative intervention that was in focus in this study. What we [together with the participants] emphasised in our practice of Philosophy for Children within Afrophia contexts were the “principles of learning collaboratively” (Glăveanu, 2011, p. 416). As Vygotsky had observed, “development based on collaboration and imitation is the source of the specifically human characteristics of consciousness that develop in the child” (Vygotsky, 1987, p. 210). Here, I also borrowed from pragmatist philosophers such as William James, Charles Sanders Peirce, George Herbert Mead, and John Dewey for pragmatism is considered the forerunner of Philosophy for Children and has some resemblance with Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory (Edwards, 2007). As an example, the concept ‘community of inquiry’ which offers Philosophy for Children a unique feature has its roots in the philosophy of pragmatism dating back to Charles Sanders Peirce who is credited as the originator of its use (see Ndofirepi, 2013) and it also foregrounds the notion of collaborative problem-solving which is so dominant in Vygotsky’s work, but does not focus on the learning process.

It is well known that Lipman, founder of the Philosophy for Children programme, was impressed with Dewey’s practicality and Mead (another pragmatist philosopher) offered him insight on the relationship between thinking and the sociocultural context (Ndofirepi, 2013). It was through this acquaintance with Mead’s work especially the, ‘sociogenetic perspective’ concept and the book *Mind, Self and Society* of Vygotsky [1934] that Lipman’s intellectual

thought also become underpinned by the work of Lev Vygotsky as he too analysed aspects of the social development of self (Lipman & Pizzurro, 2001). The developmental continuum that binds Mead and Vygotsky's ideas makes their work most applicable when discussing the agency of the self in Philosophy for Children. Both Vygotsky and Mead believe that the child is a social being whose action is directed to interaction with adults and others. This influences why the Philosophy for Children programme, unlike sociocultural theory, places learning processes under the aegis of the child's own activity. Here, I make special reference to Vygotsky's realist position which acknowledges the social nature of knowledge construction and its connection to Charles Sanders Peirce's concept of "the mind-forming powers of the social" (Edwards, 2007, p. 82) from which a need for a logical inquiry arises.

A fascinating observation about the principles inherent in sociocultural theory of learning and the Philosophy for Children- community of inquiry approach is that they present an opportunity for different epistemologies and pedagogies that foreground learner agency. Such capacity did not exist in Zimbabwe a few years ago. Although Zimbabwe has always had high literacy levels, classroom interaction has also always been asymmetrical with the teacher being the only actor and bearer of knowledge in the classroom (see Appendix A, paper 3). With the sociocultural approach to Philosophy for Children not only is the learning context changed with learners becoming more active, but parents also occupy a special place in selection of the content of a generative curriculum (see Appendix A, papers 2, 3, and 6 and Appendix B). This multi-actor involvement situates learning in contexts relevant to the learners. In this regard, "emphasis is upon pedagogic contexts in which the practice is mediated by the students rather than mediated by the demands of the teacher" (Daniels, 2001, p. xviii).

I am cognisant of the fact that one would find these principles associated with pedagogical approaches that are prominent in the Zimbabwean updated curriculum framework (MoPSE, 2014) and in other parts of the world (Rogoff et al., 2001; MoPSE, 2014). The principles include but are not limited to: reflexive learner agency, situated learning, learning as shared understanding, intergenerational-generativity learning (for a nuanced review of the principles see Appendix A, papers 2, 6 and 7).

Vygotsky stated that there is a dialectical unity between sign use (speech) and practical thinking during development (Vygotsky, 1978) but the effectiveness of this integration especially when using foreign-speech (language) and when using speech that is deep-rooted in his/her life-world is virtually unexplored in Vygotsky's work. Evidently, Vygotsky's work is limited to a very broad spectrum on use of language and its dialectical relation to development of higher psychological functions but did not go beyond asking whose language should one converse in, or specifically whose language should be the language of instruction. It is now known that colonial events in human history have subjected other humans to use of a language foreign to their life-worlds and this had drastic effects on their ontological as well as epistemological development (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020; wa Thiongo, 2009).

The next section illustrates how learners could potentially learn within the context of culture and home language. Here I traverse two dominant readings of Vygotsky: one which foregrounds the politics of culture and the other with a stress on "learning, development and the role of language in thinking" (Daniels, 2001, p. 4). I emphasise learner agency and development of critical reflexive thinking within an Afrophilic context, a move that draws to account the role of language in thinking and the politics of culture. Minimum reference is made to power and conflict in my discussion of culture as I have already illustrated in my publication that cultural hegemony as employed during the British imperial rule via cultural technologies of domination was responsible for producing social abjection (Appendix A, paper 1). With this in mind, the next section focuses on practices and agency of human actors in relation to learning.

3.5 SOCIOCULTURAL LEARNING THEORY, COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY AND THE OPPORTUNITY TO LEARN WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF CULTURE ⁹ AND HOME LANGUAGE¹⁰

This section was inspired by my thinking of the learners whom I worked with in this study-who did not speak the language of the school and considering how they could learn within the context of their culture and home language and what this might mean for a heritage-based curriculum. Here my search was more focused on creating a liberating pedagogic space within which the mechanisms of institutional disadvantages are reduced (Daniels, 2001). Moreover, it is well known that philosophy has the potential to “contribute to expanding the important conversations of societies and cultures” (Eze, 2008, p.117). For this reason, I considered the possibility that Philosophy for Children within the context of culture and home language, if supported, could be significant in postcolonial Zimbabwean education. I was also cognisant of Vygotsky’s assertion that as individuals our developmental changes are deep-seated in society and culture (Vygotsky, 1978). The worst consequences of this endeavour would be the temptation in education, as explained earlier (Appendix A, paper 1), to confuse this need for epistemological relevance with doxa less prone to criticism or taking a position that privileges the ideological politicisation of the curriculum.

In contemplating this kind of learning I followed Vygotsky’s concept of culture and Barbara Rogoff’s assertion that it is ideal to look at culture “in terms of cultural practices that show both stabilities and changes across generations” (Glăveanu, 2011, p. 410). Here, it seems

⁹ Culture is an elusive, deeply bounded and contentious concept which includes what people do and what they believe. In this study, the cultural history of practice of the Sebakwe people is fundamental as I consider the role of socio-historical factors in education to initiate a generative curriculum transformation within the area.

¹⁰ In this section I regard home language to be the language that learners use for their regular communication at home [in the context of my study, the languages are Shona, Ndebele, and Tonga] which is not the same as the formal language [English] which they encounter in school. In Vygotskian speak, home language constitutes “the linguistic tools we inherit from our culture” (Veer, 1996, p. 251). It must be understood here that, though the Zimbabwean government has officially included indigenous languages (home language) as formal languages, learners particularly starting at grade 3 have only 3 hours 30 minutes allocated time to the home language compared to English which constitutes most of the learning time. Furthermore, language is of special interest to me as Basil Bernstein reasoned that “language and discourse enjoy a hegemony in theoretical and applied fields” (Daniels, 2001, p. xiii) and in terms of a community of inquiry, I also paid attention to how language is used to shape and influence the direction of the inquiry. I also wanted to explore how this ‘hegemony’ promotes or prevents a culture of learning in schools (see paper 4).

Rogoff was inspired by Vygotsky's observation that human nature is not fixed but arises out of changing social conditions that it in turn produces. In Vygotsky's dialectical materialism he made clear a methodological assumption that all phenomena are premeditated as a process in motion and in change (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky believed that humans and their social relationships, like all phenomena, are constantly in motion and undergoing change and development; thus, his proposal that the only appropriate approach to studying higher mental abilities was historical (Lantolf, 2000). As a result, culture can be regarded as modern history. Rogoff (2003) offered insightful orienting concepts for understanding cultural processes that I have summarised in the diagram below.

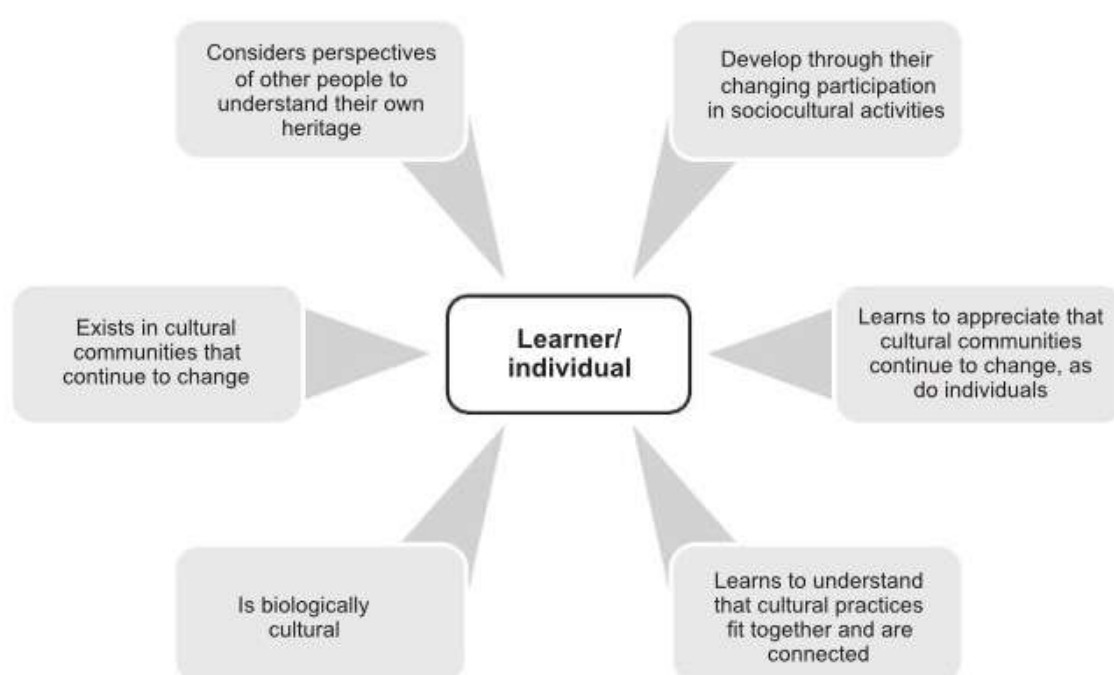


Figure 3.2: Orienting concepts for understanding cultural processes as summarised from Rogoff (2003)

I found Rogoff's idea and the orienting concepts represented in the diagram above fundamental in my study as they have a profound influence on determination of pedagogical approaches and the way learners participate in classroom interaction. Furthermore, learners who learn within the context of their culture and home language "have many opportunities to learn by observing and contributing in real ways" (Glăveanu, 2011, p. 410). The general assumption here is that when learners utilise their home language, they effectively build up the ability to listen intently and communicate successfully. Consequently, in my study language was treated as a tool to help and advance critical reflexive thinking, so the role of the teacher was to stimulate children to reflect and explain utilising their home language

(Sprod, 2001). Sprod (2001), a Philosophy for Children researcher who also worked with sociocultural theory observed that language and thought are intimately intertwined; thus, the assertion that language facilitates the subsequent internalisation of reasoned dialogical interaction as it functions as the basis for the development of reasoning. This concurs with Aleksandr Potebnya's point that "language or articulate speech not only serves as a means of communication but shapes our whole way of thinking" (Veer, 1996, p. 248).

The practice of Philosophy for Children as exemplified earlier has sturdy connections with the Vygotskian Zone of Proximal Development which typically gives attention to culture and language. Here I also regard Dewey's assertion that philosophy (herein Philosophy for Children) as "a mode of cultural critical action, focusing on ways in which human beings can overcome obstacles and settle problematic situations" (Juuso, 2007, p. 80) is very important. By actively participating in philosophical discussions during the community of inquiry process in this study, learners would most likely appropriate the Afrophilia cultural heritage and the ways of making sense of their own experiences as these are encoded in the language of interaction (Wells, 2004). Influencing this conception of learning within the context of culture and language is the belief that "people develop as participants in cultural communities" (Rogoff, 2003, p. 3). In this case human development is "mediated not by heredity" but by "transfer of information through non-genetic channels from one generation to the next" (Bauman, 1999, p.126). The latent sentiment emerging from both Rogoff (2003) and Bauman (1999) is that much of human learning is premised on how human development takes place within the context of culture and in interaction with other members of the society. Here I position culture as a potent heritage which plays an important role of preparing children to use language (Rogoff, 2003). Learning within the context of culture and home language opens space for collective participation which foregrounds Vygotsky's concept of discursive thinking and peer scaffolding within the Philosophy for Children's community of inquiry approach.

The social interaction and mutual connection that takes place during the community of inquiry engagement within cultural context allows for the provision of guidance, mutual support and the drive for cognitive development (Helou & Newsome, 2018). It additionally brings to mind a common phenomenon in the teaching world that there is a duality of action as in explaining a concept to another, one also explains it to him/herself. Here one can consider

Vygotsky's explanation that words are 'reversible stimuli'[reversible reflexes], that is as one speaks, the one will undoubtedly hear one's own words (Vygotsky, 1978). Put distinctively, the verbally expressed word which Vygotsky sees as a reflex is returned to the speaker and later acts as stimulus for conscious reflection.

In the context of my study, this resonates with an important remark that was made by Barbara Rogoff that "as individuals, we contribute to our cultural communities at the same time that our cultural communities contribute to our development" (2003). In this case learners get a better understanding of themselves when they have attempted to clarify their words in conversation with the social other. Furthermore, learners begin to assimilate the heritage knowledges embedded in their environment through actively taking part in social activities and interaction with others mediated by the use of semiotic tools (Vygotsky, 1986). In this regard, language is not only the medium for communication but is also the secure fulcrum of all forms of learning [formal or non-formal learning], with culture being foregrounded as the primary determinant of knowledge acquisition (Kurt, 2020).

One point I have emphasised has been advanced by Ndofirepi (2013) who stated that philosophy begins in a cultural milieu; therefore, to practice Philosophy for Children, one begins with the child's lifeworld or cultural-history of practice. Ndofirepi (2013) concluded his study by arguing that doing Philosophy with Children in schools in Africa contributes to the interpretation of the cultural, economic and circumstances of the African situation. This opens a hybrid space for future studies to situate the practice of Philosophy for Children within the learner's cultural context, as I have done in this study.

3.6 CONCLUSION

Emerging insights from the literature that was reviewed point toward the conclusion that as children participate in an activity with support from a more capable other, they develop higher order thinking skills. Thus, to create space for the learners' developmental processes that are present in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), pedagogical initiatives should focus more on the future than remain steeped in the past. In this way, curriculum planners should take note of the changing constellations of culture and agency of human actors. To work with the Zone of Proximal Development between the teacher and learners, the teaching material (Afrophilia reflective artefacts) should be at a level or in a form that is significant to

the learner's life-world but should still advance their current levels of development via encounters with higher order thinking skills and expansive learning possibilities. Thus, to attain significance the Afrophilia reflective artefacts that are utilised in the study were borrowed from culture. A need to reposition indigenous languages as medium of instruction was made explicit. Influencing this call for giving value to the role of indigenous languages in shaping 'experiences of reason' (Eze, 2008), learners' understanding of themselves as meaning-making agents and curriculum transformation were lessons from past degradations particularly from Africa's recent past, the epoch of imperial colonial rule.

This chapter is a continuation of the literature discussions covered in articles prepared for publication presented in Appendix A. More reflection on literature on sociocultural theory can be found in the draft Teachers Resource Booklet attached at the back of the thesis as Appendix B. In the next chapter, which is a continuation of the extended literature review, I focus on postcolonial and decolonial theory utilised in this study.

CHAPTER FOUR

EXTENDED PERSPECTIVES ON THE LITERATURE: POSTCOLONIAL AND DECOLONIALITY THEORY

The old man died beneath the wheels of the twentieth century. There was nothing left but stains, bloodstains, and fragments of flesh ... And the same thing is happening to my generation. (Dambudzo Marechera, n.d retrieved June 16, 2020: <https://www.azquotes.com/author/36339-DambudzoMarechera>)

4.0 POSTCOLONIAL AND DECOLONIALITY THEORY

The focus in this chapter is on contextualising the postcolonial and decolonial theory that I worked with in the study. Both postcolonialism and decoloniality informed the methodology chapter of my research as well as my overall rethinking of education and learning, not only from the point of view of British imperial hegemony, but also from the perspective of the experiences of those subjected to “cultural technologies of domination” (Terreblanche, 2014; Appendix A, paper 1). Furthermore, concepts from the theories served as a critical mirror within which my study questioned and examined the continuity of imperial cultural hegemony (Terreblanche, 2014) in curriculum and pedagogy, the superficial interpretation of *unhu/ubuntu* philosophy of education (see Appendix A, paper 1) and the production of social abjection through the centring of Christocentric and Eurocentric world views in the Zimbabwean education system. These concepts have caused a decontextual impasse in education – with curricula and pedagogy being theoretically and practically disconnected from the life-worlds of African children (CIET, 1999; Author, 2018; Appendix A, paper 1).

For conceptual clarification I juxtapose postcolonialism and decoloniality with the intention of uncovering their lines of convergence and divergence. This helps to explicate positionality and usage of the terms that surface from the discussion in this chapter such as colonial education, social abjection, coloniality, Other, identity, pluriversality, epistemic disobedience, remembering and recentring, and decolonial futures. From this discussion of postcolonialism and decoloniality emerges a clearer perspective on each of the concepts – their main definitions, terms, and key tenets and how they contribute to shaping the

decolonisation meaning that infuses the thesis. A clearer understanding of these concepts helps to differentiate the limitations and potentials of transformation in this study.

4.1 JUXTAPOSING DECOLONIALITY AND POSTCOLONIALISM- A CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2018), scholars believe postcolonial theory and decolonial theory are interlinked, but there are differences in the nature and productivity of the linkages. In exploring this, I asked one decolonial scholar who had written a book on decoloniality thinking (Dey, 2018): “In your view what is the difference or is there any difference between postcolonial theory and decoloniality?” and the following is an extract from his reply:

Hello John, thank you for asking this question, you see to understand the difference in the frameworks we have to remember one thing that postcolonial theory and decolonial or decoloniality as you ask cannot be differentiated completely, they both converge and diverge from each other. Historically, if you trace the evolution of these two theoretical premises you may see that decolonial theory or the exercise of decoloniality emerged from the moment when colonisation started.

Any kind of colonisation, you can talk of European colonisation, Islamic colonisation, Hinducentric colonisation, any form of colonisation. For instance if you take European colonisation it started at least 500 years back, so you see it is the moment the resistance when the colonisers arrived in the islands ... if you talk about Christopher Columbus’ trip to the Americas or if you talk about any other Spanish or going towards Australia or Asia or in the Caribbean islands. On the one side they were received warmly by the natives but with the passage of time, the natives intelligently realised that the central intention of the European colonisers was to rip apart the African [colonised people] indigenous systems of knowledges and force-feed them with European patriarchal, heterosexual, whitecentric knowledge system all across the world. Then they started facing resistance, the European started facing resistance from the local natives, there has been ample of instances of warfare, cold-wars, local conflict etc. So this form of resistance is actually what we call decoloniality.

The resistance that comes as physical resistance, the resistance that comes as a metaphysical resistance – by metaphysical I am using the term not in the spiritual sense but in the sense of being beyond the physical. Institutional resistance that took place from the local gains, local lords, local medical healers and spiritual leaders and at every instance of life, this is decoloniality.

But postcoloniality is a very new phenomenon, historically it emerged as a theoretical premise only in the late 19th and early 20th century because it is, periodically after colonisation. When the nations started gaining so-called ‘independence’ (I have always kept the word ‘independence’ within quotations because many nations did not gain independence but were given independence by the colonisers). Postcoloniality started when nations started gaining ‘independence’. Historically this is the difference.

Now postcoloniality – identified with postcolonial ideologies is mostly about the dis-intangling from the frameworks and thought processes and the identities of the colonisers. The postcolonial did not change much of what was established by the colonisers. For instance, let us take an example of Spivak, personally I find Spivak problematic, why, though she asks about the subalternity, she tries to understand why the subaltern can’t speak, she criticises the West by ironically implementing the superior colonial master narratives – the quotations that she does, the references that she make are mostly those knowledge systems or frameworks emerge from the Eurocentric knowledge base. So that is problematic with postcolonial theory... it is a kind of superficial argument. There you see, you indulge yourself in forms of arguments where you critique the one to which you refer to.

That is where decolonial scholars strike a difference, for example if you look at the writing of Professor Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni, if you look at his writing you will see that he uses references from African scholars, African scholars or Afrocentric scholars. That is a form of decolonial practice where you dig into your own indigenous knowledge systems rather than hunting and gathering from the West, because if you see... several decolonial

scholars have argued that the West are hunters and gatherers, they hunted and gathered our knowledge which they copyrighted and are now selling it back to us which is highly problematic. Therefore decolonial scholars need to identify on a daily basis, for example, the places we visit, the kind of food we eat, the way we dress – each and every colonial space has to be identified and uprooted. The colonial knowledge systems that are entrenched in those colonial structures have to be identified and uprooted. That is what I call everyday decoloniality.... So basically you see everyday decoloniality is a form of resistance that has to be adopted. What is necessary is we identify the problem on an individualistic as well as a collective basis – because if we fail to identify these we won't be able to overcome the problems of postcoloniality. But what is happening now is that decoloniality is becoming a brand or buzzword people are not really concerned about the application of decoloniality; so they make a decoloniality tattoo, T-shirt, you draw a decoloniality picture, post a decoloniality poster on Facebook.

The fantasies of capitalism are affecting decoloniality as well and this is making decolonial scholars very concerned. ... If you read an article 'decolonisation is not a metaphor'... several scholars are talking and writing about it, decoloniality is just a project, it's not a course like writing an assignment, it's a consistent neverending resistance. You see across the world especially in Eurocentric spaces in Europe, they have decolonial summer schools, but you will see that they have huge registration fees and huge financial demands that most scholars from the Global South won't be able to afford.

On many occasions these summer schools are aimed at re-centring of the postcolony within the Eurocentric emancipated spaces. It is the former colonisers who are trying to tell the Blacks how they should decolonise. So you see decoloniality is becoming problematic day by day because it is becoming a buzzword. But what I wanted you to see is that decoloniality and postcoloniality both converge and diverge from each other, they both compliment each other, as well as critique each other. It's a very ambivalent space or it's a very ambivalent positionality. It becomes so for all of us as

we engage with the arguments of decoloniality and postcoloniality. Kindly let me know if it is making sense. (Dey, 21 January 2021)

As illuminated in the narrative above, though the concepts postcolonialism and decoloniality have emerged within the same historiography of Western empire building/ colonialism, there are dissimilarities that need to be uncovered when working with the concepts, especially in educational research. On the surface, the postcolonial and decolonial critique formally addresses issues that aim to defy the insularity of Eurocentric narratives associated with the colonial tradition (Bhambra, 2014). However, a depth analysis of these concepts commonly categorised under the same stream of critique of modernity (Mignolo, 2011) reveals lines of divergence. For example, a prominent decolonial theorist advanced that “although both projects drink from the same fountain they are grounded in a different genealogy of thoughts and different existential categories” (Mignolo, 2011, p. xxiii). Here, decoloniality thinking departs from postcolonial theory as it is electrified from its inception by a need to explore the geo-historical and bio-graphical genealogies of thoughts. Similarly, Walker (2004) theorises that postcolonialism should not be regarded as a concept that assumes the same possibilities as decolonisation, thus “postcolonialism is not the same as decolonisation” (ibid., p.36). This chapter focuses on explicating the lines of resemblance and divergence inherent in the concepts and illuminates the way I applied each of the concepts in this project.

The decolonisation countenance in both postcolonialism and decoloniality surfaced from the proceedings of the Bandung Conference (1955) and the Conference of the Non-Aligned Countries that took place in Belgrade in 1961 (Mignolo, 2011). However, this does not warrant a given objective position on the resemblance of the concepts as one (postcolonialism) is in actual fact a “human existential situation” (Tlostanova, 2019, p. 165), while the other (decoloniality) happens to be an option. According to Masuku (2018), decoloniality surfaced as a radical progression of postcolonial thought. To reinforce her argument, Masuku (2018) used a metaphor that illustrates decoloniality as “a grape within a bunch of grapes called Postcolonial Theory” (ibid., 2018, p. 78). In this sense, basing on sentiments by Masuku (2018), decoloniality appears to be an ‘ad populum’ as it has gained popularity in the present times without deepened and robust analysis. However, this is not the case, for the two concepts are rather ‘complementary trajectories’ (Mignolo, 2007, p. xxvi) anchored in a different genealogy of thought but with comparable aims of social transformation. Mignolo (2007) pointed out that to subsume decoloniality thinking into

postcolonial theory is a feature of neo-liberal politics built on a need to consolidate and eliminate options. In my study, I have opted to work with these two compatible concepts as they share similar aims though approaching them from different genealogies of thought. Decoloniality thinking dates to the sixteenth century and aims to recast the muddled and tumultuous experiences of the coloniality of power couched within the rhetoric of modernity and move towards decolonial futures (Mignolo, 2007). Consequently, Mignolo proposed during the formative stages of the concept (the epoch of slavery) that transformation into decolonial futures should emerge out of a recognition of 'human sovereignty'. In this case focus in decolonial theory and praxis should be on establishing institutions that will observe human sovereignty as a basic principle (Mignolo, 2007). This is where my study offers strong connections with decoloniality theory as it is an attempt to reorder the Zimbabwean education set-up in such a way that the social abjection and exclusions it produces can be restructured to the principle of human sovereignty.

I am certainly not the first promoter of this commitment to human sovereignty in education for this quest for equality or human sovereignty in education runs through John Dewey's work, Paulo Freire's work and Noam Chomsky's work, to name a few. Immediate examples of Dewey, Freire, and Chomsky's works are 'Democracy and education: A introduction to philosophy of education' (Dewey, 1944), 'Pedagogy of the oppressed' (Freire, 1970) and 'Chomsky on MisEducation' (Chomsky, 2000). On the African continent people like Juvenal Antonio da Costa Cabral (1889 - 1951) whose work on anti-colonialism and Africanity influenced his son Amilcar Lopes Cabral (1924 – 1973), Zera Yacob (1599- 1692) of Ethiopia, and Valentin-Yves Mudimbe (1941-) of the Congo, to name a few, are on the list of promoters of human sovereignty.

In this sense, there is a significant deviation between decoloniality and postcolonial thinking. On the one hand, Walker (2004) has described how postcolonial theory incorporates and replicates different cultures and cultural trends, as a result of its influence and because of the influence of colonialism during the historical process. Decoloniality, on the other hand, anticipates the unveiling of the hidden side of modernity and of the modern world system (Mignolo, 2007). Put modestly, decoloniality is not a quest for alternative modernities; rather it strives for alternatives to modernity which is why decolonial scholars emphasis delinking from coloniality (McConaghy, 2000; Quijano, 2007; Mignolo, 2011). The vantage point in delinking from coloniality is that instead of building postmodern alternatives/ options such as

the postcolonial option, there is room in decoloniality to build transmodern futures (Walsh, 2018). In the next section, I discuss postcolonial theory further and then return to decolonial theory which features more strongly in this thesis.

4.2 POSTCOLONIAL THEORY– DEFINITION AND MAIN PERSPECTIVES

The definition(s) that I offer in this section are not comprehensive, for postcolonial theory is elusive and there are multiple understandings of its meaning. According to Paul Tiyambe Zeleza, “postcolonialism is a vexed theoretical term” and due to its interdisciplinary nature, “the term has become so diffuse and heterogeneous that it defies definition as to whether it refers primarily to texts and discursive practices, the construction of subjectivities and identities, or concrete historical processes” (Zeleza, 2006, p. 91). My interest is in examining the theory’s sufficiency and inadequacies in doing educational research. Drawing on Slemon’s (2003) assertion that postcolonialism could be applied in various fields of study, it seemed appropriate to consider its main principles for educational research. Most often, postcolonial theory is framed as a critique of totalising narratives of Western historicism and thought systems. Recent research indicates the applicability of the theory in diverse situations and fields of study especially in pursuit of alternative ways of thinking and praxis. For example, Steinberg (2007) positioned postcolonial theory in a peace studies programme with a focus on evaluating how the theory would contribute to peace building in the world. Parsons and Harding (2011) undertook a study to investigate existing networks between postcolonial theory and action research. Viewed this way, postcolonial theory could be regarded as an essential praxis of inquiry.

Diverse applications of the theory indicate that the theory is not rooted in/on a definite definition but has assorted delineations in accordance to its applicability in distinct fields of study. Thus, in this study I concur with Rivas (2005) who reasons that postcolonial theory or the concept of postcolonialism is “an interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary undertaking that has multiple analytic approaches ...” (ibid., p. 62). Moreover, researchers working with the theory use various analytical lenses depending on their locality. Dominant analytical lenses that could be utilised in postcolonialism include but are not limited to neo-Marxist critique of ideology, psychoanalysis, post-structuralism, feminism, or postmodernism (Rivas, 2005, p. 62). Also unique in the use of the concept postcolonialism/ postcolonial theory is how the positioning of the ‘post’ of postcolonial theory could imply different aspects or thinking for different scholars or researchers.

The hyphenated term is often used by those who approve of the thinking that the concept denotes a fractional/ temporal decolonisation process. This resonates well with Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin (1995) who, in their book with a collection of 86 articles from different scholars, subscribed to use of the term ‘post-colonial’ arguing that it is, ironically, representative of ‘the continuities of coloniality’ (Appendix A, paper 1 and 2) within a diverse range of societies. Sawant (2015) emphasised that since the colonised only managed to get political freedom at the expense of cultural and economic sovereignty, postcolonialism in this sense manifests as a continuation of colonialism despite intentions to the converse. This is in line with the thinking of African philosopher, Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze who, on commenting on postcolonial African philosophy, reasoned that:

the ‘post’ of ‘postcolonial’ African philosophy has to be written under erasure, or- more conveniently- in brackets. Scribing the ‘post’ of the postcolonial under erasure or brackets serves as signal and pointer to the (in many parts of Africa) unfulfilled dreams of the independence achievements of the 1960s. (Eze, 1997, p. 14)

Here, Eze (1997) argued that the (post)colonial which is not only hyphenated but also bracketed is a place of dangerous potency which due to its criticality must remain a project in double gesture. This contribution from an African philosopher bears significance as philosophy is one of the key fields (among other fields such as, ethnography, semiotics, and psychoanalysis) whose theories and methods are useful in postcolonial studies (Daniels, 2014). Moreover, Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze is one of the philosophers of African origin who has inspired my work (see Appendix A, papers 1, 2, 4 and 7) as I introduce an Afrophilic perspective into curriculum transformation.

Contrary to Eze and those who subscribe to use of the hyphenated term are those who aim to indicate in their work (through use of the term ‘postcolonialism’) the colonial aftermaths that emerged because of territorial occupation (Rivas, 2005; Masuku, 2018). For those who wish to differentiate the historical and material conditions from academic scholarship and how it appropriates the colonised people’s experiences, the most commonly used term is ‘postcoloniality’ (Masuku, 2018). However, divergent as the terms appear, they are anchored on colonialism as the main referent to violent conquest, application of cultural technologies of domination, and exploitation (Appendix A, paper 1). According to Rivas (2005), the focus of postcolonial theorising, even though it is a contested concept through its usage in various

fields of study, is on the aftermaths of colonialism. Ordinarily, the middle-space from which postcolonial theorists write seek to explore one of these referent points: ‘conquest, domination and exploitation’ in depth or all at the same time. Henceforth, in this research I focus on domination as I interrogate British imperial colonisers’ use of cultural technologies of domination in education via the colonial system of education. The general observation, as argued before, is that this system of education was inherited by the postcolonial Zimbabwean government and has implications for the quality of teaching and learning, especially in resettlement schools that are still under-resourced.

4.3.0 Locating a suitable understanding/ definition

Historical process demands that postcolonial theorists explore colonial facets from their inception, rather than focusing on the after-effects. This is because the seeds of the burden of absence, of exclusion and of compromise that shape today’s society as condition of coloniality were propagated during the colonial epoch (Appendix A, papers 1, 2, 5 and 7). Drawn from this complexity, postcolonial studies’ subsequent plaintive interrogation of conquest, domination and exploitation emerges (in social and educational thinking) as a pivotal source for the establishment of an alternative way of theorising a non-coercive rapport between the West and the excluded ‘Other’ and in spearheading new platforms for contextualising and countering earlier inequalities and cultural wretchedness that emanate from the colonial encounter (Andreotti, 2011).

Postcolonial theory in this study also reveals an important aspect of the history of colonial education in Zimbabwe. The central concepts in postcolonial theory, though originating from different parts of the world, lead us to understand that the colonial relationship was asymmetrical and affixed on power (Mignolo, 2007; Andreotti, 2011). It further uncovers the fact that the violent cultural intrusion that culminated with the advent of colonialism was not deliberately foisted on a passive non-participatory community (Eze, 2007). As an example, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak (1988) illuminated the subaltern voice and the reassessment of history, while Edward Said (1977) through his analysis process best known as orientalism, explored the question of projection, of seeking self-definition through what one is not, while Bhabha (1994) considered the transnational hybridity of cultures and people or processes of mimicry (Rivas, 2005; Masuku, 2018).

Here, it could be noticed that the focus in postcolonial theory is on evoking the colonial experience from the colonised people's perspective. Spivak, Said and Bhabha constitute the mantle of perspectives on postcolonial theory that has been utilised in research together with the thinking of other theorists such as Frantz Fanon, Kwame Anthony Appiah, Helen Tiffin, Raja Rao, and Dennis Lee. In the next section I take a closer look at perspectives on postcolonial theory and how they contributed to shaping my study. Perspectives on postcolonial theory, especially from an educational point of view, were of critical importance in my study as I focused on creating a postcolonial Afrophilic sensitive learning environment (Barongo-Muweke, 2016) in which a culture of learning was supported via fostering development of critical reflexive thinking in learners and exploitation of learning practices that are rooted in the learner's life-world.

4.3.1 Perspectives on postcolonial theory

To better understand perspectives on postcolonial theory and how they contribute to shaping the thinking in this study, it is important to note that in the 1890s Britain extended her empire into Zimbabwe and aggressively established an imperial British culture together with its institutions and norms (Appendix A, paper 1). Consequently, Zimbabwe, like many formerly colonised countries, is shaped by an account of convoluted power relations and this has a bearing on the existing education system. The postcolonial age in Zimbabwe was well notarised in 1980 after years of protracted struggle against the Empire. According to Bertens (2007, p. 200), "in the course of 1980s, Commonwealth literary studies [Zimbabwe was then a member of the Commonwealth] become part of the then emerging and now vast field of literary, cultural, political and historical inquiry that we call postcolonial studies."

What is fascinating about postcolonial theory is its attempt to challenge the complexity of the colonial encounter and the disorientation that is adjunct to such an experience with the hope to "redefine, reformulate and reconstruct the colonised self" (Sawant, 2015, p. 2). This involves writing about the colonial experiences from the colonised's vantage point. Moreover, postcolonial theorists tend towards a polemic that foregrounds complexities within the discussion and the least decidable factors become the most thought-provoking and indispensable. The hybrid space of in-betweenness (Masuku, 2018) from which these postcolonial theorists (Spivak, Fanon, Bhabha and Said) position themselves seems not to be located in the marginal expanses, for their work emerges from a point of defiance.

Edward Said whom scholars position as the father of postcolonial theory, following his work on Orientalism, analysed Western literary texts from an enriched space of in-betweenness and posed serious challenges to questions of cultural representation between the West and the East (Masuku, 2018). Orientalism could be defined as “the project of studying, teaching, and writing – or simply producing knowledge – about the Orient” (Andreotti, 2011, p. 20). In Orientalism, Said (1977) utilised terms such as ‘Orient’, the ‘Other’ and ‘Occident’ (Daniels, 2014) to critique the cultural asymmetry and oppositional binaries constructed by the empire in which Western imperial culture is symbolised as superior while the Oriental/ the colonised’s culture is echoed as a middle-of-the-road culture (Barongo-Muweke, 2016). Here, the idea of the Orient has epistemological and ontological implications as it illuminates how knowledges of the West are packaged and disguised as neutral knowledges in order to inscribe and reproduce a colonially defined culture and identity on the ‘Other’ (Andreotti, 2011). Bertens (2007) reasoned that:

West and East form a binary opposition in which the two poles define each other, the inferiority that orientalism attributes to the East simultaneously serves to construct the West’s superiority. The sensuality, irrationality, primitiveness, and despotism of the East construct the West as rational, democratic, and progressive and so on. (p. 205)

This concurs with Fanon (1967) who, in his analysis of the colonisation of the mind, argued that the consciousness of the Orient/ colonised is bounded within a hierarchical view of the world. In this case, the coloniser/ occident’s life-world and culture is portrayed as the final benchmark for civilisation and development, forcing the Orient to reject his/her own cultural history of practice (Fanon, 1967). Evidently, Said and Fanon share similar views that the colonisers were successful in devaluing the culture of the ‘Orient’ and projecting the Other’s life-world as epistemically and ontologically inadequate. Considering this, Moore-Gilbert (1997) reasoned that in orientalist discourse, the ‘Orient’ is presented as being “voiceless, sensual, female, despotic, irrational and backward”, contrary to how the ‘Occident’ is projected as being “masculine, democratic, rational, moral, dynamic and progressive” (ibid., p. 39). Such discourses do not only offer socio-economic privileges to the Occident, but they are drivers of coloniality and social abjection.

The implication for this in educational context, as observed by Paulo Freire, who upon writing from an in-betweenness space of exile, advanced that such experiences lead to the abstraction of knowledges and practices that originate from the life experiences of the colonised (Freire, 1993). Amidst this context, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak was deeply concerned via her “Marxist and feminist-inflected deconstruction” (Zezeza, 2006, p. 92) whether or not there is potential within postcolonial societies to recover the previously silenced voice of the subaltern. What worried Spivak (1988) was how violently the subaltern voice had been marginalised and how inconsequential its recovery could be if situated “within power and subordinate asymmetries” (Barongo-Muweke, 2016, p. 43) as this had the capacity to keep the voices stemmed and isolated from theoretical legitimacy.

Marginalisation of the subaltern voice as remarked by Homi Bhabha has been a tactical approach by the colonisers for controlling the imagination of the colonised. Here, the coloniser applied the written text as the exclusive truth to conceal the experiences of the colonised (Ashcroft et al., 1995). Bhabha (1994) however reasoned that the suppression of the experiences of the colonised has an impact on the colonial authority as it renders it ambivalent. This is because in its endeavour to devalue and obscure the experiences of the colonised, it created an environment that was always a space of contestation and antagonism since the colonised did not willingly give away their identity.

4.3.2 African driven thoughts for postcolonial futures

Turning now to African driven postcolonial perspectives, we find evidence that they evolve around the thinking that Africa is not yet free, and that Africa has something unique to offer to the world as part of the African contribution to world civilisation (Hountondji, 2009; Eze, 1997). This line of thinking was reinforced by Robert Sobukwe who reasoned that “world civilisation will not be complete until the African has made his or her full contribution” (Sobukwe, 1949, p.10). Thus, the postcolonial current of thought in Africa is attentive to the thesis of the ‘emancipation of the mind’ but is also alive in appreciating the point that “unless one is capable both of glancing backward and of looking forward” (Mbembe, 2008, p. 8), one would never attain the desired emancipation. Similarly, thoughts for a postcolonial future in

Africa are acquainted with the reality that “Africa is not then, and never has been, a hermetic universe peopled by identical people with identical historical experiences” (Rathbone, 1981, p. 2). This aligns with current calls for development of “free and critical thinking on the subject of our present realities” (Hountondji, 1996, p. 172) anchored on an acknowledgment of the diversity of African cultures and traditions. What we see here is rather an uptake of Bhabha’s concepts of hybridity and in-betweenness and they influence development of identities that are not homogenous but pluriversal.

In this case, African driven thoughts for a postcolonial future would first aim to illuminate the violent torture chambers of colonial rule from within which the existing image of Africa and that of the West emerged. Put differently, it is in understanding the brutality for instance of British imperial rule in Zimbabwe that new forms of existence ‘for both the coloniser and the colonised’ attuned to a new world order committed to the values of human sovereignty materialise. Secondly, discourse on postcolonial futures invites people to critically engage with Africa and the outside world to understand the unlimited influence that African societies have on their former colonisers (Eze, 1997).

During colonial times Africa was deceitfully assimilated into the Western trajectory (Nkomo, 2011). This assimilation was done in ways that dehumanised Africans and their cultural history of practice was devalued and discarded as non-significant in world development discourse. Henceforth, setting the tone for postcolonial futures in Africa, anti-colonial campaigners challenged colonialism in all its facets (Nkomo, 2011). Prominent among the path breakers towards an ‘Afrophilic’ contemporary postcolonialism are Léopold Senghor, Aimé Césaire, Amílcar Lopes Cabral, Walter Rodney, Claude Ake, and Frantz Fanon who were successful in creating new identities and forms of thought to challenge colonialism. As an example, Léopold Senghor’s *négritude* movement was influential in pronouncing the uniqueness of African culture and its value to the world via its celebration of Blackness and black culture (Appiah, 1992).

As one of the path-breakers, Léopold Senghor attracted deep criticism from those who considered the *négritude* movement as a form of essentialism that reinforced the idea of race instead of negating it (Nkomo, 2011). However, despite the criticism the efforts made by the

movement are greatly appreciated by those who view it as an essential starting point in pushing for social change. Moreover, it has to be understood as Eze (2001) put it that “Négritude was a response to the Age of Enlightenment's discourses on man and reason” (ibid., p. 42). Unlike Léopold Senghor who focused on establishing a collective African identity, Aimé Césaire's interests were in bringing to light the drastic effects of European colonialism. According to Césaire, the Eurocentric pseudo-humanism in development discourse only functioned to dehumanise, and to objectify the ‘Other’ (Loomba, 2005). In light of this, Césaire was convinced that claims and forms of logic that were offered by the colonisers were “evidence of the naturalness of the imperialist colonisation of Africa” (Ahluwalia, 2001, p. 27).

The most extremist among the counter colonialist advocates I referenced above is Frantz Fanon whose work attracted the attention of those battling against the residuum of bigoted obliviousness to date. Fanon's writings position themselves as a counter-hegemonic opposition to colonial practices via his deep analysis of the subjugation of the colonised people (Nkomo, 2011). On the issue of language and culture, Frantz Fanon reasoned that, “to speak [*especially for the colonised*] means... above all is to assume a culture, to support the weight of a civilization” (Fanon, 1963, p. 17-18). Here Fanon, like Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o, argued that one cannot speak a particular language without taking aboard the culture and identity associated with that language. In *Black Skin, White Masks*, Frantz Fanon (1952), explained that:

Every colonized people – in other words, every people in whose soul an inferiority complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality – finds itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation; that is with the culture of the mother country. The colonized is elevated above his jungle status in proportion to his adoption of the mother country's cultural standards. He becomes whiter as he renounces his blackness, his jungle. (p. 18)

This is why there is so much resonance between contemporary postcolonial and decolonial thinkers and Frantz Fanon's work. As an example, his use of the terms ‘containment’ and ‘negation’ in analysing colonial hegemony in colonised communities was adopted by Amílcar Cabral and Walter Rodney in their separate analysis of the negation of history

(Sharawy, 2003). Concomitantly, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o posited that people often lose the tools for self-definition if they get stripped of their culture (wa Thiong'o, 2009).

It is evident that the first generation of postcolonial thinkers initiated a multifaceted movement against a manipulated and limiting modernisation. The current generation should foreground a specific niche, that of dismantling canonical knowledge forms by means of fostering and conserving local heritage knowledges both in theory and praxis (Mignolo, 2011; Sawant, 2015). Knowledge as a tool for perpetuating power is essential in mapping a durable foundation for postcolonial futures. Connell (2007) lamented the extant disparities in the worldwide production of knowledge where there is evident monopolisation of theory by scholars in the global north with the world in the south becoming only functional as a data collection spot. Here, as observed by Hountondji (1997), postcolonial Africa falls within a constraining experience of academic dependency out of which Africa become a space known by the Western thinkers who would later export the theories and methodologies to postcolonial communities for appropriation and application (Eze, 1997). Especially challenging in the postcolonial futures debate is a need to move African theory and praxis beyond the conviction that Africans are incapable of rational thought (Eze, 2001).

Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze and Paulin J. Hountondji have played an important role in moving postcolonial African philosophy (theory and praxis) forward by calling for a critical and rigorous process of knowledge production and theorising from within the African continent (see Eze, 1997; 2008; Hountondji, 1996; 1997). These scholars saw the urgent need, as Hountondji (1996) poignantly explained:

... to recognize that the most important thing today is not to study African cultures but to live them, not to exhibit them to ourselves or dissect them with scrupulous scientific objectivity but to practise them, not to digest them passively but to transform them. (p. 168)

In this single far-seeing sentence, the underlying argument is for postcolonial Africa to develop the capabilities with which to distinguish those human activities rooted in their cultural history of practice that sustain life and utilise them for the common good of humanity. In this case, postcolonial nations will be able to define themselves "from the point of view of experience" (Eze, 2008, p. 187). To rethink the idea of experience awakens us to

appreciate the point that world history including ways of knowing and making sense of the world cannot continue as a completely coherent narrative stemming from one powerful centre (Eze, 2008). The nuances of the remembering and expansion of Afrophilia knowledges deriving from postcolonial African thinkers lead to a robust decolonial praxis. In the next section I discuss decolonial theory in further detail.

4.4 DECOLONIALITY – PUTTING THE THEORY IN THE PICTURE

Spivak posed questions that gives pointers in the cloud of uncertainty constantly threatening decolonising stratagems and procedures in research and educational reforms that focus on challenging the colonially dominant practices and knowledges that constrain postcolonial institutions (Walker, 2004). The two main questions that Spivak (1996) asked are: “Who decolonises? And how? (ibid., 1996, p. 237). These questions have potent implications on how scholars define decoloniality. Decolonial theory has remained an elusive concept that is difficult to define. As a way of example, definitions of decolonisation span: “breaking free, settler removal, resistance and resurgence, neurodecolonisation, and re-indigenisation” (Balcos, n.d). In the next section, I offer an in-depth analysis of decolonial theory.

According to Mignolo (2007), decolonial theory emerged as a social, political, religious and epistemological paradigm shift from the hegemonic Eurocentric understanding of the world. This understanding of decolonial thinking resonates well with McConaghy’s (2000) elucidation that decolonisation is a way of “exposing the compartments established by colonialism, and of re-establishing relationships between social phenomena” (ibid., 2000, p. 269). These colonial epistemological practicalities transplanted from Westernphilic historical and geographical locations are better understood under the elucidation of the concept termed ‘coloniality of power’ (Quijano, 2007). Most generally unlike postcolonial thought, which is partly based on Western philosophy, decolonial theory does not have a Western philosophical pedigree and heritage. According to Dey (2018), the theory provides former colonised people with a hybrid-space that allows for the re-telling of the historical, cultural and epistemic practices that have suffered from the negative effects of modernism. Thus, decoloniality means decolonial options confronting and delinking from coloniality, or the colonial matrix of power (Mignolo, 2007). The decolonisation approach of this study aims to displace the dominant top-down approach to knowledge production and theory building through the construction of bottom-up theory building. In the next section, I discuss

a concept in decolonial theory which clearly reveals that the hegemony of Westernphilia knowledges is not only historical, but it also carries through to the present.

4.5 COLONIALITY AS A CONCEPT IN DECOLONIAL THEORY

Emerging in the late 1980s from the work of Anibal Quijano, the concept ‘coloniality’ or colonial matrix of power occupies a special space in decolonial theory. What is fascinating about the concept is that though many scholars have used it in their work (see Quijano, 2007; Mignolo, 2007; 2011; Lugones, 2007; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2015), none have used the concept as a ‘totalitarian concept’ (Mignolo, 2007, p. 2). Coloniality is in itself a response to Eurocentrism and its desire to emulsify the world into a singular “representation of a geohistorical ontology of the world” (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018, p. 195). Lewis Gordon simplified our understanding of the concept saying coloniality “is a set of norms through which colonialism is supported” (Gordon, 2019, p. 17). The effects of coloniality are that it forces other forms of world representation to be devalued, and discarded to the peripheral zones. It is true today that world civilisation, celebrated under the banner of globalisation, was built to a large extent upon the devaluation of knowledges and cultural traditions of the people located in the global South (De Sousa Santos, 2014). The trend regenerates into the present moment as Africa has not yet found liberty from the strapping snare that keeps her “entrapped within the existing global matrices of power underpinned by Eurocentrism and coloniality” (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013, p. 332). My use of coloniality in this study is aimed at challenging “epistemic totalitarianism” (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018, p. 195) via use of a broader conception of knowledges anchored on Afrophilic foundations (see Author, 2018 and Appendix A, paper 1).

Ordinarily, coloniality has to be understood as a conceptual structure that requires a deepened understanding of the frame in which the concept becomes meaningful (Dey, 2018). Often, as explained by Mignolo and Walsh (2018), the concept is hidden behind the complex narratives of modernity that are instrumental in the justification of modern imperialisms. In this case, coloniality is that which the narratives of modernity hide. Mignolo (2007) described the complex narratives of modernity, noting that they have a sly characteristic of denying world citizens located outside the Eurocentric geopolitics the vestiges of humanity that it ascribed to itself. Hence, coloniality of knowledge refers to the manner in which knowledges and epistemes from outside Eurocentred epistemology are often ignored, negated, and marginalised in favour of Eurocentric knowledge systems (Mignolo, 2007).

The implication of this in Africa (Zimbabwe included) is that Western knowledges and epistemes (despite the fact that they are historically situated and potentially restrictive if universalised) remain common sense and hegemonic, thus ensuring a continued colonisation of our understanding of the world (Mbembe, 2015). Here, coloniality becomes a force behind our constitutive blindness or as stated by Lewis Gordon ‘epistemic blindness’ to other forms of knowing and making sense of the world that are outside Eurocentric modernity (Gordon, 2011). Given the fact that our framework and actual practices as researchers, educators and policy implementors are rooted in Eurocentric knowledge systems, decoloniality becomes a practicable option as it opens our imagination to other possibilities. In the next section, I continue the discussion on decoloniality and coloniality as I consider the thinking of prominent decolonial theorists.

4.5.1 Coloniality: Impact on education and pedagogy

The condition of coloniality remains an invisible presence that “continues to ‘devour’ all well-intentioned postcolonial/post-apartheid educational policies” (Mgqwashu, 2019, p. 64) not only in South Africa but in almost all former colonised states. Thus, due to coloniality, formal education especially in Southern Africa has continued to undermine or discard indigenous knowledges and teaching and heritage-based learning practices that stem from local contexts. In this regard Siyakhwazi and Siyakhwazi (2013), Mgqwashu (2019) and Masuku (2018) all pointed out that there is need to include indigenous cultures and knowledge-generation practices in the education curriculum such that education becomes sensitive to the lived experience of the indigenous learners. This is also essential, not only in reconstituting educational pedagogy, but also in informing emergent theories anchored in the life-experiences and worldviews of indigenous people.

Locally sensitive pedagogies and theories of education have potential in enabling epistemological access to knowledge especially for marginalised people (see Lotz-Sisitka, 2009; Bhurukeni, 2018; Mgqwashu, 2019). This entails that curriculum content selection, framing and pacing, as well as teaching and assessment practices (Bernstein, 2000) should not continue to privilege dominant cultures but also meaningfully include other cultures and knowledges. However, due to coloniality, formal education especially in Zimbabwe (my study area) continues to misrecognise its indigenous recipients and ignores the need to develop the functional literacy they require to engage with their environment (CIET, 1999; MoPSE, 2014; Mgqwashu, 2019). Present pedagogies in the Zimbabwean curriculum favour

the elite urbanised learners while marginalising learners from rural and resettlement areas (Chitumba, 2013). Coloniality has ensnared the majority of Zimbabweans with a mindset that normalises asymmetrical power relations and representation systems in education. Having considered the nuances which define education from the perspective of colonial impositions and colonial modes of being, I next discuss perspectives from decoloniality theorists and their views on coloniality and how the formerly colonised peoples can delink themselves from coloniality.

4.6 DECOLONIALITY THEORY THEORISTS: ANIBAL QUIJANO, CATHERINE WALSH AND WALTER D. MIGNOLO

4.6.1 Anibal Quijano (1928-2019)

Anibal Quijano is credited for having developed the concept “coloniality of power” (Mignolo, 2011). He was a Peruvian sociologist and humanist thinker who devoted his life to exploring social and political practices that would change his society. Quijano can thus be described as an advocate for social justice. This form of political activity once saw him in trouble with the Peruvian government (Jonas, 2018). Though, he was an experienced social justice advocate, Quijano had a thirst for intergenerational interchange, qualities that earned him a respectable worldwide status. At the beginning of his life as a sociologist, researcher, and writer, Quijano departed from the long-established tradition/modernity dichotomy and inaugurated a historical-structural heterogeneity as his principal narrative (Lynch, 2018). Here, he was influenced by José Carlos Mariátegui (a Marxist intellectual) and by his constant engagement with Peru’s indigenous communities (Jonas, 2018). In addition, Quijano made contributions in these distinct areas: urban planning and the workforce, Latin American identity and the concept of race, which was a key concept in his theorisation of the coloniality of power (colonialidad/coloniality). In fact, Quijano viewed the global capitalist world in terms of two terms ‘coloniality of power’ and ‘modernity’ (Lugones, 2007).

The coloniality of power, according to Quijano, denotes an externally framed hegemony and an internal custom of domination both transfixed on differential racial edifices (Lynch, 2018). The process of coloniality depicts “a violent concentration of the world’s resources under the control and for the benefit of a small European minority – and above all, of its ruling classes” (Quijano, 2007, p. 168). External hegemony is exerted on a colony or neocolony by the empire builders – in light of my study, this entails the pressure wielded on Zimbabwe by the

former British imperial colonisers together with other nations from the ‘global north’. Though Quijano believed internal domination to be a kind of domination applied by the ruling elite over the entire citizenry on the grounds of racial difference, it has to be understood that this kind of domination could be a result of social pressures other than race. Here, coloniality of power becomes problematic as it acts against the establishment of plurinational states.

‘Coloniality of power’ as conceptualised by Quijano plays an important role in my study. Firstly, it helps in the analysis of social abjections produced by a system of education that was enacted during the epoch of methodical repression well articulated in the colonial time in Zimbabwe. Then it offers efficient scaffolding in my analysis of the continuing inequalities and exclusions within the postcolonial education sector as a result of internally instituted hegemony by the ruling elite (Siyakwazi & Siyakwazi, 2013; Appendix A, paper 1; CIET, 1999). According to Quijano (2007), coloniality bestows a strong foundation for enacting a Eurocentred world in which the only presumed functional worldview and epistemology is a monopoly of the imperial colonial empires. This has motivated me to participate within a community of inquiry (in indigenous communities of Sebakwe) and engender a school curriculum deconstruction based on our understanding of the Afrophilia learning processes (see Appendix A, papers 2-7). Knowledge decolonisation is a well-intentioned option since Quijano (2007) noted an asymmetrical political, social, cultural and epistemic relation that was established by the Europeans as they dislodged indigenous “modes of knowing, of producing knowledge, of producing perspectives, images and systems of images, symbols, modes of signification...” (p. 169) to the periphery.

Quijano discussed how the European culture was made so captivating that it became regarded as the open gate to the realms of power. In fact “Cultural Europeanisation” (Quijano, 2007, p. 169) became the trading currency with which to procure the same material benefits and power as the Europeans among the subaltern world (Spivak, 1988). Development aspirations were anchored on the nation state’s capacity to aspire to the Eurocentric thought systems and modes of production. Subsequently, new social and cultural identities were produced for the world citizens aligned with race (Whites, Indians, Blacks etc) and geocultural location (Europeans, Africans, Asiatic etc). The implications for this (cultural coloniality) were however not uniform across the globe as in some parts of the world it was an adjunct to

extermination of indigenous peoples while in other parts, like in Africa, it succeeded in the deprivation of legitimacy and recognition of African culture and knowledges in the global cultural order (Quijano, 2007; Mignolo, 2011). With this, Quijano was convinced that coloniality is a tenacious mode of domination in the world even after the collapse of colonialism.

The articulation of the concept ‘coloniality of power’ by Quijano influenced other scholars such as Maria Lugones, Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni and Maldonado-Torres. Maria Lugones used the concept to enunciate a nuanced understanding of gender. Drawing on Quijano’s classification of the world order, Lugones (2007) raised distress signals that the social taxonomy of world citizens as established via the coloniality of power results in diverse configurations of violent abuse as constituted by patriarchy. Here, Quijano reasoned that human beings as social agents fight over control of “the four basic areas of human existence: sex, labour, collective authority and subjectivity/intersubjectivity, their resources and products” (Lugones, 2007, p. 189). Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2015) articulated coloniality as that which still survives as the remnant of colonialism and is a convincing reference point in explanations that focus on power dynamics and the production knowledge. Next I take a closer look at Catherine Walsh’s work who also explored the concept of coloniality in great depth and coined the concept of ‘other thought’ as “a strategical tool in the struggle to confront non-existence, dominated existence and dehumanization...” (Walsh, 2012, p.15). Emphasis in her work is on remembering and recentring or rethinking critical thought or critical knowledges, such as Afrophilia thought systems from other alternatives outside the hegemonic cloud of Eurocentric modernity.

4.6.2 Catherine E. Walsh

Catherine E. Walsh, an intellectual activist and pedagogue, is indisputably a distinguished leading voice in decoloniality theory who was deservedly awarded the Frantz Fanon Lifetime Achievement Award by the Caribbean Philosophical Association in 2019 in recognition of her work. Walsh has been involved in the struggles for social justice for a period that spans more than 25 years in the US and later in Ecuador and Latin America (Mignolo, 2007). The influencers of her work include Frantz Fanon, Paulo Freire, Fausto Reinaga and Walter D. Mignolo, with whom she co-authored a book *On decoloniality: Concepts, Analytics, Praxis*

(2018). Her other major publication is the book entitled *Pedagogy and the Struggle for Voice: Issues of language, power and schooling for Puerto Ricans 1991* (Walsh, 2012). Walsh become cognisant of the colonial problem and the decolonial struggle in the 1980s through her involvement with US based Puerto Rican organisations, groups, and communities.

Walsh considered decoloniality to be a pluriversal and interspersal concept in which Euromodernity is also located within the pluriversal but which should not be blindly accepted. Henceforth, she recommended an 'other thought' to avoid putting everything in a narrow deficit line of modernity (Mignolo, 2007). The foci of Walsh's decoloniality are shaped by a need to build a collective memory that has an antecedents in the political-epistemic insurgence of indigenous and African-descendant people (Walsh, 2011). The aim in Walsh's work is on rethinking and reconstructing society via the guiding ethics of interculturality and plurinationalism for the entire human race. Thus Walsh urged thinkers in decoloniality today to avoid being reactionary to the ideals they are against but rather to build an understanding of the kinds of relationships and possibilities to which one should be committed. This is where she advanced the praxis of decoloniality as decoloniality-for (Walsh, 2018).

Walsh's articulation of coloniality was greatly inspiring for my study. For example, in my work, like in Walsh's there are undercurrents of evidence that coloniality enfolds an epistemic position that influences how reality is considered. Strong evidence of this claim is found in my articulation of the cultural technologies of domination, reproduction of social abjection and the subsequent suggestion of a transformative pedagogy (Appendix A, papers 1 and 5) and in Walsh's pedagogical approaches that foreground critical questioning, understanding and actioning. Collectively, my study and Walsh's work regarded pedagogy to be a way of:

... breaking through, transgressing, disrupting, displacing, inverting inherited concepts [*the Afrophilia learning processes*] and practices [*embedded in heritage knowledges as ancestral cosmologies*], those psychic, analytic, and organizational methodologies [that] make different conversations and solidarities possible. (Alexander, 2005, p. 7, emphasis added)

For Walsh, the concern was to shift the geo-politics of knowledge from the continued reproduction of the meta-narratives of modernity to other frames that depart from the horizon of coloniality (Walsh, 2007). The attention that Walsh offered to ‘other thought’ afforded subaltern knowledges especially those from the global south (De Sousa Santos, 2014) a visibility previously negated. Thus Walsh’s work flings radical turn-arounds for recognising local heritage knowledges as necessary components for re-making or re-founding of educational systems in particular and society in general.

This also translates into a reconstruction of ‘power, being, and life itself’ (Walsh, 2012). However, Walsh was critical of how these previously negated life-experiences could “become little more than discursive strategies that give the appearance of change, while at the same time promoting interests that further fragment, coopt, and defy ancestral collectivities, knowledges, territories, and sensibilities, in the name – still – of modernization, progress, and development” (Walsh, 2011, p. 63). This is in line with my initial argument in paper 1 (Appendix A) where I contend that the positioning of *unhu/ubuntu* as the underpinning philosophy in the Zimbabwean educational curriculum (see, CIET, 1999, MoPSE, 2014) is superficial and takes little meaning from the life-experiences of the learners.

This is contrary to Walsh’s assertion which I also subscribe to (in a kind of decolonial alliance) that knowledges should be constructed and positioned from the histories, cultural practices and subjectivities of the people. It is evident here that Walsh’s work is instrumental in leading discussions on reformulating a generative curriculum model that is grounded in ‘philosophies of existence’ (Gordon, 2000) such as *unhu/ubuntu* philosophy that are significant to the sociocultural practices of the indigenous people. Such an undertaking invites us to rethink decoloniality in terms of Mignolo’s concepts of delinking which I explore below.

4.6.3 Walter D. Mignolo

Mignolo is transnationally recognised as one of the high flying decolonial theorists (Masuku, 2018), who has devoted the greater part of his life to finding a solution to the historical violent establishment of the modern/colonial world system. His major publications on decoloniality thinking include *The Darker Side of Western Modernity: Global Futures*,

Decolonial Options (2011), *On Decoloniality: Concepts Analytics Praxis*, which he co-authored with Catherine E. Walsh (2018), *Learning to Unlearn*, which he co-authored with M. Tlostanova (2012), and many other articles and book chapters.

Walter Mignolo employed the term ‘delinking’ in work. Delinking as understood in decoloniality theory urges us to break from and/or resist, colonial practices, or efforts (Mignolo, 2011, p. xxvii). The concept of delinking seems to imply complete disconnection from colonialism and its aftermath. However, I have since discovered that in classroom context (especially in the Zimbabwean situation) to set forth the goal of delinking as the only way to do decolonial work may be a misreading of the impact of the colonial matrix of power and its persistent presence in our lives (Appendix A, papers 2-7).

This misjudging seems to limit our pedagogical choices and curriculum content, and this translates into the manner and efforts surrounding how we may communicate about decolonial work. According to Donelson (2018), Mignolo’s concept of delinking is a threshold concept¹¹ of decoloniality theory. Ordinarily, such a concept is used in a manner that illuminates a base understanding of the concept, or scholars use the concept without offering a distinct definition. In his elucidation of the concept, Mignolo (2007) suggested that de-linking was “a de-colonial epistemic shift leading to other-universality, that is, to pluriversality as a universal project” (p. 453). Here, I urge teachers working with an Afrophilia learning lens to understand that Mignolo’s call for an epistemic shift does not entail total disconnection; rather it involves finding alternative ways of teaching and learning. My emphasis is on selecting and utilising Afrophilia-reflective tools and artefacts that allow for children’s diversity in reasoning or that enables them to “be reflective and reflexive of their relationships to the colonial matrix of power” (Donelson, 2018, p. 47; Appendix A, papers 5 and 7).

Mignolo also discussed the concept of coloniality which he drew from Quijano’s elucidations on the concept of coloniality of power (Masuku, 2018). As indicated previously, Mignolo

¹¹ ‘Threshold’ concept in this study refers to a concept that when acquired, forces the reader to shift his/her understanding of a premise or concept, and it becomes difficult to discuss them without using these terms (Donelson, 2018; see Appendix A, paper 1 where I used cultural technologies of domination a concept that I read from Terreblanche, 2014).

believed that the colonial matrix of power operates within four interconnected domains (Mignolo, 2011) which as he further explained are intercontinentally webbed. Especially interesting for my study is how Mignolo envisioned modernity as a conjoiner to coloniality and advanced a point that the concept has epistemic as well as ontological impact. Thus, in my designing of a generative curriculum that foregrounded Afrophilic learning foundations (see, Appendix B), I was attentive to the effects of coloniality in learning context as learning also embodies both the epistemic and ontological being status.

In connection to coloniality, Mignolo deliberated on the geopolitics of knowledge (Mignolo, 2011). Here his focus was on the history of Western knowledges and their connectedness to the history of capitalism. Thus, according to Mignolo, Western knowledges played a scaffolding role in facilitating the world-wide expansion and development of Western capitalism (Grosfoguel, 2011). In this case the models of learning that were imposed on the 'Other' by the West were anchored on the thinking and philosophy of people who extended Eurocentric modernity like Descartes of the '*cogito ergo sum*' (I think, therefore I am) dictum. Viewed in the Zimbabwean context, the '*cogito ergo sum*' maxim is responsible for the problems of individualism that influence Eurocentric thinking and inequality as explained in the last chapter of this study.

As an antithesis to the influence of keeping alive knowledge from one geopolitical centre Grosfoguel (2011) and Hountondji (1996) recommended pluriversality which is synonymous with Ngugi wa Thiong'o's (2009) concept of shifting the epistemic centre and allowing for permeability or the development of Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze's (2008) diversity in reason (see Appendix A, papers 1, 4 and 6). Concomitantly, Mignolo borrowed Enrique Dussel's idea of transmodernity which in its expansive comprehension is inclusive (though with modicum acquiescence) of knowledges brought about from the peripheral areas (Mignolo, 2011). Mignolo's concepts of de-linking, coloniality, geopolitics of knowledge and that of critical border thinking, which is a radical step against Eurocentric redefinitions of citizenship, democracy, human rights, and humanity towards a more pluriversal understanding and definition of the concepts, are also evident in the thinking of African decoloniality thinkers discussed below.

4.7 THE DECOLONIALITY OF AFRICAN THEORISTS ON DECOLONIALITY THEORY: SABELO J. NDLOVU-GATSHENI AND NGŪGĨ WA THIONG'O

The discussion above was mainly focused on work by theorists whose origin is not African. They were primarily Latin American theorists whose contributions to decoloniality have influenced and motivated decoloniality thought from across the world. In this section of the chapter, I explore the meaning of decoloniality within the African panorama. Ordinarily, the historical purposes and practices of colonialism in Africa are different from those of any other nation where colonialism could have taken place. Against this background, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2020) suggested a need to explore in depth the contribution of African thinkers on decoloniality scholarship and praxis.

Here, I do not wish, as Clapham has wished, to see a singular understanding of decolonisation in Africa (Clapham, 2020) for this would be a misreading of the African society and its pluriversal disposition. I am avoiding the presentation of a unidimensional and teleological understanding of a concept that is innately multifaceted. Thus, I aspire to “move beyond self-location and create space for critical reflection that translates into a deeper analysis of the present reality” (Paper 1, p. 112). Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2020) offered a table to demonstrate the polygonal modus of the decolonial turn.

Decolonial turn	Elaboration
1. Decanonisation	Shifting from Eurocentric scaffold of knowledge to African and other subjugated knowledges
2. Deimperialisation	Changing the modern power structures which anchor and enable universalisation of European knowledge
3. Depatriachisation	Undoing the androcentrism in knowledge generation and opening up to feminist, queer and womanist scholarship
4. Deracialisation	Removing the colour-line and abyssal thinking in knowledge
5. Dedisciplining	Liberating knowledge from disciplinary empires and academic tribes
6. Deprovincialisation	(Re)placing Africa into the centre of knowledge and releasing it from marginality and peripherality
7. Debourgeoisement	Liberating knowledge from dominant white minority male elite intellectuals and opening it up to knowledge from African intellectuals, peasants, workers, and women
8. Decorporatisation	Confronting market invasion and colonisation of universities and challenging commercialisation and commodification of knowledge and education.
9. Democratisation	Opening up to mosaic epistemology and ecologies of knowledges
10. Dehierarchisation	Decentering hierarchies of thought and knowledge

Figure 4.1: The ‘Ten-Ds’ of the decolonial turn (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020, p. 3)

Figure 4.1 illuminated the diversity in understanding and articulation of decoloniality, not only in Africa but in countries of the global South. It also reflects the praxiology of decolonisation in different communities. However, the list is not only limited to Ndlovu-Gatsheni's polygonal modus for mention is made of scholars like Leopold Sedar Senghor whose input to decoloniality was via the concept of 'negritude', Cheikh Anta Diop who tirelessly challenged Eurocentric historiography, Ibbo Mandaza whose interest is on decolonial issues to deal with the national question, nation-building, state-making and neo-colonialism, and Samir Amin who is credited for bringing to the fore the concepts of delinking and extroversion (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020, p. 2). In this section, however, focus is on decolonial perspectives from two main scholars, Ngugi wa Thiongo and Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni.

4.7.1 Ngugi wa Thiongo

Ngugi wa Thiongo introduced the concept of remembering and recentring and decolonising the mind while Ndlovu-Gatsheni has explored in depth the concepts of coloniality of power, of cognitive empire and the politics of knowledge (see wa Thiongo, 2009; Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). As shall be seen below, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's work was focused on decolonising the imagination of the Africans/ decolonisation of African memory especially through his advocacy for use of African languages in academic spaces (see wa Thiong'o, 1991, 1993, 2009 for his articulations on use of African languages).

Ordinarily, a reading of Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's works is suggestive of the fact that decoloniality in Africa dates to years before the Berlin Conference of 1884, during formative years of defiance to the Trans-Atlantic Slave trade. However, the Berlin Conference has greater implications for postcolonial Africa as it saw Africa been disjointed and reordered into British, French, Portuguese, German, Belgium, and Spanish territories (wa Thiong'o, 2009). Thus, the post-Berlin conference Africa was dismembered, causing indigenous citizens to suffer the loss of control of their natural and human resources (wa Thiong'o, 2009, p. 6). Another significant development in African colonisation, as with colonisation of other parts of the world was how epistemology was deployed in configuration with the thinking and desires of the colonisers resulting in a model of the world that suited only the colonisers (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020). In light of this Terreblanche (2014) reasoned that:

We cannot understand the challenges of our time without understanding the ways in which 500 years of Western empire building, often with the complicity of the elites of the Restern [Western] world, have shaped our world into the deeply unequal and gratuitously unjust place that it is today...We cannot hope to remedy the brokenness of our modern economic system without understanding the economic, social and political *including the cultural, religious and epistemic* [emphasis added] drivers that have brought us here, and that continue to dictate the narrative of institutionalised poverty and globalised inequality. (p. 3)

In this sense Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o has contended that colonialism in the world and Africa in particular was bent on the coloniser's predatory plunder and politicisation of epistemology (wa Thiong'o, 1993, wa Thiong'o, 2009). Henceforth, colonialism produced a huge dividend of knowledge for the colonisers, while ensuring that the colonised would lose their identities. According to wa Thiong'o (1993) there is need therefore to "search for a liberating perspective within which to see ourselves clearly in relationship to ourselves and to other selves in the universe" (wa Thiong'o, 1986, p. 87). This he reasoned would have an effect on how we see the world contrary to how the world has been presented to us via the West's imposition of cultural technologies of domination.

Using the teaching and learning of literature both in schools at universities as a tool to catalyse his arguments, Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o has recommended moving African culture to the centre so as to allow the African child to view other cultures in relation to the African culture (wa Thiong'o, 1986). This aligns with the aim and logic of my study, to reconsider the place of Afrophilia epistemologies and move them to the centre, to let them inform the child's worldview so that their learning would reflect African experience. In this way teaching and learning would evoke a more familiar world defined in the African experience of history contrary to the inherited curriculum model that is largely influenced by the 'European experience of history' (wa Thiong'o, 1986; 1993). Here it has to be noted that Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o decolonial theory on education (the teaching and learning of literature) is informed by the belief that "education is a means of knowledge about ourselves" (wa Thiong'o, 1986, p. 94). Thus he advocated a curriculum that is rooted in the lives of indigenous learners. The coloniality of knowledge and power addressed in Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o's creative writings, essays and lectures finds common ground in the work of Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni.

4.7.2 Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni

Ndlovu-Gatsheni, author of the powerful text *Coloniality of Power in Postcolonial Africa: Myths of Decolonisation* (2013) has emerged as one of Africa's great scholars on decoloniality theory. Like Ramon Grosfoguel (2007), Ndlovu-Gatsheni argued that the world has shifted from an era of global colonialism to an extant experience of global coloniality. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013), global coloniality was created by the negative process of Western modernity. Cognisant of the complexities and challenges encountered by the former colonies as they engage with the Western world, Ndlovu-Gatsheni employed the term "postcolonial neocolonized world" that was used by Spivak (1990, p.166) to describe the rough terrain in which the former colonies find themselves in as they encounter European modernity that is at the helm of global power. Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) described the concept postcolonial neocolonised world as "an entangled situation where the African and the Western world meet under highly racialized, hegemonic, hierarchical and unequal terms" (p. 4). To better understand this, I present below the four denials and layers of denial that best exemplify the entanglement that characterises world relationships.

	Violence	Unsustainability	Entanglement	Depth of the Problem(s)
Deep denial (refusal to engage the critique)	No recognition of racial/colonial violence	No recognition of ecological unsustainability [and human nature relationality]	No recognition of entanglement	No recognition of serious problems of concern
Interpretive denial (selective acceptance of the critique)	Racial/colonial violence is a product of exclusion from opportunities and institutions, and should be addressed through inclusion and access	Ecological unsustainability (climate change, biodiversity loss, habitat destruction, ecological degradation, pollution) is a product of inefficiency and wastefulness, and should be addressed through technological innovations, renewable energy	Relationality and responsibility are established through individual choices regarding (social, familial, political) association	The problems we face can be adequately addressed with minor changes to policy and practice, and technological solutions
Implicative denial (acceptance of the critique, but not the full implications)	Racial/colonial violence is a product of the existing system, and should be addressed through systemic changes, e.g., redistributing resources and centring marginalized voices	Ecological unsustainability is a product of corporate greed and political corruption, and should be addressed through collective public action and mass movements to create green energy/jobs/policies	Relationality and responsibility operate within collective structures that exceed individual choices and should be therefore addressed with regard to the relevant power relations and obligations	We will need to take concerted collective action and mobilize political will in order to enable the kind of transformations that can adequately address the serious problems we face
No denial (full acceptance of)	Racial/colonial violence is the condition of possibility	Ecological unsustainability is a product of the economic and ecological logics of the existing	Relationality and responsibility operate at many layers, including	The depth and magnitude of the problems we face will

critique and implications)	for the existing system and while changes to the system in the short term can be important for harm reduction, in the long-term harm will not cease until the system itself is either dismantled or falls on its own	system (i.e., extractivist capitalism), and while green energy/jobs/technologies are important for mitigation, we will ultimately need to surrender this way of life and enact another mode of existence	an existential layer before will (unconditional), and a political layer that recognizes systemic violence and tries to mitigate harm (in the short term) and cease the harm to ensure collective well-being (in the long term)	make impossible the continuity of our existing ways of knowing, being and relating; we will need to disinvest from dominant problem-solving strategies and tap into exiled capacities to address these challenges

Figure 4.2: The four denials and four layers of denial

Source: <https://decolonialfuturesnet.files.wordpress.com> (Date accessed: 11/06/2021)

Read with Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni’s work, the four denials and four layers of denial fall in line with his articulation of the colonality of power. According to Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013), “coloniality of power speaks directly to the entanglement and entrapment of Africa and other ex-colonized parts of the world in the ever-present colonial matrix of power of the modern/colonial world” (p. 18). Again, the denials help us to imagine as Ndlovu-Gatsheni imagined the possibility of reconfiguring the postcolonial nation into an engine of development (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020) through disinvestment from dominant problem-solving strategies, and drawing on exiled capacities to address the challenges of the postcolonial state. The next section demonstrates this shift from dominant frames of educational practice as I situate decoloniality thinking within heritage-based learning processes.

4.8 DECOLONIALITY THEORY WITHIN HERITAGE BASED (AFROPHILIA) LEARNING PROCESSES

In one of my publications (Appendix A, paper 1) I cited O’Donoghue et al. (2013) to illuminate that heritage is constituted by both tangible and intangible aspects of human livelihood practices. Heritage, I argued (paper 1) has to be contemplated as plurivocal and contradictory as it is not univocal (Hountondji, 1996) but takes the shape and form of all embodied livelihood practices. Exploring the implications of a heritage response to education in the same publication I observed that heritage based curriculum reform strengthens and heightens affiliations between educational praxis and theory. This is because heritage is generally “conditioned by the complexity of the sociocultural context in which it exists” (Capela de Campos & Murtinho, 2016, p. 39). More generally, heritage gives society its self-image, which is the reason why it appears to be neutral and unchanging; in so doing heritage

knowledges become “equally expressive of all and accessible to all” (wa Thiong’o, 1993, p. xv). What is yet to be explored especially in the light of this study’s aspirations for educational transformation, is the interconnectedness between decoloniality theory (that is inclusive of postcolonial thinking) and heritage based Afrophilia learning process.

Decolonial scholars such as Walter D. Mignolo and Sabelo J. Ndlovu-Gatsheni have and continue to emphasise the impact of modernity couched within globalisation narratives (Mignolo, 2007, Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2020). Consequently, Rosa Anna Genovese has argued that globalisation has caused disruptive transformations that have had unprecedented impact on cultural heritage (Genovese, 2016). Considering this study, globalisation and coloniality comprehended as interconnected ‘cultural technologies of domination’ (Terreblanche, 2014; Appendix A, paper 1) have impacted on the cultural tools and artefacts traditional communities use to teach their children. As I have argued before, the Zimbabwean education system suffers from a chronic inherited condition called colonisation. This affects the content of the curriculum as well as pedagogic choice (see, CIET, 1999, MoPSE, 2014; Appendix A, paper 2-7). In this regard decoloniality registers as a sustainable theory insofar as it seeks simultaneously to provide critical analysis of the existing world and to offer doable regenerative alternatives.

Working from a conviction that heritage (Afrophilia learning processes) is a right, decolonial theory in heritage-based education allows for the re-narration of colonial history through enabling new voices, voices that emerge from a rethinking of other critical knowledges as expressed in Walsh’s (2012) concept of ‘other thought’. My articulation of the decolonial theory within heritage-based learning is linked to schools becoming learning communities that contribute to multiply the decolonial options and to limit the dominant colonial option (Eurocentric modernity) to one among several (Mignolo, 2011). Thus, Afrophilia learning processes are ultimately an expression of Afro-modernity, an expression that has capacity to grant the learners of African descent the right to name the world for themselves (wa Thiong’o, 1993).

4.9 GESTURING TOWARDS DECOLONIAL FUTURES: REFLECTIONS ON USE OF AFROPHILIA HERITAGE KNOWLEDGES AND LEARNING PROCESSES IN MY STUDY

The education system that was put in place by the British imperial masters in the formative stages of colonialism was uncritically inherited by the postcolonial government (Bhurekeni, 2018; Appendix A, paper 1). While I have reiterated this in separate studies and in the opening chapter, the point I make here is that though Zimbabwe has been a victim of colonialism ‘as a violent Eurocentric model of modernity’, the education system that operated in the country made Zimbabweans “active participants in the production of modernity” (Quijano, 1993). This form of participation should be seen as participation in production of colonial forms of reason (Gordon, 2019) and the repercussions have been the manifestation of an identity crisis for many Zimbabweans and the negation of other forms of reason (Eze, 2008).

It must also be noted that the dominant knowledges produced by our inherited form of education do not correspond with contemporary social or social ecological needs (Siyakwazi & Siyakwazi, 2013). Thus, in my reflections on use of Afrophilia heritage knowledges as contribution to decolonial futures/transmodern futures, I strongly consider the fact that learners are ontological beings that cannot stand abstracted from the social and historical forces that shape their environment (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). Again, I stand guided by Gordon’s (2019) elucidation of decolonial futures as ultimately anonymous hence inviting us to consider working in collegiality rather than the isolated self. This point is also emphasised in the methodology chapter where I recognised the multi-voiced nature of this study (see Chapter 2; Appendix A, papers 3, 6 and 7).

The study acknowledges that decolonial theory has attracted growing interest in education thereby opening opportunities for educational thinkers to imagine strategies for enacting different futures (Passada, 2019). This, therefore influenced use of Afrophilia-heritage knowledges and learning processes as an attempt to enable sustainable possibilities of transformative education via enacting generative pedagogies that are viable, but currently exiled from dominant frames of reference in the Zimbabwean education system. Indigenous heritage-based knowledges and practices were ejected because of the inauguration of imperial

colonial modernity in Zimbabwe and other parts of formerly colonised nations in the rest of the world (Benyera, 2020). Thus, the Afrophilia perspective in this study was utilised to deconstruct the colonality of imperial colonial rule which has been internalised as the absolute truth in order to re-member and reproduce new ways of being and thinking (wa Thiong'o, 1986; Bhurukeni, 2018). This aligns well with the decolonial goal that Franz Fanon hoped for and boldly describes as the possibility of setting afoot a new humanity. This heritage based turn in curriculum rethinking (CIET, 1999, MoPSE, 2013) resonates with calls for pluriversality as a universal project as it acknowledges the contribution to knowledge production of different cultures and practices (Mignolo, 2011).

4.10 CONCLUDING REMARKS

As I conclude this chapter, I would like to emphasise a point that the development of decolonial futures does not mean that we must simplistically reject all knowledges and their informing world views currently informing our education system. On the contrary, it entails that we conceive of such knowledges and worldviews as one perspective on the complex web we refer to as reality. This perspective on mapping future cosmopolitan communities anchored in pluriversality as a universal project is evident in both postcolonial and decolonial thinking as discussed in this chapter. In this chapter I have demonstrated that as we unmask coloniality (dominant imperial colonial thinking and practices), it is also time to start reconfiguring how, especially through educational transformation, Africa (Zimbabwe included) could engage going forward. The next chapter further contributes to the extended literature review section of this thesis and focuses on curriculum theory and Philosophy for Children.

CHAPTER FIVE

EXTENDED PERSPECTIVES ON THE LITERATURE: CURRICULUM THEORY AND PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN (P4C)

5.0 INTRODUCTION

This is the last of the chapters on the extended perspectives on the literature. In this study curriculum theory was instrumental in helping me address the following questions: a) What kind of curriculum do we want? b) What kind of curriculum does our society want? c) On what philosophy can we anchor the curriculum? d) What kind of citizenry do we expect? To be able to answer these questions I referred to curriculum theory and theorists whose work takes up curriculum as a political text, which in turn reproduces and challenges dominant ideologies (Apple, 1990; Bowers, 2001; Pinar et al., 1995). In this chapter I discuss how curriculum theory influenced my idea of doing Philosophy for Children in a different way and how the Zimbabwean curriculum obstructs or supports Philosophy for Children as a practice in schools. The first section of this chapter reflects on my position in mapping the ground for definitions offered in this chapter.

5.1 A WORD ON COHERENCE AND CONSISTENCY IN DEFINING CONCEPTS

In defining the concepts curriculum and curriculum theory in this study, there is need for coherence and consistency to advance transformation and good practice in the field of education. Here, I consider two aspects. The first aspect is that in giving definitions of concepts we should avoid broadening the concept for this may lead to the lumping together distinct elements that may need to be separated for clarity (Barrow, 2015). Thus, my definitions will be more specific but not necessarily narrow in scope and focus. Secondly, “definitions of the word *curriculum* do not solve curricular problems; but they do suggest perspectives from which to view them” (Stenhouse, 1975, p. 1). To develop a cogent and logical definition of curriculum and curriculum theory, I firstly unpack what is to be understood as learning in this study and this will lead to the definitions.

For this study learning is viewed in a reconstructionist way that is amenable to transformation and change (Ndawi & Maravanyika, 2014). Thus, learning is here perceived as the changing patterns of participation in specific social practices (Rogoff, 1990). Emphasis on participation is essential considering that in most cases the principle aim of any given curriculum is to

create a third space for learners to think and to make critically informed choices (McKernan, 2008). Henceforth, to achieve this one must fully participate and assimilate the experience that will inform the decision-making process. The view of learning and of education as a social practice affects not only the definition considered for curriculum but also the methodology taken in designing a generative curriculum model for implementation in the Sebakwe cluster. Put differently, the understanding of learning considered in this study “allows for the creation of new lines of flight in curriculum research to emerge” (Reynolds & Webber, 2009, p. 3) and in my case these lines of flight have influenced the decolonial positioning of this study. For example, I began to consider my role as a teacher more in an emancipatory light¹² that places me as a critical theorist in educational settings.

Furthermore, I support the notion that the curriculum needs to be situated as a continuous learning experience which is not a product but rather a process (McKernan, 2008). This is contrary to viewing curriculum from an objectives model point of view as is the case in Zimbabwe (MoPSE, 2014). In the next section I make a distinction between curriculum and education; this helped me in marking the contours for my discussion on the meaning of curriculum theory and its rationale in the study.

5.2 MAKING A DISTINCTION BETWEEN CURRICULUM AND EDUCATION

Although “curriculum is at the heart of education,” according to Null (2011, p. 1), there is a distinction between the two. In making this observation Null was quick to point out that people commonly make the mistake of discussing ‘education’ without paying attention to the curriculum, something which he believed was a barrier in the quest to develop good schools. Depth engagement with Null’s (2011) discussion on the distinction between curriculum and education reflects that he is privy to the fact that curriculum and education serve each other. This is because details of an educational policy proposal are communicated via the curriculum which is reflective of the valued knowledge, values, skills and other dispositions that have been intentionally planned (McKernan, 2008).

¹² The emancipatory role I spoke of entails that the teacher/educator is an agent of cultural and educational renaissance.

On the one hand, curriculum typically has an institutional identity because it is linked to institutional decision making (Null, 2011). In Zimbabwe, for example, schools are encouraged to develop school-based curricula in accordance with the curriculum updating process (MoPSE, 2014). Thus, curriculum compels us to consider the ethics of practice because it is based on the content of what should be taught, which to me is an ethical matter. Ghiațău (2010) pointed out that there are moral values that need to be reflected in teaching. Schubert (1986) claimed that the role of curriculum work is a moral imperative:

An educator is entrusted with the most serious work that confronts humankind: the development of curricula that enable new generations to contribute to the growth of human beings and society. This means that those who have chosen to devote themselves to curriculum must address the most basic questions that exists. What does it mean to live a good life and how can a just society be created? (p. 423)

Curriculum should thus be considered to be the central guide for teachers as to what is essential for teaching and learning. According to McKernan (2008), planning, implementation, teaching, learning, and evaluation are what the curriculum is concerned with. Thus, curriculum is the sum of all learning experiences and opportunities that are provided to learners in the context of formal and non-formal education (MoPSE, 2014).

On the other hand, education is an abstract and indistinct concept that lacks a focus on the subject matter to be taught. This is because education is the process of learning about a subject (Null, 2011). According to Dewey (1916), when education is contemplated in its broadest sense it constitutes the means of social continuity of life. By this he referred to the renewal or re-creation of the life experiences of a particular group, including “beliefs, ideals, hopes, happiness, misery, and practices” (ibid., p. 2). This explains why Banana (1987) stressed that education is a means by which humans acquire a broad base of knowledge, attitudes, values and skills. Banana (1987) drew our attention to the anticipations of the Zimbabwean community that education “should lay emphasis on collectivism rather than individualism, co-operation rather than competition, egalitarianism rather than elitism” (ibid., p. 30). In the next section I discuss the rationale in using curriculum theory in this study.

5.3 SIGNPOSTING CURRICULUM THEORY AND ITS RATIONALE IN THIS STUDY

According to Pinar et al. (1995), curriculum theory emerged because of the failure by traditional curriculum studies to provide the tools to address rapidly changing social and cultural landscapes. As a result, curriculum theory is often discussed within the frame of curriculum studies. Barrow (2015) defined curriculum theory as the theory that is related to curriculum and closely relevant matters. Throughout this study curriculum theory is regarded as an interdisciplinary study of educational experience which is expected to guide educational thinking, in conjunction with the establishment of wider and more far-reaching forms of international/local co-operation (Pinar, 2004; UNESCO, 2015).

More generally, the theory could be referred to as an inquiry into the complex relationships among race, gender, multiculturalism, ecology, popular culture, and other variables of society (Pinar et al., 1995). Henceforth, curriculum theory in conjunction with socio-cultural and postcolonial theories discussed in Chapters Three and Four enabled me to report the case-study findings in a way and manner attuned to the concrete situation of children represented in the study (Freire, 1970). Through a focused depth understanding of curriculum theory, I managed to gain an understanding of the ‘historical antecedents’ (Ndawi & Maravanyika, 2014) of the Zimbabwean education system.

The theory also strengthened my knowledge on how to work with three curriculum variables: relationship between every day and specialised knowledge; relationship between specialisations, and relationships inside specialisations. This led to insights into the curriculum planning model extant in the Zimbabwean context and informed the curriculum planning approach and model used in my study as discussed in the next sections (Ndawi & Maravanyika, 2014).

Important for this study was how curriculum theory managed to shed light on the distancing and estranging of Zimbabweans from their life circumstances, and the current deficiency in local wisdom and situated intelligences in the curriculum model, in which as Pinar et al. (1995) observed, teachers become technocrats responsible for reproducing and delivering a pre-packaged curriculum (Shizha & Kariwo, 2012; O’Donoghue, 2015). Henceforth, situating curriculum theory in this study that is set on decolonising and indigenising the

education system was ideal in steering the transition to a knowledge-driven society capable of teaching critically reflexive thinking skills to future generations (Freire, 1970; MoPSE, 2014; UNESCO, 2015;).

Drawing on curriculum theory in my quest to anchor Philosophy for Children on an Afrophilia foundation, I developed what Rogoff (2003) termed a “generative curriculum model” which opens a door to culturally specific understandings of educational ideas and practices and the educational needs of Africa’s ethnically diverse communities (ibid.). The vantage point of this curriculum model is that it supports socially oriented learning practices; by so doing the theoretical troika employed in this study could be viewed as one that values the significance of subjectivity to teaching. According to Pinar (2004), the significance of subjectivity is that it is inseparable from the social; it values collaborative effort in working towards the reconstruction of the present historical moment for posterity.

In this study I was able to examine the suitability of the formative curriculum intervention with respect to its specified concerns as explained in Chapter One and in the articles in Appendix A prepared for publication presented later via utilising the concept curriculum analysis which is an aspect of curriculum theory (Ndawi & Maravanyika, 2014). For example, knowledge of curriculum theory aided in examining the suitability of the content of the curriculum in the postcolonial African context in which the curriculum operates and to Sebakwe society of which the case study school is part. This notion of curriculum in context (Zazu, 2007) takes into consideration both structural and socio-cultural factors. As Zazu (2007) observed structural factors include tangible aspects like the educational infrastructure such as classrooms, chairs, and books (in the case of the Sebakwe community, the absence of proper educational infrastructure influences the way Sebakwe primary schools are operating). Structural factors also refer to how the teaching and learning is organised and the power-knowledge relationships amongst the different people involved. Socio-cultural factors are linked to issues of societal values, norms, and beliefs (Hapanyengwi, 2012). They relate to traditions and ideologies which need to be taken into consideration for curriculum work. Hence, I considered Apple’s (1990) suggestion that “the curriculum researcher must think structurally and relationally. He or she must link ... back to the question of power and control outside the school” (ibid., 1990, p. 17).

The vantage point of such an approach, as explained by respondents in Gupta's (2006) study, is in the teaching of values, development of intellect and enhancing 'cultural hybridity' (ibid.; Bhabha, 1994). Underlying the theoretical framework of this study and the work of Gupta (2006) is the concept of transformative change and an orientation to change that is tilted towards achieving a contextually oriented approach in teaching and learning, or 'learning as connection' (Lotz-Sisitka & Lupele, 2016). Drawing on Rogoff (2003), I am of the view that this approach as adopted in this study is suitable for Zimbabwe as well as in other African countries because Africa's children are not socialised only in school; they also receive family-based education as they develop into accredited participants in their cultural communities. This leads to a discussion of the need for designing curriculum and instruction for context.

5.4 CURRICULUM IN CONTEXT: WHY DESIGN CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION FOR CONTEXTUAL TEACHING AND LEARNING

Although Zimbabwe recently updated its national school curriculum to decolonise the education system (CIET, 1999), teachers are still struggling to assume control of the centralised and standardised national curriculum. The government, through the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education, determines which textbooks can be used in schools and which pedagogical framework teachers must follow. A paradox arises when even in such a strict and restrictive environment, marked by a high degree of ad hoc political decision-making and 'operational decontextualization' (Cornbleth, 1988), learners are expected to have, among other things, problem-solving skills, critical thinking skills and leadership skills from their learning experience (MoPSE, 2014). This requires that the teacher must make learning meaningful and significant to the learner's life-world through a 'macro, and micro' review of the pre-designed, standardised and politically dictated curriculum (Chiarelott, 2006). Furthermore, there is need to make a connection of concepts to content. For this, teachers must draw insight from Chiarelott (2006) who postulated that curriculum need not be an abstraction that can be imposed on any learning environment.

According to Cornbleth (1991), the curriculum is an ongoing social activity that is shaped by the influence of various contexts inside and outside the classroom and interacts primarily with teachers and learners. In John Dewey's view, the school is a miniature society. When designing the curriculum for context, the future focus should be on how learners acquire

knowledge and learning opportunities. It should also include how these opportunities arise and what values they reflect and uphold (Cornbleth, 1988, 1991; Chiarelott, 2006). The idea of establishing the curriculum in such a case is that it can foster the correlation between content, contexts, and the social organization.¹³

Ordinarily, lurking behind the need to develop curriculum for context is the desire to reach out beyond the classroom walls, into the community where teachers and learners can consolidate their learning experiences with context in order to transform the world (Ellis, 2003). As described above, orientation is toward problem-solving at personal level, involving community affairs and real-world problems (Cornbleth, 1988). For example, the context within which schooling takes place is structured by many layers (multi-layered), is emergent, and is complex. The practice of Philosophy for Children is based on this indeterminate reality. Therefore, curriculum designing must be informed by this uncertainty because this helps in thinking about what can be done now (in educational transformation) in a retroductive way by connecting the desired future (highlighted in the conceptual framework in Chapter One) and the present. Thus, the notion of a curriculum in context in this study lays emphasis on the importance of bringing education into the closest relationship with all the other agencies of social improvement.

To accomplish this, Chiarelott (2006) proposed a pedagogical re-design based on the principles of contextual teaching and learning (CTL). Contextual teaching and learning refer to a way of thinking about teaching and learning that allows teachers to connect subject matter to real-world situations and encourages students to make connections between knowledge and its applications in their lives as family members, citizens, and workers (Berns & Erickson, 2001, p. 1). Engrained in contextual teaching and learning is the aspect of utilizing active learning approaches that enhance learner agency and help them to consolidate what they already know with that which they are expected to learn in school (Hudson & Whisler, 2008). Ordinarily, contextual teaching and learning is more viable through the

¹³ Social organisation includes the role of teachers in schools, their competences, and practices, and how they affect the role of learners; it also considers the existing constellations of communication that shape the learning environment (see Cornbleth, 1991; Chiarelott, 2006; Appendix A, papers 6 and 7).

application of either project-based, goal-based or inquiry-based learning (Berns & Erickson, 2001). Thus, viewed in this way, curriculum in context through contextual teaching and learning appears to be important for the study as I use the inquiry based ‘community of inquiry’ approach which is supported and sustained by one of the learning theories that I often incorporated in contextual teaching and learning; sociocultural learning theory.

Sociocultural learning theory, as I have already stressed in Chapter Three, emphasises that knowledge and learning are situated within context and that learning is a social activity driven by social and cultural factors (Vygotsky, 1962). In essence, the contribution of the theory to contextual teaching and learning could be seen through Vygotsky’s notion of the Zone of Proximal Development described in Chapter Three. Here, through social interaction learners use the experience they already have to consolidate current learning activities and the outcome of this is tied to real-life scenarios. Next, I discuss some of the contexts that often influence teaching and learning in schools.

5.5 CURRICULUM AS A POLITICAL AND CULTURAL TEXT

In the previous section, reasons as to why the curriculum need to be designed in context or for context were proffered. Henceforth, in this section the discussion focusses on curriculum as a socially constructed and selective account of what society considers worthwhile. As noted by Carr and Hartnett (2010), educational policies aim to address fundamental political questions considering that debates on education unavoidably focus on alternative views on good education and good society. This, according to Pinar (2004), is what makes the curriculum a political text. Pinar reasoned that:

If public education is the education of the public, then public education is, by definition, a political, psycho-social, fundamentally intellectual reconstruction of self and society, a process in which educators occupy public and private spaces in-between the academic disciplines and the state (and problems) of mass culture, between intellectual development and social engagement, between erudition and everyday life. (2004, p. 15)

Pinar (2004) did not hide the fact that politics and culture are veritable tools in curriculum planning and drives the content of the curriculum. In pointing out how politics is at play in the Zimbabwean curriculum, Appendix A (papers 2, 5 and 7) stress that there is pressure on

teachers to induct learners into ‘exam-thinking’ and that it seemed unpatriotic to question some educational guiding principle. This observation and the workshop data presented in Chapter Seven, where teachers grumble about the homogenous nature of the education system and how one could be regarded a member of the opposition political party if they dare question the received content of the day, reflects the intensely political nature of the Zimbabwean curriculum.

Another example is how different political parties use public education as a campaign strategy. In 2013 Zanu PF cited primary and secondary school enrolment (1980-2012) as one of their political achievements in post-independence Zimbabwe; they promised to devote the largest portion of the national budget to education (Zanu PF Manifesto, 2013, p. 63). The MDC Alliance party had a list of 24 pledges on education that include provision of free primary school education, provision of adequate learning and teaching materials and rehabilitating and expanding education facilities among other pledges (MDC Alliance Manifesto, 2018, pp. 64-65). Apart from the political manifestoes, it could also be argued that since 1980 the postcolonial government has retained control of what teachers are permitted and what learners are permitted to learn via the established national curriculum development unit (CDU). The CDU develops curriculum material for schools and also approves textbooks to be used in schools.

According to Pinar et al. (2008), the systematic effort of understanding curriculum as a political text emerged in the 1970s following the Marxist or neo-Marxist tradition and critical theory which has become, in the last few decades, the dominating approach in the curriculum field. Apple (1990) reinforced this point of view by acknowledging that political perspective is identified with the neo-Marxist argumentation on structural power relations, social class, and oppression. However, Wahlström (2018) took a somewhat different perspective by equating the political with the Deweyan notion of a philosophy of education, where every educational act yields philosophical implications as there is political-philosophical approach that is unspoken in every educational line of reasoning. Here, the question is not so much about the inherent philosophical idea, but rather how the idea is articulated. Literature is replete with assertions that education is a field that is intensely political and that political contestations are more forceful in the making of the schools’ curriculum (see Freire, 1998; Giroux, 2005; Apple, 2008). Brennan (2011) posited that questions of politics and questions

of education are inextricably intertwined in the processes of authorising a national curriculum.

The political contestations that arise during curriculum making are evidence that curriculum is not politically neutral, and schools are not ideologically innocent sites of learning (Apple, 2008; Giroux, 2005). Rather the curriculum and schools are a product of politics and interest groups (Giroux, 1994). This is because they reflect the power dynamic extant in a society and the ideological contestations that make the curriculum a purveyor of values, knowledges and culture that are never inclusive of all groups in society (Apple, 2008). Thus, the observation that since policies on education are shaped by discussions that unavoidably include alternative perspectives on a noble education system which translates into an honourable society, they consequently address vital political questions (Wahlström, 2018).

Therefore, even though Taba (1962) argued that to develop a balanced curriculum, one needs to study both the learners' needs and interests and the "economic, political, social, and cultural character of the society" (ibid., p. 33), the curriculum has consequently remained a cultural and political text. For De Alba (1999), the school's curriculum is ordinarily a "political-educational project constituted by a synthesis or an articulation of cultural elements derived from fights, impositions and negotiations amongst different social subjects" (De Alba 1999, p. 481). Wahlström (2018), cited Carr and Hartnett (2010), who reasoned that the political perspective in education is anchored on four conditions namely:

...that school always is embedded in society because its task is to reproduce the cultural, social, and economic life of a particular society. The second is the inherent tension in education between social reproduction and social transformation. The third is that educational change is related to conflicts and disagreements between individuals and social groups regarding their views on how a good education is related to a good society. Finally, an ethical, informed discourse exists as to what questions to address in education and the ways in which they can be addressed. (Wahlström, 2018, p. 712)

Thus, curriculum is forthrightly an imprint of power and culture as discussed in paper 1 (Appendix A) where I observe that often cultural technologies of domination are employed in

shaping the contours of an education system. In practice, it must be understood that teaching is innately a political act, and consequently teachers are often regarded as political and social beings (Freire, 1998). As a result, teaching and learning occur in socially constructed contexts marked by a rigorous and embryonic arbitration of meanings. This entails that the subjects that teachers teach, and their pedagogical choices are politically and culturally laden as these accord with the political and cultural nature of the curriculum (Freire, 1970; Shor & Freire, 1987; Apple, 2008). According to Shor and Freire (1987), schools are marketing sites of official ideology which is the reason why the curriculum and the didactic lecture predominate as the educational forms for containing teachers and learners inside the official consensus.

Following this notion, there is indication that the heritage-based Zimbabwean curriculum is framed within the outlines of what Popkewitz, Pereyra and Franklin (2001, p.17) referred to as “an apparatus for the social reproduction of national identities through the development of the individual to the images and narratives of nationhood”. Thus, the Philosophy for Children formative intervention is positioned as a political activity which is aimed at decolonising both the theory and praxis of the present curriculum (Appendix A, papers 5 and 7). This is because heritage within the national curriculum represents a combination of history, memory, and identity, and if not carefully worked with, the heritage component of the curriculum might become subject the “political instrumentalization of the past” (Grever, 2009, p.47) as the curriculum planners may superficially interpret it and the associated *unhu/ubuntu* educational philosophy (see Appendix A paper 1) for instrumental purposes. Amasa Ndofirepi calls for the hybridisation of Philosophy for Children in Africa arguing that “the notion of philosophizing as a critical activity is sensitive to context and does not have a place for forms of ready-made texts, concepts, methods, or values” (Ndofirepi, 2014, p. 203). Sensitivity to context does not entail acquiescence to ideological loadings because the practice of Philosophy for Children in schools emerges from the live experiences of the learners rather than ‘doxa assumptions’ of the society (Appendix A, paper 1) or an instrumentalisation of the past. Ndofirepi’s hybridisation of Philosophy for Children is aimed at ensuring that Africa (Zimbabwe included) can creatively interlink the external (Western influence) in the context of an internal pluriverse and, as philosopher Gyekye remarked, “weave a cultural mesh” (Gyekye, 1997, p. 296). The following section reflects on how a curriculum if politically or culturally overloaded can make learners feel (un)home/ alienated in education.

5.6 THE PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN CURRICULUM: HISTORICAL TO CONTEMPORARY – A BRIEF RE-VISIT

In Chapter One I described the two generations of Philosophy for Children; in this section I briefly revisit the Philosophy for Children curriculum and work towards describing the emergence of the third generation. During the formative stages of the Philosophy for Children programme there was only one curriculum which was published by the Institute of the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC). According to Lipman, Sharp and Oscanyan (1980) the IAPC curriculum originated in 1969 and by 1974 the curriculum had expanded significantly. The IAPC curriculum was staged throughout grades K – 12 and was inspired by the belief that philosophy cannot be force-fed to people; they must be ‘delighted’ in doing it. As a result the curriculum was designed to present philosophy in a dialogical manner, one in which teaching and learning happen in concert (Goering, Shudak, & Wartenberg, 2013). In essence, the first generation Philosophy for Children curriculum was more of an essentialist curriculum in the sense that it was generally textbook-based. Aware of the likely weakness of a textbook dominated practice, the second generation curriculum was designed in such a way that it embodied the values to make it attractive across generations and within a diversity of cultures. In it aspects such as doing philosophy with pictures (Murris, 1997) and use of stories were included as children learn best in a nurturing, child-initiated play-based environment that fosters self-confidence, trust, creativity, autonomy and acceptance of individual differences (Shudak, 2013). The third generation Philosophy for Children curriculum with which I am working, brings in the idea of decolonial futures as it emphasises development of diversity in reasoning in heritage-based contexts for purposes of making sure that children develop a strong sense of identity and competences in contexts that are relevant to their life worlds (see Appendix A, papers 4 and 5). Each of these developments in Philosophy for Children aimed for children not to feel (un)home/ alienated in education; rather schools should facilitate learning and development in the context of a caring community of learners.

5.7 (UN) HOME/ ALIENATED IN EDUCATION? PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN BRINGS A DIFFERENT KEY

Educational experiences during colonial times and now under the weight of coloniality “tend toward formalism and decontextualization” (Morris, 2009, p. 85). Banana (1987) lamented

that education in colonial Zimbabwe, as in any other colonial situation, involved the washing away of local indigenous culture and its replacement by Western values founded on exploitative capitalism; paradoxically this has remained the situation in postcolonial states (see Appendix A, paper 1). Viewed from the resettlement schools' perspective this has forced learners in resettlement schools like Sebakwe to feel “(un)home in education” (Morris, 2009, p. 83), or alienated, as they find no direct correlation between school experiences and their life-world (see, Appendix A, papers 2, 4 and 6). Here, life-worlds as lived experiences are essential as “lived experiences function as sites of knowledge” (Watkins, 2009, p. 155). This reflects sentiments by curriculum theorist Hollis Caswell (1901-1989) that curriculum is a set of experiences and therefore learners must experience what they learn.

Following Banana (1987) and Morris (2009) and the reality that the curriculum is still abstracted from the life world of the learners (see Appendix A, paper 1), I discovered that most teachers (myself included) were teaching the current generation of learners out of their tradition and re-inscribing a popular culture and a foreign identity. Thus, the decision to introduce Philosophy for Children anchored in an Afrophilia learning lens in the Zimbabwean curriculum that departs from the traditional norm and becomes a form of ‘heretical curriculum work’ (Morris, 2009). I consider the praxis of my formative intervention heretical in the sense that I continually question my line of practice to ‘remember’ (wa Thiong’o, 2009) how I can get everyone participating in the classroom and how the curriculum can take root from local heritage knowledges and how I can build strong partnership with parents and teachers in the selection of curriculum content. Bringing in learners’ life experiences into the curriculum is essential as Hwu (2008, p. 193) observed that “curriculum is the neverending trace of the text of everyday life”.

Philosophy for Children has been theorised and an educational approach has been developed; here I reflect on the praxis of the programme and how it influences ‘possibilities of more meaningful times ahead’. Finding meaningful times is one of the dilemmas of postcolonial societies, because at the moment “we live in the present historical conjuncture” (Reynolds, 2009, p. 20) that is politicised and our learning institutions are ideological market places (Shor & Freire, 1987). Furthermore, curriculum reforms are done so that children acquire skills, the lifestyle, and ambiance that coloniality prescribes and which suits the extant official ideology. In this way the curriculum is designed in a way that it demands less of

learners and teachers, the content of the curriculum is authoritatively spelled out, and learners are expected to passively regurgitate it (Ellis, 2003). Correspondingly, the teacher is expected to follow an already made syllabus and deliver the content.

An education system that make learners feel (un)home or alienated is well illustrated in the writing of Paulo Freire, a pedagogue and theoretician. According to Freire (1970, p. 45):

The teacher talks about reality as if it were motionless, static, compartmentalized, and predictable. Or else he expounds on a topic completely alien to the existential experience of the students. His task is to "fill" the students with the contents of his narration— contents which are detached from reality, disconnected from the totality that engendered them and could give them significance. Words are emptied of their concreteness and become a hollow, alienated, and alienating verbosity.

In such an education Freire (1970) observed the main affliction to be “narration sickness”. He described this as the “banking concept of education” (ibid., p. 46) marked by the learners as the depositories and the teacher as the depositor. Subsequently he listed ten attitudes and practices of the banking concept which he said are also reflective of an oppressive society (Freire, 1970, pp.46-47). These are:

1. The teacher teaches and the students are taught;
2. The teacher knows everything and the students know nothing;
3. The teacher thinks and the students are thought about;
4. The teacher talks and the students listen – meekly;
5. The teacher disciplines and the students are disciplined;
6. The teacher chooses and enforces his choice, and the students comply;
7. The teacher acts and the students have the illusion of acting through the action of the teacher;
8. The teacher chooses the programme content, and the students (who were not consulted) adapt to it;

9. The teacher confuses the authority of knowledge with his or her own professional authority, which he or she sets in opposition to the freedom of the students; and
10. The teacher is the subject of the learning process, while the pupils are mere objects.

This approach as observed from these ten attitudes and practices limits the learners' possibilities because it is predominantly teacher-centred. Subsequently, the learners' inventiveness is substantially reduced and the most cogent implication is uniformity of learning experiences no matter how abstracted they might be from the learners' life world (Kysilka & Davis, 2014). Such an education lacks the capacity to develop in learners an intuitive understanding of their environment and the world in which they live.

Bringing in Philosophy for Children into the school's curriculum as I did in schools in the Sebakwe community, brings about a different orientation to curriculum reform because philosophy for children is "a growing field of inquiry that poses deep questions about teaching, learning and schooling, and that has a profound contribution to make to broader debates about childhood, education, community and democracy" (Gregory et al. , 2017, p. xxii). Evidently, since its introduction by Mathew Lipman in the 1970s (Ndofirepi, 2012), the educational approach has offered a distinctive and critical take on broad curriculum issues such as the teacher's role, inclusive education, democracy in education and development of diversity in reasoning (see Eze, 2008; Appendix A, paper 4) and emotional literacy. The practice of Philosophy for Children via the community of inquiry pedagogy make it possible for discussants during the inquiry process to surpass disciplinary boundaries inherent in the curriculum and steer new possibilities for rational inquiry (Gregory et al., 2017).

To ensure the possibility of ordaining rational inquiry in the classroom, there is need for teachers to learn the art of "responding in a spirit of inquiry, rather than trying to provide answers, that mattered" (Mohr Lone, 2012) and this is a distinctive aspect supported by Philosophy for Children. Mohr Lone claimed that as humans we develop the capacity to reflect on the oddity of our situation through engaging in philosophical questions. Such an experience where a discussion can focus on metaphysical questions, for example, is exclusive in Philosophy for Children and as Mohr Lone (2012) observed, it "can be both intellectually inspiring and emotionally supportive" (ibid., p. 43) for both adults and children. Moreover,

Philosophy for Children can liberate learners from their (un)home situation in school by connecting adults with the special capacities present in childhood (wonder and curiosity, vibrant awareness and imagination), a situation that is mostly uncommon in the Zimbabwean school curriculum.

5.8 HOW CAN A NATIONAL CURRICULUM OBSTRUCT OR SUPPORT PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN AS A PRACTICE IN SCHOOLS?

Previously, I looked at how the practice of Philosophy for Children could be moved “beyond deficit models” (Gregory et al., 2017, p. 35) to bring about a different orientation/ new direction in curriculum that is context sensitive. However, Philosophy for Children is an unusual approach in Zimbabwean schools. In this section, I examine how a national curriculum could obstruct or promote the practice of Philosophy for Children in schools. Thus, the section explores how to make philosophy for children more doable and sustainable in schools especially in areas where it has not yet been introduced. David Shapiro noted that for Philosophy for Children to be promoted in schools, it needs a time slot on the school timetable (Shapiro, 2012). In his book *Plato Was Wrong! Footnotes on Doing Philosophy with Young People*, Shapiro (2012) explained how he got a time slot in Mr. Reed’s fifth-grade class. For any curriculum subject or programme to be successful, learners should be able to spend a substantial amount of time on it:

The key thing is finding some threads to sew P4C into the fabric of your school, so that it isn’t just an occasional treat but something that children will remember as a treasured part of their school experience.

While it is important to give the programme a slot in the timetable, it must be noted that giving time alone is not enough as this does not guarantee effective learning. One of the important features of P4C is that it is real, responsive, unpredictable dialogue, not pseudo dialogue in which the children are speaking so that their skills can be assessed, or their knowledge evidenced (Mohr Lone , 2012). Thus, in order to make it work in the classroom there is a need to empower the teachers as curriculum agents. This is because the process of establishing a worthwhile curriculum lies in seeking out content that is useful or relevant, and if teachers are empowered, they can play a greater role in ensuring this happens (Barrow, 1984). Again, this is how curriculum fidelity could be established because its deficiency

affects the effective introduction of the Philosophy for Children programme in schools. Other obstructions to Philosophy for Children in schools are discussed in Chapter Seven where I discuss curriculum barriers or rather the issues that militate against development of a culture of learning in schools and development of critical reflexive thinking in learners. One of the issues discussed there is the overemphasis on quantitative measurement in the evaluation of teacher and learner competence.

5.9 PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN AND THE LEARNING AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM

Philosophy for Children covers many infant and junior school curriculum objectives and the skills developed enhance learning potential and school life in general. It is easier to envisage how Philosophy for Children can enrich infant and junior school Languages and Humanities (Heritage and LOP - Social Studies; Family, Religion and Moral Education (FAREME); however, in practice learners can reap the benefits of Philosophy for Children in a diverse range of learning areas. According to Mohr Lone (2012), using Philosophy for Children to deliver different subjects adds variety to the curriculum. To explore this point further, Gregory et al. (2017) supported the position that Philosophy for Children helps children to think in new, challenging, and unfamiliar ways that can potentially enhance their engagement and understanding of what they are being taught. Below I discuss the many ways in which Philosophy for Children can support the curriculum in Zimbabwe.

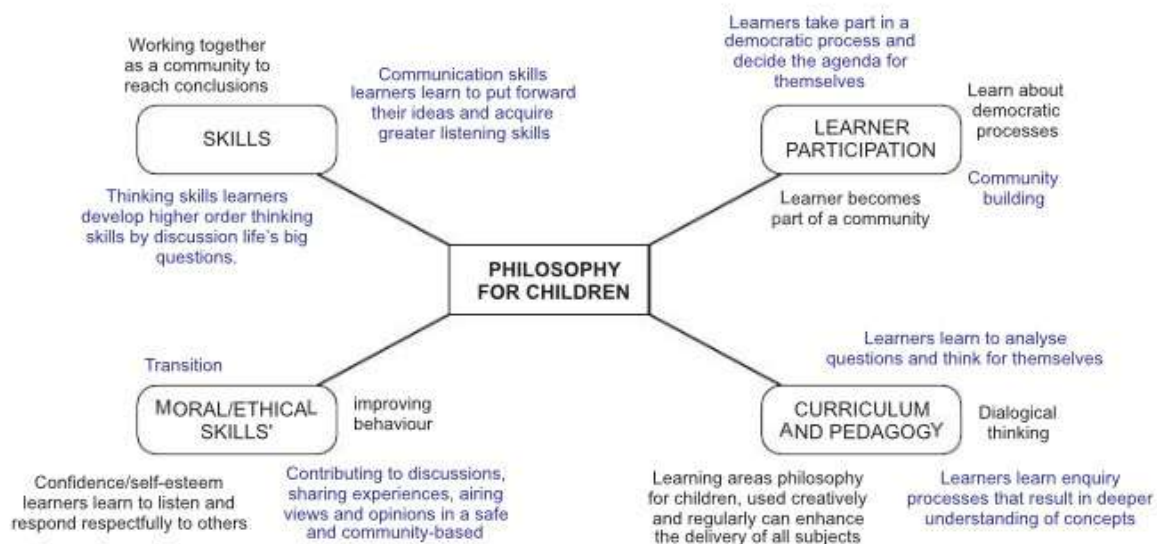


Figure 5.1: Philosophy for children and its supporting pillars to the curriculum

5.10 THE GENERATIVE CURRICULUM MODEL

5.10.1 Development of the generative curriculum model

The first step in developing a generative curriculum model¹⁴ was to find commonalities between the generative curriculum that stems from the Afrophilia reflexive lens selected by teachers, parents, and learners (see Appendix A, papers 2-7) and the mandated national curriculum (MoPSE, 2014). Then, as the formative insider interventionist I was involved in deciding on the prescribed curriculum vital to generative curriculum, included reading, writing, and participating in group discussion. Important for this study is the fact that, the generative curriculum utilised in this study has a different orientation from the competence-based model extant in Zimbabwean schools.

The generative curriculum developed in this study was successful in involving parents and teachers as explained in Chapter Two and in developing an effective, culturally consistent learning programme (Appendix A, paper 6). Thus, it was focused on building an open curriculum to bridge the culture extant in the Sebakwe community being served and the British colonial culture embodied in the Zimbabwean school's curriculum (CIET, 1999). Furthermore, the model was consistent with the decolonial thought discussed in Chapter Four and arises from the view that useful knowledge exists in interaction, or in praxis (Freire, 1972). According to Shor and Freire (1987), such knowledge is mutable rather than immutable as it takes its form from the environment in which it was created and is endlessly transforming. This is because it evolved from a decolonial valuing of 'multi-voicedness' (see paper 4 and Chapter Two) and an insistence upon situating alternative constructions of experiences with reference to the historical, cultural, political and personal context in which those constructions were generated.

5.10.2 A 'generative curriculum' for supporting critical reflexive thinking in Afrophilia learning settings

Burns (1995) defined a generative curriculum as an unprescribed, creative, intuitive curriculum that evolves by way of children's inquiries, questions, and interests. In practice,

¹⁴ According to Ndawi and Maravanyika (2014), a model offers depth explanations on the nature, structure, and scope of the curriculum.

this model draws from the learner's life world and thus as Rogoff (2003) observed, opening a door to the development of culturally specific understandings of educational ideas and practices and the educational needs of Africa's ethnically diverse communities. Thus, the generative curriculum model as reflected in the articles prepared for publication and in this chapter, is aimed at making educational experiences more authentic. This is because the model as practised within the community of inquiry framework motivates and provides ownership as it allows for choices in what learners would want to learn (see Appendix B).

The Philosophy for Children formative intervention presented in this study focuses on the fact that children's learning needs to be reality-based rather than abstract. This is guaranteed by making sure that learners have a choice in what they learn and are meaningfully engaged in the learning process (Burns, 1995). In doing philosophy with children, most questions for philosophical discussion within the community of inquiry emerge from the learners themselves they are not predetermined by the teachers or some form of curriculum guide. This resonates well with one of Manning and Manning's (1991) observations that in a generative curriculum the topics or themes for discussion are expansive and evolve from the interests and curiosities of the learners. Manning and Manning (1991) further commented that these topics or themes that go beyond textbook knowledge (Appendix A, papers 4 and 6) and often stem from the social issues that resonate with learners personally.

5.10.3 Learners' and teachers' roles in a generative curriculum

Since the Philosophy for Children generative curriculum is to be developed by a community of teachers, parents, learners, and education inspectors by drawing on the learners' interests and experiences as a significant incentive, the learners are expected to play a part in supporting the learning process. As explained in Chapter One, the learners "help plan and develop curriculum and are expected to be active participants and responsible learners" (Turkanis, 2001, p. 91). Thus, all participant learners are included in decision making and they all can choose appropriate questions for philosophical engagement (see Appendix A, paper 6). Interesting for this study is how teachers are expected to utilise knowledge of the Philosophy for Children programme to build bridges to parents and community, and to involve them in the life of the school (Rogoff et al., 2001; see papers 2, 3 and 6).

It follows then that in a generative curriculum model, every participant is a potential source of insight (Mohr Lone, 2012). Concurrently, all members of the community of inquiry within a generative curriculum are expected to do their best to actively listen to what others are saying to understand them – no point of view is accepted uncritically. Both teachers and learners are expected to ask for reasons, pointing out consequences, or clarifying implications (Gregory et al., 2017).

From the preceding discussion, it becomes evident that greater emphasis is on helping learners to become engaged through learning not only from the teacher but from each other. The role of the teacher is supportive, nurturing, and facilitating, in other words anything to enable children to grow in confidence and to enjoy their learning (Shor & Freire, 1987). As mentioned before the teacher is a co-inquirer and “can also be mistaken and learn anew through enquiry. Otherwise, without this genuineness, 'the teacher' will be unconvincing and, consequently, ineffective in nurturing 'the learner's self-esteem, critical awareness and autonomy” (Lane & Lane, 1986, p. 268; see Appendix A, papers 4, 5, 6 and 7). This concurs with Dewey whose description of the role of the teachers in a community of inquiry eliminates the dichotomy of teacher-controlled learning and learner-controlled learning. According to Dewey (1938):

It is possible of course [for a teacher] to abuse the office, and to force the activity of the young into channels which express the teacher's purpose rather than that of the pupils. But the way to avoid this danger is not for the adult to withdraw entirely. The way is, first, for the teacher to be intelligently aware of the capacities, needs, and past experiences of those under instruction, and, secondly, to allow the suggestion made to develop into a plan and project by means of the further suggestions contributed and organized into a whole by the members of the group. The plan, in other words, is a co-operative enterprise, not a dictation. The teacher's suggestion is not a mold for a cast-iron result but is a starting point to be developed into a plan through contributions from the experience of all engaged in the learning process. (p. 85)

Dewey's sentiments add political depth to transformative learning as they introduce a practice that is different from the traditional curriculum – the teacher also learns from the

learners. Thus, this generative curriculum is the space where both the teacher and learners can get in touch with their own subjectivity because it offers them space for contact with their own reality (Shor & Freire, 1987). However, emphasis is on the fact that the crucial role of the teacher is to safeguard the philosophical dimension of community of inquiry approach (Murris, 2008; see Appendix A, paper 3).

5.11 CONCLUDING REMARKS

This chapter provided a general overview of the curriculum field and a set of concepts for analysing that field. It discusses coherence and consistency in defining concepts and goes on to establish a distinction between curriculum and education. The rationale of the theory in this study was provided with an acknowledgement that the theory helped me to work with three curriculum variables: relationship between every day and specialised knowledge; relationship between specialisations; and relationship inside specialisations (see Appendix A, paper 6 and Chapter 7 on how these intergrations between and within specialisations were done). Knowledge of the theory led me to argue in support of a generative curriculum which as viewed concurrently with the findings presented in papers 3, 4, 6 and 7 in Appendix A was successful in involving parents, teachers, education inspectors, and children in developing an effective, culturally consistent learning programme. The chapter also discusses how Philosophy for Children could bring about a different orientation in curriculum theory and educational practice. One of the key arguments of the chapter is the need to make a connection between concepts and context because this is how learning could be made relevant to the learners' life world and enhance development of critical reflexive thinking in children. In the following chapter, I provide a narrative account of my publishing journey. This chapter is crucial in this thesis because publications are the main focus of the study as it is a PhD by publication. Generally the publications introduce and present findings of the Afrophilic Philosophy for Children "formative intervention"¹⁵ work that I was doing in the Sebakwe resettlement primary schools' area, with details thereof contained in the papers themselves.

¹⁵ In formative interventions, a researcher collects mirror data to assist practitioners in developing an understanding of their own practice by interpreting and transforming what could have initially been presented as a problem into a meaningful challenge (Cole & Engeström, 2007). The interventionist is the researcher who conducts intervention work and is responsible for initiating and sustaining an expansive transformation process that is led and owned by the practitioners or the participants (Postholm, 2020, paper 2).

CHAPTER SIX

A NARRATIVE REPORT OF MY PUBLICATIONS JOURNEY

6.0 INTRODUCTION

This chapter provides a narrative report on my publication journey because the articles that I published and prepared for publication during my PhD journey are the foundation of my thesis. The experiences I published and prepared for publication are based in part on the experiences and words of the participants in the formative intervention study with whom I worked (see papers 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7 in Appendix A). I have a great deal of affection and respect for the work they do, the responsibility to keep the Afrophilia experiences alive, knowing first-hand what it entails and what it takes. However, the story in this chapter is told in part through the words of various journal editors and reviewers who, at the time of writing, have provided critical feedback on most of my articles. I will thus present the abstract for each article that I prepared and then discuss the key points in reviews of the article. Following this is a discussion on how I responded to the key points that were raised by the reviewers and how my engagement with the reviews advanced my article and the project overall. For ease of interpreting the next section, readers may consult the papers in Appendix A, for reference, as they interpret my reflections on the construction of these papers.

6.1 PAPER 1: DECOLONIAL REFLECTIONS ON THE ZIMBABWEAN PRIMARY AND JOURNEY SECONDARY SCHOOL CURRICULUM REFORM **Published in *Educational Research for Social Change*, 10(2), pp. 101-115**

In this section, I present the abstract of my first article which is a conceptual article which was published in the *Educational Research for Social Change (ERSC)* journal's 19th edition in 2020.

ABSTRACT (see Appendix A, paper 1, for the full-length article)

The Zimbabwean curriculum reform journey is shaped by the weight of cultural technologies of domination employed in the country during British imperial rule (1890–1980). Moreover, these imperial forms of domination that, paradoxically, continue to exist today influence the sociocultural and political institutions in the country and delineate what is epistemologically

feasible. In addition, the inherited education curricula, specifically at primary school level (the focus of this study) were theoretically and pedagogically disengaged from the lifeworlds of the learners they intended to educate. In this conceptual article, I challenge this colonially inherited education and the paradox of superficial interpretation of *unhu/ubuntu* (ironically, a doxa in the postcolonial Zimbabwean education system). Further, I suggest considering epistemic depth in pedagogy as an experience that transforms education and society.

Keywords: decolonial philosophy, curriculum reform, superficial philosophy, cultural technologies of domination, heritage education, social abjection

6.1.1 Type and focus of the article

The article is a conceptual piece that argues for transformation of the curriculum in Zimbabwe. I interpret and situate *unhu/ubuntu* philosophy as a decolonial Philosophy for Curriculum transformation. It is an important anchoring article because my work and the Zimbabwean curriculum that I worked with are based on the philosophy, and it also introduces the decolonial theory that guided my research. My area of focus was the primary school curriculum because that is the target level for my study and because I am a primary school teacher with 17 years' experience. The call for curriculum transformation was motivated by the need to challenge inherited colonial paradigms and replace them with more indigenous theories and practices. In line with African philosophers such as Hountondji (1996) and Eze (2008), I called for a validation of indigenous ways of knowing, rather than mere acceptance of Western knowledge as the only valid basis for curriculum design. The conclusion of my article suggests a deeper level of epistemic exploration and understanding.

When the article was sent for reviews one of the most outstanding critiques that was raised by the reviewers is that by recommending a deeper level of epistemic exploration than doxa, I was perhaps paradoxically recommending a re-inscription of Western values into the curriculum. The other suggestion was that I should clarify some of the concepts that were unclear in the manuscript. Reviewers' comments and suggestions were all addressed and a cover letter in response to their reviews was prepared and sent to the journal with the following contents.

6.1.2 Cover letter in response to the reviewers' comments

I worked on clarifying concepts that were unclear in the first edition. The reviewers specifically stated that the concept “**cultural technologies of domination**” must be made clear to readers for them to understand this. Thus, I added a footnote explaining how the concept should be understood and applied in the paper. ‘Cultural technologies of domination’ in the paper and in the study represent the synthesis of religion, culture, political economic development, ideology, and monolithic epistemic access options in the curriculum that suppress the culture, knowledges, religion, and ideologies of colonised people. See also a quote under the section: **Colonial history of curriculum and how it influenced pedagogy**, where italics have been added to emphasise how these components perceived to be essential in human relations were used to shape the African education curriculum in ways that excluded the African child’s lived experiences.

I also went back over parts of the paper where there were repetitions and rewrote the section if this was necessary to reinforce an idea or argument. The repeated areas were simply deleted in some cases. The curriculum documents that formed the basis of the paper’s analysis were stated in full in the context and background section, and I then used their acronyms. Where ideas or claims were made without references, references were added.

Reviewers suggested reworking the discussion and conclusion sections of the paper in the final section of their recommendations, citing that I appeared to have made a leap into including logic and rationality. I responded by rephrasing other sections of the discussion to emphasise that there was no return or re-inscription of Western values, as the paper argues that *unhu/ubuntu* should be the foundation upon which other values are built. The aim was to reinforce philosophical values that would aid in shifting the focus of pedagogy away from doxa (commonly held opinion) and towards epistemic depth. The philosophical values enshrined here are not necessarily Western, as they are values inherent in any philosophy of the world (see Bodunrin, 1981; Hountondji, 1996; Eze, 1997; 2008; Van Niekerk, 2013), who argued that African philosophy, like any other philosophy, begins in wonder and includes, among other practices, conscious reflection on one’s beliefs or on the thought systems of a community.

I emphasised the importance of cultivating aspects of reasoning in diversity premised on the principles of *unhu/ubuntu*, as this appears to be the missing link in the Zimbabwe’s

curriculum transformation discourse. It is important to note how postcolonial education reform narratives emphasise a need to foster development of critical thinking skills and autonomous thinking; however, this will be paradoxical if done in the absence of a theory or philosophy of education that refers to reasoning in diversity, logic, and rationality as the fronting principles built and grounded on *unhu/ubuntu* rather than as fronting principles. As reflected in the paper, we are confronted with a succinct question about how the postcolonial African focus on curriculum transformation can avoid the ‘dialectics of opposites’ (Eze, 2008), particularly those that emerge between the need to maintain an African identity (ontological being status) and the need for epistemic depth engagement in pedagogy, which calls for inclusion of a diverse conception of knowledge heritages from diverse geo-epistemic locations in the curriculum. As a result, I recommend that this paper be read in light of an urgent need to collapse the limitations of doxa that lead to superficial interpretations of *unhu/ubuntu* philosophy and to strike a balance between the fronting of identity politics (ontological being status) and foregrounding of epistemic depth in curriculum reform.

6.1.3 Value of the article to my scholarship and the entire project

Conceptual articles are spaces in which an original concept rather than original data is presented for the purposes of facilitating theory development (Jaakkola, 2020). A deeper discussion on this aspect is presented under the heading “Technical practical lessons learned on journal publishing” towards the end of this chapter. In my conceptual article I developed a critical macrohistorical political sociology of the colonial history of the curriculum. Of interest to me was how this has influenced pedagogy both during colonial rule and in the current postcolonial period. For this work I focused on two main documents that are also key to the entire project:

1. Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training (CIET, 1999)
2. Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE, 2014)

The documents are of major importance to the contemporary Zimbabwean education system because they are the main informants of the reforms that are currently taking place in schools.

However, since I was interested in gaining a deeper understanding of the history of formal education in Zimbabwe I made use of two more documents that were critical in shaping the direction of formal colonial education not only in Zimbabwe but in a majority of African states especially those that were under British colonial rule. The documents are: *The dual mandate*

in British Tropical Africa (Lugard, 1922) and *An African survey: A study of problems arising in Africa south of the Sahara* (Hailey, 1938). While the first two documents were written in postcolonial Zimbabwe and make a precise ideological standpoint against the colonial education system positing that it is laden with legacies of discrimination carved along racial lines that translate into creation of social abjection (Rodney, 1981), the other two signify the period when “the colonising powers carried out a series of investigations into educational possibilities in Africa” (Rodney, 1981, p. 241) and initiated a transition from the Christianising purposes of formal colonial education to a more systematic and measurable approach to formal education. To achieve this, as I have argued in the article, the colonial masters used what I referred to (drawing on Terreblanche, 2014 who in turn draws on Foucault) as ‘cultural technologies of domination’ to conceal the hegemonic position of the colonial project of education in Africa. What I noticed with cultural technologies of domination is that they are embedded in epistemological positions and developmental discourse to such an extent that the victims may not notice their effects on their decolonial future endeavours. Sampie Terreblanche from whom I borrowed this concept advanced a point that because of the subtle nature of cultural technologies of domination, “the colonised internalized inferiority” (Terreblanche, 2014. p. 88).

According to Terreblanche (2014), as a result of the internalisation of inferiority the colonial empire was capable of co-opting collaborators in the postcolonial world and these assisted the colonial empires to maintain order and to administer the colonised peoples on their behalf, a point also made by other theorists e.g. Rodney (1981) and Mamdani (2018). As I reviewed the macrohistorical political sociology of the Zimbabwean education system, I also found the problem of a superficial interpretation of *unhu/ubuntu* decolonial philosophy of education by many of those who seek to decolonise the education system (see paper 1, where I discuss this in detail). These insights from my critical analysis of the education system opened my eyes to the profound complexities and paradoxes that stymie curriculum reforms in postcolonial Zimbabwe.

As a result, I used works by African philosophers Paulin J. Hountondji (1996; 2009), Emmanuel C. Eze (1997; 2001; 2008), and Kwasi Wiredu (1998; 2008) to support my decolonial position not only in the article but throughout the project (see Chapter Four). The shift from philosophical doxa to considering epistemic depth in pedagogy was a decision that

took my project from “sounding more like a political decision to inject more philosophy, particularly African philosophy, into primary education” (Alena Rettova, December, 2016, personal communication) to a learning-centred project aimed at fostering critical reflexive thinking skills in children and developing a culture of learning in the schools that were involved in the study.

While, Rettova’s sentiments as a critical reader could be true, that the idea of anchoring the curriculum or research project on the African philosophy of *unhu/ubuntu*, could be viewed by some people as an emotive and loaded decision which may stir negative emotions, in my research this was seen as a process of transformation and development which enables postcolonial communities to optimise not only the formal curriculum but also their own decolonial potential as independent communities. I give two reasons in support of this: primarily education has to be considered as something that takes place within a community and “norms and values [*all embedded in the philosophies of life*] of the latter often influence the curriculum” (Carl, 2009, p. 46, italics added). Thus, the relevant values inherent in the community may eventually determine how the school curriculum appears since the school and the community are interlinked (Dewey, 1932). Secondly, the humanistic and social turn reworking of the curriculum aligns with my project of seeking insight into a transformation orientation of curriculum which requires that the learner and the curriculum must integrate with the view of giving meaning to the latter (Miller, 1983). These views influenced my decision to adopt a Philosophy for Children approach with a sociocultural orientation in my study, as explained in Chapter Five. My second paper was specifically drafted to illuminate this perspective.

6.2 PAPER 2: A SOCIOCULTURALLY FRAMED PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN (P4C) APPROACH BASED ON UNHU/UBUNTU PHILOSOPHICAL FOUNDATIONS: A ZIMBABWE PRIMARY SCHOOLS’ CONTEXT. Submitted to *Journal of Contemporary Issues in Education* - waiting for editorial decision

ABSTRACT (see Appendix A, paper 2, for full length paper)

Zimbabwe's educational system is wrought by the weight of binaries between the adult and child worlds imposed by a colonially informed conventional pedagogy. Regardless of how far curriculum reform has progressed, an inherited epistemology and pedagogical muddle imposed on Zimbabwe's indigenous children persists. Furthermore, through exposing

children to a rigorous examination process, the emphasis on examination assessment scores widens the gap between the adult and child worlds, as well as the gap between contextual realities and examination content. This article provides qualitative empirical evidence to support the claim that the Philosophy for Children approach can be socioculturally framed and anchored on unhu/ubuntu dialectical rationality, thereby opening up possibilities for delinking and relinking with the broader praxis of curricula and pedagogical decolonisation. In order to support children's learning, it is recommended that educational reforms in the country consider the Philosophy for Children approach, which is underpinned by a sociocultural orientation that appears to give teachers appropriate agency to modify and adapt their pedagogies in alignment with the learners' life worlds. Through this research, teachers, parents, education administrators and children will be able to examine the ways in which they negotiate relationships and influence the classroom social context.

Keywords: sociocultural theory, curriculum reform, philosophy for children, unhu/ubuntu dialectical rationality, discourse analysis

6.1.1 Focus and value of the article to scholarship and the entire project

This is an empirical article that was originally submitted to the journal as a conceptual article. The reviewers suggested in their feedback that adding data to the article was worthwhile because it demonstrated evidence that some empirical work was being done in line with the philosophical tenets. Another suggestion from the reviewers was to conduct a thorough literature review of the Zimbabwean education system to help readers unfamiliar with the Zimbabwean education context understand the situation, as well as to combine my review of literature on sociocultural theory and Philosophy for Children into a single section.

As I was writing the empirical article version presented in Appendix A, I kept these suggestions in mind. Data for this article were gathered through document analysis, formative intervention workshops, community of inquiry lesson observations, and reflexive interviews as elaborated in Chapter Two. With these and through a decolonial discourse analysis of data scripts, four insights emerged namely: (a) Zimbabwe's decolonial curriculum reforms are complex and fraught with competing goals, (b) a Philosophy for Children approach underpinned by a sociocultural orientation empowers teachers to modify and adapt their pedagogies in accordance with the learners' life worlds, (c) socioculturally framed curricular

reforms are critical in the Sebakwe resettlement's emerging constellation of practices, such as actively involving children and encouraging intergenerational learning in a variety of school, family, and community activities; and (d) a socioculturally-framed Philosophy for Children inquiry influences power sharing beyond teacher-child relationships.

6.3 PAPER 3: AN AFROPHILIC P4C INTERVENTION: THE CASE OF SEBAKWE PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN ZIMBABWE

Published in *Journal of Philosophy in Schools*, 8(1), 6-32

ABSTRACT (see Appendix A, paper 3, for full-length article)

Decades of research and practical engagement with an educational approach known as Philosophy for Children (P4C) has documented and exemplified how the approach provides an optimum environment for the advancement of children's rationality in diversity, critical reflexive thinking, and problem-solving skills. While this is certainly important, there is still a need to expand insights into how curriculum reform and transformation in Zimbabwe emerge from Afrophilic P4C learning processes. Drawing on insights from my involvement in a formative intervention study in a Sebakwe schools cluster, the paper provides descriptions and practical insights on how children's participation in a sociocultural approach to Afrophilic P4C sessions contributed to educational theory and practice. The results showed that this formative intervention strengthens connections to children's lifeworlds and their engagement with the world. Moreover, in an education system with a pedagogy that is transfixed on technical disciplines of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and success in examination, the experiences and practices of children need to become alternative lenses for mediating epistemic engagement and developing a critical generative approach that considers heritage-based curriculum foundations in the Zimbabwe national schools' curriculum.

Keywords: Afrophilic learning process, children's lifeworlds, Community of Inquiry, curriculum transformation, rationality in diversity

6.3.1 Engagement with reviewers

The article was accepted with minor comments and suggestions from reviewers and editors of the journal. The first reviewer's comments were as follows:

"This is a very interesting and relevant paper. It is well written and would be of interest to readers of this journal. I only have two thoughts- both very

minor-regarding changes. First, there needs to be a bit more detail in the ethics section. I cannot see where it actually states that institutional consent was given, nor by which institution it was given. I also wonder whether any sensitive/controversial issues were pre-empted as potentially arising and how these were planned for/mediated. Second, the paper presents incredibly positive work. This is good, but were there no real tensions or issues involved? If there were, paying attention to these would add another level of depth to the analysis.” (Reviewer 1, December 14, 2020).

MY RESPONSE: Thank you for your appreciation and for bringing this to my attention. I have included the institutions that gave me ethics approval in the ethics section together with the ethical approval tracking number for my research is 2017.12.08.04 (see Appendix C).

The second reviewer’s comments were an invitation to me to think more deeply about the work that I am doing:

“The article clearly fits within the scope of the journal and the author presents research about p4c in a context that is original and relevant for those interested in p4c development within different contexts. The decolonial intention, the student outcomes, and pedagogical implications of the research are all interwoven, and all draw upon a very broad research base. Weaving all three together at times oversimplifies analysis or lends to jargon, but this is difficult to avoid in a short article. Overall, it’s more interesting to weave together the different threads than to simply focus on one thread. Given the brevity of the article and its analysis, the conclusion, helpfully identifies interesting areas for further research.” (Reviewer 2, December 14, 2020).

The reviewer went on to say:

“...given the many threads the author is trying to weave together, the argument sometimes seems choppy. However, the main ideas and methodology are clearly stated, and a reader will understand the overall relevance of the research even if they don’t follow a particular transition or reference. The abstract and introduction are particularly helpful for orienting the reader. While the methodology was new to me as a research methodology, it was adequately explained and familiar as a process for research. Comments were made on some of the transcript excerpts illustrating further or slightly different points. Appendices were helpful and interesting. Formatting adheres to author guidelines, but article would benefit from copy editing to catch inconsistencies in use of comments or parentheses. More comments have been provided in the text of the article manuscript (attached). Overall, I think article would benefit from clearer emphasis on how an Afrophilic p4c approach can impact student engagement, school curriculum, and understanding teachers’ roles.” (Reviewer 2, December 14, 2020)

MY RESPONSE: Thank you for appreciating the effort and for the insightful comments. Please note that I have done the corrections as suggested in the text of the article manuscript and I have also revisited the implications of Afrophilia Philosophy for Children section and made a clearer emphasis on the issues suggested. Please note: Reflections on the reflective artefacts that were selected reveal that Afrophilia learning lenses resonate well with the life experiences of the learners and the quality of their being-ness. Thus, Afrophilia Philosophy for Children has potential implications for how the school curriculum is to be organised as this translates into a new understanding of the teachers' roles and learner's engagement. As a way of example, the Afrophilia Philosophy for Children in this study, has a focus on Zimbabwean identity, norms, and values. Henceforth, for curriculum transformation to be reflective of this Afrophilic approach it must encompass heritage knowledges that are considered an important part of the Zimbabwean image (Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education [MoPSE], 2014). Furthermore, as noticed and reported in some of my other empirical work related to this project, (Appendix A, paper 3, submitted for publication) teachers utilising this approach become aware of the collective experiences of learners, hence they become alive to appreciating the pendulum shift from teacher-controlled learning to dialogue driven learning. This increases learner agency and their participative role in stirring the dialogue.

I have also added a few references in line with the changes and the references list has since been updated. Footnotes, though kept to a minimum have, been placed to clarify use of words such as 'braai' where a footnote has been placed to explain that the word means the same as grilling or barbecuing and for use of the lowercase 'p4c' where a footnote has been placed for emphasis that the lowercase signifies the version of 'Philosophy for Children' (p4c) that I worked with in my study that draws insights from Vygotsky and Lipman with great antecedence toward language socialisation and is couched within Afrophilic [*unhu/ubuntu*] learning foundations. Edits were also made to the findings paragraph which was said to be choppy.

The copy editor made a few suggestions aimed at improving the article. The first suggestion was to clarify the use of lower-case p4c. The second suggestion was that it may be more straightforward to introduce a term such as 'Afrocentric P4C' (unless there are other connotations of this term that the author would prefer to avoid) or 'Afrophilic P4C'

throughout, rather than p4c. ‘Afrocentric P4C’ has been suggested in the text below to replace p4c but might also work to interchange between Afrophilic P4C and Afrocentric P4C.

MY RESPONSE:

Thank you for your suggestion; take note that I have added a footnote clarifying my use of the lower-case p4c. Regarding your second suggestion, I believe that working to interchange Afrophilic P4C and Afrocentric P4C is the best way to reduce the dominantly political perspective associated with Afrocentric, or, if possible, can we completely drop the Afrocentric emphasis in favour of Afrophilic P4C, which is more congruent with the philosophical intent of my study.

Another suggestion made by the copy editor was to shorten the article title, which was originally: *A Sociocultural Philosophy for Children (p4c) Formative Intervention: Case of Sebakwe Primary Schools in Zimbabwe*, to the one that became the article's publication title: *An Afrophilic P4C intervention: The Case of Sebakwe Primary Schools in Zimbabwe*. I agreed to the publication title because it highlights the Afrophilic theme that runs throughout the article and reflects the philosophical intent of the work.

6.3.2 Focus and value of the article to scholarship and the entire project

The article provides grounding for bringing children’s heritage and cultural lenses to bear on curriculum and pedagogical praxis. Drawing upon insights gained through my data collection (document analysis, formative intervention workshops, community of inquiry lesson observations and reflexive interviews) I made use of an Afrophilic learning framework, specifically founded within the *unhu/ubuntu* philosophical framework, to develop a sociocultural approach to Philosophy for Children, in this instance, situated in Zimbabwe resettlement primary schools. The findings section of this article reflects those benefits commonly held dear to practitioners of P4C: critical and reflective thinking skills are evidenced, along with deep inquiry, and a learner-centred approach that builds enthusiastic engagement while also encouraging listening to others, as reported in paper 3.

Furthermore, the article and the whole study in general makes a connection to environment and cultural identity. This is witnessed when the Community of Inquiry (CoI) is infused with culture-based artefacts such as African proverbs, music, picture books, images and folklores (see also paper 4; article discussed under section 6.6 of this chapter). The approach that I utilised in the article and the research to which it makes a contribution resonates with the aim of decolonising the curriculum and supporting a pedagogy that is embedded within, and sensitive to, a specific cultural context. In this case, the praxis affords a synergy between P4C and the Zimbabwean heritage-based educational curriculum, serving to enrich both.

6.4 PAPER 4: PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN: A POTENTIAL PEDAGOGY FOR TRANSFORMATIVE EDUCATION IN ZIMBABWEAN RESETTLEMENT PRIMARY SCHOOLS

Published in *Moja: An Interdisciplinary Journal of African Studies*, 2(1), 67- 89

ABSTRACT (see Appendix A, paper 4, for full-length article)

Zimbabwe is currently experiencing high activity and spending on education as the country updates its primary and secondary school curricula. However, only a few rigorous studies have evaluated innovative approaches that can help transform the curriculum by integrating indigenous languages as intangible cultural heritage and promote educational transformation. This article provides reflections on findings of the larger study to which it contributes, as well as making recommendations for curriculum developers and teachers who may be developing pedagogical approaches without the benefit of an evidence-based implementation of a context-based P4C. The article proposes, based on data from the formative intervention study, that implementing a context based P4C is effective in strengthening strong community relationships, instilling pride in local heritage, and in advancing curriculum transformation.

Keywords: Transformative education, Philosophy for Children, Heritage language, Critical reflexivity

6.4.1 Engagement with reviewers

Reviewer 1: General commentary/narrative feedback

This article makes an important contribution to scholarship exploring the intersection of education, philosophy, language, decoloniality and liberation. The author succeeds in creating and sustaining a logical argument in the article, demonstrating the wealth of possibilities that P4C avails in the teaching and learning experience. The article showcases how P4C renders the world of the learner significant as a starting point in knowledge construction and acquisition processes in ways that promote learners' intellectual agency. It

also commendably deals with these issues with reference to a significant calibre of schools in Zimbabwe, that is, resettlement primary schools – schools which are infamous for acute shortage of teaching and learning materials and therefore heavily implicated in undermining of learners’ futures. Thus, I am beyond impressed by this article and I recommend that it be published in *Moja: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Africana Studies*. The only suggestions I would make for the author to improve the article is to ensure that all spellings are in American English. Secondly, I encourage the author to say a little bit more about resettlement primary schools so that readers are aware what kind of schools these are. By pointing out these schools’ material deprivation, the author will simultaneously justify the significance of P4C in these schools and lend credence to the research as a whole. Half a page to a page of text on this would be adequate. There are some technical issues about footnotes and where one begins to use the short form of a concept / label that I addressed in the text, so I won’t repeat them here. Overall, I have nothing on this article and am grateful for the opportunity to contribute towards quality control in *Moja: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Africana Studies*.

MY RESPONSE

Thank you for appreciating the work done in this article and for making suggestions aimed at improving the article and my scholarship in general. Please note that the spelling has been corrected to meet the journal specifications. I have also added a section titled ‘brief context of resettlement schools’ in order to make the readers aware of the context of these schools. Readers would note that a majority of these schools were founded between 2000 and 2005, shortly after the country’s compulsory land reform, and are still not formally registered as schools with the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education [MoPSE]. I hope, that though the section is not detailed enough due to word restrictions, it is well thought out to help readers grasp the context of the schools. The technical issues on footnotes and in text were addressed as suggested.

Reviewer 2: General commentary

The author attempts to tackle an interesting issue. However, the author needs to revisit the problem statement and make it clearer for the readers to follow. Moreover, the author does not describe the methodology in sufficient detail to carry the reader along. Another suggestion is that the author must use current documents other than MoPSE, 2014 and CIET,

1999. I therefore recommend that this paper be acceptable provided the issues raised have been addressed.

MY RESPONSE

Thank you for noting and raising these important issues. Please see the attached paper with tracked changes as suggested by the editorial team and notice how the problem statement has been revised in concert with the context of the study and also in line with the suggestions. Clarifications on the methodology have been made and please note a mind map of the critical reflective cycle with Afrophilic formative intervention has been added in figure 1.0 as shown in my revised manuscript. On the issue of my use of the CIET, 1999 and MoPSE, 2014 documents, please understand that these are the documents that shape and inform the contours of postcolonial Zimbabwean education. The CIET 1999 document presents findings from the only commission on education and training done in postcolonial Zimbabwe since 1980. As for MoPSE 2014 please note that this is the curriculum framework in use and thus cannot be ignored in deliberation on the education system in the country.

6.4.2 Focus and value of the article to scholarship and the entire project

The paper brings together existing evidence from the Philosophy for Children Afrophilic formative curriculum intervention study to develop a generative framework for good practice mechanisms for curriculum transformation in Zimbabwe. It utilises critical reflexivity as a methodology and reflects on empirical data mainly from reflective interviews with participants drawn from within the study area. In this paper I argue that context-based Philosophy for Children, if well implemented, could be an alternative approach in effecting educational transformation especially in postcolonial countries like Zimbabwe where there is need for educational rethinking to meet the demands of 21st century education. Also, as observed by reviewer 1, the article succeeds in creating and sustaining a logical argument, demonstrating the wealth of possibilities that P4C avails in the teaching and learning experience especially in resettlement schools. The focus on language as an intangible heritage deepened my understanding on how heritage knowledges and the tools or artefacts that embody them could be utilised in community of inquiry. Working on the article helped me engage with intangible heritage policies across the globe such as the Australia, Commonwealth Government's launch of a National Indigenous Languages Policy in 2009 for purposes of addressing the conundrum of language loss in indigenous communities. I was

also able to appreciate the fact that indigenous heritage and decolonisation issues are complex not only in my local context but regional and international as shown by the pledges made by the Canadian government and the on-going reforms in countries Kenya and Tanzania. The article situates the entire project in a position where it contributes to discussions on heritage and education and decolonisation especially in light of the International Decade of Indigenous Languages. International Decade of Indigenous Languages (IDIL 2022-2032), announced in February 2019 on the occasion of the end of the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages (IYIL 2019) in Mexico City. This is critical especially for the next article which is an empirical one focusing on the roles, practices and competences of teachers as they work with children via use of the Philosophy for Children pedagogical approach.

6.5 PAPER 5: IMPLICATION OF A SOCIOCULTURAL APPROACH TO PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN (P4C): FOR TEACHERS.

To be resubmitted for editorial decision to *South African Journal of Education*

ABSTRACT (see Appendix A, paper 5, for full-length article)

Teaching is a complex and subtle practice, and one's motivations for pursuing the profession should be carefully considered. It is important to pay attention to teachers' voices and what they do in the classroom because this may result in increased educational competitiveness and closing achievement gaps for all learners. The purpose of this paper is to offer a critical review of the implications for teachers' roles, competences, and practices of a sociocultural approach to philosophy for children formative intervention that was implemented in schools in the Sebakwe resettlement area in Zimbabwe. The question to be answered is "*what is the teacher's role in the context of the reforms taking place in the Zimbabwean education system*". Six dimensions of teacher roles surfaced from the approach to deepening epistemic engagement with the heritage-based intentions of the updated curriculum. These included the teacher's role as a decoloniser, facilitator, and pedagogical innovator among others. In conclusion a suggestion is made that further research should focus on learners' participation in community of inquiry as this contributes to the evaluation of the whole project as a formative intervention in Sebakwe primary schools.

Keywords: community of inquiry, pedagogical renewal, teacher's roles, formative intervention

6.5.1 Engagement with the editorial committee

Technical comments

- 1) Provide cover letter confirming that it is your own work, that it has not been published before and is not under simultaneous review elsewhere.
- 2) Keywords should be presented alphabetically
- 3) Adjust the Bibliography as per instructions in the Author Guidelines (pay attention to punctuation) – see examples attached.
- 4) Headings to be formatted as follows (starting with Abstract, Introduction, Method, Results, Discussion, Conclusion at Level 1)
- 5) Kindly provide us with a letter of confirmation from your Language Editor confirming that he/she edited your manuscript.
- 6) Provide recommendation for three national and three international reviewers.

MY RESPONSE

Thank you for taking the time to read the manuscript and for making helpful technical suggestions to ensure that it adheres to the journal's guidelines. Please note that the corrections and cover letter will be sent to you as soon as the manuscript is returned from the language editor.

6.5.2 Focus and value of the article to scholarship and the entire project

The article opens a discussion on the implications of the teachers' roles, practices, and competences of a sociocultural approach to Philosophy for Children formative intervention. This discussion viewed in the context of the study and curriculum transformation in general is critical as it challenges readers to rethink the role of the teacher in curriculum transformation both at micro level (classroom context) and at macro level (national curriculum development). Issues of teacher involvement in curriculum development are topical particularly in postcolonial nations where government are working on addressing the colonial imbalances in education through curriculum reforms. Subsequently, the issue of teacher involvement, their roles, practices, and competences lead to a discussion on teacher empowerment and autonomy. The findings of the article illustrate some functions of teacher empowered teacher and they open an agenda for future exploration on the notion of teacher involvement in curriculum designing and development.

Essentially, the article demonstrates how teachers' roles, practices, and competencies in the classroom tend to influence and affect the dynamics of curriculum development. It invites teachers, including myself, to read this paper in search of theoretical and practical pedagogical alternatives to authoritarian teacher-centered pedagogy. In Zimbabwe, for example, the current curriculum MoPSE (2014) was developed at the national level, and teachers were only involved after receiving training in the application of the updated competence-based curriculum at the district, cluster, and school levels. During the training, teachers' roles in the classroom began to be referred to as that of a facilitator. As I worked with the teachers in this formative intervention work, I discovered that curriculum developers quite often assign curriculum functions to teachers at the end of the implementation process when they were not involved from the start. From the six dimensions of teachers' roles, practices, and competences presented in the article, it could be seen that teaching as it occurred in the trailing of the philosophy for children intervention in the Sebakwe resettlement primary schools is more than the activities defined within the classroom walls and in the curriculum framework. One of the roles that emerged is that of teacher as decoloniser and pedagogical innovator; this motivated the development of the article that follows, which looks into the potential that philosophy for children has in fostering decolonisation and improvement of learning opportunities in the Sebakwe resettlement area.

6.6 PAPER 6: DECOLONIZATION AND IMPROVEMENT OF LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES: IMPACTS OF AFROPHILIC P4C CURRICULUM INTERVENTION IN SEBAKWE PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN ZIMBABWE

To be re-submitted for editor's decision to *Journal of Precollege Philosophy and Public Practice (Plato)*

ABSTRACT (see Appendix A, paper 6, for full-length article)

The Afrophilic Philosophy for Children (p4c) is a version of 'Philosophy for Children' that draws insights from Lev Vygotsky and Mathew Lipman with great antecedence toward language socialization and is couched within the philosophical foundations of unhu/ubuntu. This article which is part of the broader Afrophilic p4c study conducted in Sebakwe resettlement schools in Zimbabwe discusses how Afrophilic p4c can be a useful model for decolonization and improving learning opportunities, especially for children in disadvantaged schools. Drawing on my experience as an insider formative intervention researcher and

employing researcher reflexivity as a methodology, I argue that Afrophilic p4c contributes significantly to a heritage-based approach to transformative education. This work presents a "third space" by contextualizing curriculum content knowledge in a collaborative-learning-centred classroom setting, resulting in the development of cultural confidence and competence for learners. The implications of this paper and the study to which it contributes is that the integration of indigenous heritage knowledges with the sociocultural learning theory in the curriculum potentially leads to the advancement of higher order thinking skills in children. Finally, the article makes some recommendations regarding the need for additional research on this topic, specifically how more context-relevant curriculum and pedagogical interventions could be used to inform educational transformation in Zimbabwe.

Key words: Decolonisation; Afrophilia; Philosophy for children; Learning opportunities; Third space

6.6.1 Engagement with reviewers and the editorial team

We are asking for major revisions to the manuscript so that it can be revised and resubmitted for consideration for publication. Below are editorial suggestions to guide your revisions.

Typographical errors

- a. The manuscript contains an unusually high number of typographical errors. Please ensure that when you resubmit the manuscript it is as free of these kinds of errors as possible.

2. Use of unexplained terminology; Suggestion to add new section

- a. You use several terms that are not fully explained or that are raised early in the paper but only clarified later. We suggest adding a new section entitled "Central Concepts" (or something similar) where you explain the terminology and concepts you use throughout the paper. Terms that require further explanation include:
 - i. *Afrophilic philosophy for children* – is this your own approach or is it based in a known tradition. If the latter, please explain that tradition and provide citations. If the former, please explain what you mean by this approach. Additionally, you regularly refer to "the Afrophilic P4C," but that is unclear. Are you referring to an Afrophilic P4C

program, tradition, methodology? “The Afrophilic P4C” is incomplete as descriptive language.

- ii. *African unhu/ubuntu learning foundations* – these are explained later in the paper but need further development and explanation much earlier.
- iii. *Resettlement primary schools* – you briefly describe these on page 5, but it would help to have a bit more context about these schools.
- iv. *Zone of proximal development*
- v. *Decolonial reforms and decolonial intentions*
- vi. *Any other concepts or terms you take to be central to your piece.*

3. Clarify what you are arguing for and keep it consistent

- a. You currently have several different expressions of the purpose and take away from your work. These include:
 - i. “This work establishes a ‘middle-space’ in which learners’ creativity and agency in co-creating knowledge are recognized and accepted, while also influencing new teachers’ roles and competence.” (abstract)
 - ii. “In this study, I will show how Afrophilia learning can help us become full-fledged participants and co-creators of alternative educational discourse, and thus serve as a model for decolonization and improving learning opportunities for children,” (3).
 - iii. “Insights gained from the study bring to mind that there shouldn’t be contradictions between a learning theory than an educational program adopts and the context of the learners to which it is intended. The findings confirm that the sociocultural learning theory that informed the Afrophilic P4C approach strengthened connections between informal learning and school-based learning,” (15).
- b. These are three rather different descriptions of what your study shows. Please develop a consistent description of the main conclusions of your study.

4. “Understanding decolonization” Section

- a. The reference to Foucault needs more development and a citation.

5. “Decolonial reforms in the Zimbabwean education system” Section

- a. *Title* - Since this appears to be the first section where your study’s intervention is being discussed, we recommend a different title for this section, preferably one that reflects more directly the content of the section.
- b. *Figures and Appendices*
 - i. Figure 1 (p. 9) is not legible
 - ii. On page 11, you say that there would be 10 community of inquiry lessons conducted by you with the children. Please provide a table or appendix of some kind that maps out the features of the study and summarizes the content of the sessions.
 - iii. P. 13 – You discuss interviews with the children. Please provide an appendix with a complete list of the interview questions used. This would also enable you to remove the transcript of the interview with a child on page 13 and, instead, describe what the child said or offer in-paragraph quotes from the interview.
 - iv. Please provide an appendix or table showing the various participants in the study and the ages of the children. You might also create a “Participants” section where this information can be provided along with a table. For an example of what we have in mind here, see Appendix B in this paper previously published in our journal: https://www.pdcnet.org/collection/fshow?id=p4_2021_0003_0041_0065&pdffname=p4_2021_0003_0000_0042_0066.pdf&file_type=pdf

6. “Discussion and Implications” Section

- a. Your “Discussions and Implications” section needs revision. As it is currently written, it seems to overstate the implications of your small study. It is preferable to explain how your research points to the need for further exploration and study rather than to claim definitive outcomes based off a relatively small study.
- b. On pp. 15-16, you discuss how P4C helped learners’ sense of agency and you cite work by Correa-Chavez, et al, Ramose, and Freire). Is this referencing outcomes from your study or from others’ studies? Is this support for your work or a part of the stated outcomes of your work?

- c. We have the same question about your statement on page 16 that “...participation in co-creative activities initiated by the participants’ knowledge of the Afrophilia learning foundations closes the knowledge gap between generations.” Are you stating this as an outcome of your study or is it meant to provide support for your work?
- d. Rethinking how you discuss the outcomes of your study could help as you reformulate how you want to address our feedback in #3 above.

7. “Recommendations” Section

- a. Your recommendations section is rather general. Can you make some more specific recommendations? This could be a good place to point to the need for further research on this topic and suggest potential questions for further exploration.
- b. Depending on how you restructure your “Discussion and Implications” and “Open-ended Conclusions” sections, this section could be deleted and replaced with discussion of your recommendations in a different way.

8. General Note about Section Headings/Titles

- a. The current section headings are not contributing much to help readers understand the flow of the paper. We recommend rethinking your section titles and making use of sub-headings.
- b. The headings and subheadings used in the paper I linked to above can provide a model.

MY RESPONSE

Thanks so much for the editorial comments and for believing in the potential of my work. I noticed that there are no comments concerning ‘background and context’, ‘problem statement’, ‘situating orientations and my positionality’, are these sections okay as they are? On figure 1 (p. 9) do I have to remove the figure or just need to make it legible? There is an appendix: credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability criteria, do I have to remove it or it’s okay as it is?

EDITORIAL RESPONSE

With respect to the sections where we haven't put comments, I think you'll find while doing revisions that some changes will be needed there. For example, in responding to comment #3 of the feedback, you'll likely need to revise the "problem statement" section. You will also likely need to revise some of the other sections once you add the new "Central Concepts" section. So, I would keep an eye on those other sections we did not specifically mention and make sure to adjust them accordingly as you make the other requested revisions. For Figure 1, you can try to make it more legible and then we can see how that works when we look over your revisions. If you find it's too hard to make it more legible, you are welcome to find alternative ways to impart the same information. I think it's fine to keep the existing Appendix for now. We'll take a look once you add the requested appendices and then see how we're doing for length, etc.

MY RESPONSE

Please find my revised article titled: Decolonization and improvement of learning opportunities: Impacts of Afrophilic p4c curriculum intervention in Sebakwe primary schools in Zimbabwe. I have considered all the suggestions made by the Editors specifically adding a review of central concepts section and following one line of argument. I have also revisited the recommendations section.

EDITORIAL RECOMMENDATION – REVISE AND RESUBMIT:

We are grateful for your significant work responding to the editorial feedback we provided in September. The paper is much improved in terms of organization, focus, and framing. The addition of quotes from participants, inclusion of the terminology explanation section, and description of the curriculum (especially the clarification of what is meant by Afrophilia artefacts) are all good improvements.

The paper does still have some significant issues, however. Given the substantial amount of editorial time we have put into the paper already and our belief in the importance and promise of your work, we are open to one more round of revisions in the hopes the resulting paper will be accepted for publication. This would be the last round of revisions, however. We recommend you send the paper to colleagues for feedback on language, spelling, content (in particular to ensure your conclusions and recommendations match what can be gleaned from a relatively small study), etc. and resubmit the most polished version of the paper as

possible. Ideally, you would resubmit it to us in 6-8 weeks, but if more time is needed, please let me know.

Once we receive the resubmission, we will either accept the paper for publication or recommend alternative journals where you might consider submission.

SPECIFIC EDITORIAL FEEDBACK FOR REVISIONS:

Jargon – The paper is extremely jargon-heavy. Our journal reaches a wide audience with varying areas of expertise. It is important that the writing we publish is clear and accessible. Please remove the use of unexplained jargon and clearly restate your ideas. Here are two examples to help you understand what we mean:

Page 16 – “The findings also give an account on how the study envisioning evolved to a pluriversal decolonial future.”

Page 18 – “Henceforth, I argue that the socioculturally framed Afrophilic PVC offers limitless learning support resonance.”

In general, the language should be accessible to those both within and outside your discipline. Where it is not, it should be replaced.

Typos, Misspellings, Etc. – The paper still contains a surprising number of typos and misspellings. These need to be rectified before resubmitting the paper as they impact the clarity of your ideas. In general, when combined with the heavy use of jargon, the writing gets in the way of reader comprehension. Here are some examples, but this is not an exhaustive list:

First sentence of the abstract – “The Afrophilic philosophy for children...”

Page 3 – “Situating orientations and my positionality convoluted”

Page 4 – “...more than they could be shaped by my positionality.”

Page 17 – “Moreover, as have been stated...”

Sections/Ideas that need further development – There are a few areas of the paper that are either underdeveloped or overstated.

Page 9 – The Foucault statement remains underdeveloped. It should be cut.

“Discussion and Implications” and “Recommendations” Sections – These both are a bit too sweeping given the size and scope of your study. We ask you to reconsider what are reasonable conclusions to draw given that size and scope and focus on asserting claims that are demonstrable from your work. One way to do this would be to point more directly to opportunities for necessary further research.

The “Recommendations” section would benefit from more concrete recommendations that clearly flow from the arguments of the paper. Examples:

You say, “The government should also motivate platforms which give teachers a leadership role in curriculum reform since, teachers are the practical implementers of the curriculum” (19). This does not appear to come from the research discussed in this paper.

You say “Lastly, there is need for the government to consider directing more teaching and learning materials to resettlement schools, and further improve the existing infrastructure standards in these schools so as to encourage effective teaching and learning processes,” (19). Here again, it is not evident that this recommendation flows from the study you did on Afrophilic P4C. While it isn’t hard to believe that the resettlement schools would benefit from more support from the government, it’s not clear that that recommendation comes directly from the research you are writing about in this paper.

Figure 1 on p. 11 – The figure is hard to read, even with the description provided. Either rework the image or find a way to express what it contains in the main body of the paper.

Frequent Citations of your own work – It is unusual in academic writing to so frequently cite one's own work. Perhaps there is a dearth of literature in this area, and you are left with no choice? Please either engage more fully with other relevant literature or explain why the frequent citations to your own work are necessary.

Appendix Documents – These are a good addition that provides important details of your study. Some of the content of the appendices would be beneficial in the body of the paper as well. For example, some of the content in Appendix C could be discussed more explicitly in the body of the paper to give the reader more of a grasp of what was happening in the P4C work being done. The data in Appendix D indicates that this was a three-year study, but that is not made clear in the body of the paper. It would be helpful to have that context made more explicit.

Further solidifying the central thread of your study – It seems you have two main conclusions from the interviews with study participants: the importance of collaboration and learner-centeredness (pp. 13-14). Perhaps these could be mentioned more directly in the abstract and in the discussion section as a unifying thread regarding what the study is revealing as the impacts of Afrophilic P4C.

MY RESPONSE

Thank you for your positive feedback on the revisions. Please note that I have considered your suggestions in my revisions. The paper now appears to be jargon free and might be read by readers from different academic fields because I have simplified my language for the benefit of all potential readers. I proof-read the paper for typos and misspellings. The Foucault statement that was said to be underdeveloped has been cut. I have revised the discussion and recommendations section making sure the section is aligned to the findings and context of the study. The editors commended my frequent referencing of my previous work; as I indicated in the paper, the current work is continuation of an ongoing study on Afrophilic p4c, and hence I am referencing the previous work in order to align the current paper with the broader study to which it contributes. Furthermore, because the study is a

pioneering study in the area, and most likely in the country, frequent self-referencing is made possible by the dearth of literature in the field. More empirical data has been added to support the claims made in the paper, and the content of the appendix has been discussed in the main body of the paper.

6.6.2 Focus and value of the article to scholarship and the entire study

The paper focuses on discussing how Afrophilic P4C can be a useful model for decolonisation and improving learning opportunities, especially for children in disadvantaged schools. It contributes to the theory and practice of decolonisation as well as to the practice of transformational education in postcolonial Zimbabwe. Children involved in the study are children at the periphery with deep complexities in terms of access to quality education. The article suggests consolidating curriculum content knowledge with the learners' home knowledge so as to make learning meaningful to them and hence improve their access to knowledges. This approach contributes to other processes of undoing colonial practices and within the educational context, this entails confronting and challenging colonising practices that have influenced education in the past and continue to do so today (Mignolo, 2006). The discussion sparked by this article may highlight the importance of critical engagement with context, as decolonisation is influenced by the context in which one operates.

6.7 PAPER 7: ENACTING ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS EDUCATION FOR WILDLIFE CONSERVATION USING AN AFROPHILIC 'PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN' APPROACH.

Southern African Journal of Environmental Education (SAJEE): Accepted, in Press.

ABSTRACT (see Appendix A, paper 7, for full-length paper)

Environmental ethics education (EEE) has in recent years emerged as a critical tool for wildlife conservation research. Despite this environmental ethics education is paradoxically predominated by traditional forms of western science such as the concept of Anthropocene which appear to exclude aspects of African life-worlds where the natural environment is considered a heritage component and is linked to onto-religious understandings of human existence. The purpose of this study is to explore how African heritage-based knowledges and practices are understood by children who identify and understand the relevance of their totems and taboos associated with them, in relation to wildlife conservation. The study from

which this paper is derived utilised formative interventionist methodology complimented with a multi-voiced decolonial approach to explore whether children-participants aged 8 to 11 years understand the purposes of their totems and associated taboos. To achieve this, I used an Afrophilic philosophy for children pedagogical approach, which foregrounds dialogical learning and development of critical reflexive thinking skills. Emerging findings indicate that children associated their totems and connected taboos as tools for protecting against environmental pollution, and minimising resource over-extraction. Findings further demonstrate an improved learner agency and development of ethical reasoning among children. Given how participants' respect for environmental conservation and sustainability was informed by the significance they place on their totems, I recommend the need for schools to develop generative curricula that takes seriously context-based solutions to environmental problems. Future research should also consider understanding environmental conservation issues from a context-based perspective, which can inform existing heritage practices and pedagogies.

Keywords: environmental ethics education, Afrophilic philosophy for children, ethical-reasoning, heritage-knowledges

6.7.1 Engaging with reviewers

REVIEWER 1

This paper is well structured, fabricated and carefully presented. The argument presented was supported by evidence drawn from the main study. There is high logic in the arguments raised. The language used as well as the presentation format was very attractive. However, there are few editorial issues I would advise the author to attend to. Most suggestions have been highlighted and commented on the document itself. There is need to attend to the opening sentence of the abstract to clearly outline the papers intent, methodology used, and key concept used. I would love to see a more concrete and explicit relationship of the "five distinctive strands" drawn from the nexus of unhu/ubuntu, philosophy for children and environmental ethics education on the generative onto-ethical mode (see Figure 1). This will strengthen the onto-ethical mode and can be a useful inquiry framework/analytical lens/think piece in the new Wildlife conservation education trajectory. Lastly, the author must be careful of long sentences.

AUTHOR RESPONSE

Thank you for your encouraging words and for your high regard for the work I'm doing. Please be aware that I have addressed the majority of the issues raised by the reviewer.

1. I have revised the abstract's opening sentence, which now clearly states the methodology and intent of the paper.
2. I included a section titled: The interactive nature of the generative onto-ethical mode and the five strands. In the section the author outlines the relationship between the strands and their connection to the onto-ethical mode of participation depicted in figure 2.
3. I have revised the sentences that the reviewer identified as long sentences.

REVIEWER 2

The subject matter of the research raises critical questions about environmental education. The outcomes of the activities shared on pages 10-11 are interesting and intriguing and inspire the reader to find out more. As the presented data is central to the study more time could have been given to explaining the methodology and design choices. For example, how and why were 'the [specific] Afrophilia experiences.... chosen...'? How was the research designed, with whom and by whom? The author presents 'a plan' in Figure 1 (p.7) and speaks about what children will learn but it is not clear how this is achieved or assessed. How for example, is the 'learning done differently from the traditional norm'? More detail on number of participants and educational context is needed.

The author moves between an 'I' and 'we' as researchers (see paragraph 2 and 3, p8), which leads to a confusing understanding of who designed, facilitated, and lead the research.

It would be helpful for the reader if there was more clarity on the use of concepts and how they interact and interlink, some of which include 'dialogic communitarianism', 'effective language acquisition', 'proximal development', 'epistemic engagement', 'border thinking approach', 'generative dialogue', 'intersubjective knowing', 'eco-freaky'.

Some sentences are not clear:

1. "Here the discourse that emerge out of a discussion of questions, for example, those prominent above marks what could be seen, as on the off chance that we ca get from (Scott and Fraser, 2012) an ontological move to dialogical reasonableness that can guarantee a

comprehension of how human conduct impact the progressions that occurred in the environmental ecosystem.” (p 4)

2. “Perhaps what is required in the world, (my study area included) is looking for an elective that will guarantee economical low carbon prospects and effective wildlife sustainability models Clough, (2010) is a way of thinking that underscores interdependence as a constituent element of existence (Praeg, 2014).” (p5)

It is clear the author is passionate about the subject matter and has a lot to contribute to the field. My sense is that there is a distracting use of multiple concepts. Perhaps the author would consider reworking the conceptual framework and devote more time to sharing the data design, collection, and analysis.

MY RESPONSE

Thank you so much for your kind words and finding my paper inspiring. Appropriate action has been taken in response to the reviewer’s comments.

1. I have explained the methodology and design choice under a section titled: The exploratory case study framework
2. In different sections of the paper, I explained the reason (s) why the Afrophilia experiences were chosen (i.e., they were selected during formative intervention workshops for the purpose of making learning experiences in school more sensitive to local context).
3. I have explained the number of participants and their selection criteria.
4. I have explained the assessment criteria for the learning activities.

As the formative intervention researcher, I was in charge of designing, facilitating, and leading the research, but as I explained in the paper, “the research was open and participant-driven, taking into consideration the role of multi-voicedness” (p. 3). My use of the word ‘we’ is in appreciation and acknowledgement of the participants’ contribution. Please keep in mind that I have explained the concepts, and where necessary, some of the concepts have been completely removed and replaced with more appropriate phrases or words. On the issue of concept clarification please take note, as I explained before some of the concepts have been completely removed from the paper replaced by more appropriate phrases and word. Again, the study framework and data analysis plan have been discussed in the paper.

Following these revisions, the paper was later accepted for publication by the deputy editor. However, the Editor-in-Chief could not support its publication citing the following reasons:

“If the work is worth publishing, it will need to be based on a substantial presentation of data, an analysis of the data, and conclusions that can be traced directly to the data. The alternative is a paper that appears highly rhetorical in nature, i.e., a viewpoint, which is also not well argued and therefore leaves itself open to question. If you wish to rewrite the paper with these comments in mind, you are most welcome to do so, provided the work has not been published elsewhere in the same form” (October 18, 2021).

MY RESPONSE

Thank you, Editor-in-Chief, for your insightful comments and suggestions, which helped me improve and strengthen the claims in my paper. Kindly be informed that this is a re-submission of the paper: *Enacting Environmental Ethics Education for Wildlife Conservation using an Afrophilic Philosophy for Children Approach*. The paper was peer reviewed last year and accepted on October 6, 2021, but the Editor-in-Chief did not support its publication at the time. I revised the paper in response to the comments, and suggestions made by the Editor-in-Chief. The following changes were made:

1. Learners' drawings, written work, and excerpts from the community of inquiry have been added as data.
2. Wherever possible, interview data from parents, teachers, and students has been included.
3. The paper includes some of the activities that were done in build up to the writing of the paper.
4. The paper includes a table that shows the connections between taboos and scientific concepts in the learners' textbooks.
5. The process-based analysis tool (The Jackson's GOOD THINKER TOOLKIT) used in data analysis has been discussed and is shown in the paper's appendix.
6. The paper's conclusion section has since been revised, with more context-based conclusions added as suggested by the Editor-in-Chief.
7. The methodology section has also been updated to show the participants and data collection procedures used in the study.
8. The paper has been discussed in relation to the research project to which it contributes.

9. The paper's presentation has been changed to make it easier to follow, and the paper has been proofread for errors and as part of an initial language editing.

Please note that the paper has not been submitted anywhere else. I am pleased to let you know that I am ready and able to do another round of revisions if you believe there is still a need for me to do so. Thank you in advance for taking the time to read my paper; I look forward to hearing back from you.

6.8 TECHNICAL PRACTICAL LESSONS LEARNED WITH REGARD TO JOURNAL PUBLISHING

As I worked on the development and submission to journals of my paper 1- 7, I realised that the transition from an idea to the publication of a manuscript is a daunting process. In this section, I share my personal reflections on the practical lessons I learned while writing and publishing the journal articles that form the foundation of my study. My reflections on the complexities and challenges of embarking on a PhD by publication journey soon after the acceptance of my PhD proposal are intended to assist scholars who wish to follow in my footsteps, as well as supervisors who wish to enrol students in this programme. First, I would like to emphasise the significance and advantages of mind mapping in journal article writing.

Mind mapping is widely regarded as one of the most effective tools for creative thinking. Porphyry of Tyros (3rd Century BCE) is credited with pioneering the use of mind mapping to categorise and organise Aristotle's works, and mind maps have remained popular to this day. A mind map is typically thought of as a collection of ideas that have been organised into the form of a visual diagram to aid in productivity, creativity, and memory. For example, the mind maps shown in Figure 6. 1 below start with a central topic in two of the maps, then they radiate from the top containing further themes and concepts to be explored, thus forming a natural organisational structure. The diagrams helped with extracting my thoughts into something more visible and structured. Furthermore, they literally 'mapped' out my thoughts as they allowed space for use of associations, connections, and they also stimulated further ideas. The aspect of mind mapping in journal article writing includes considering the article's word count and brainstorming possible subheadings for the topic.

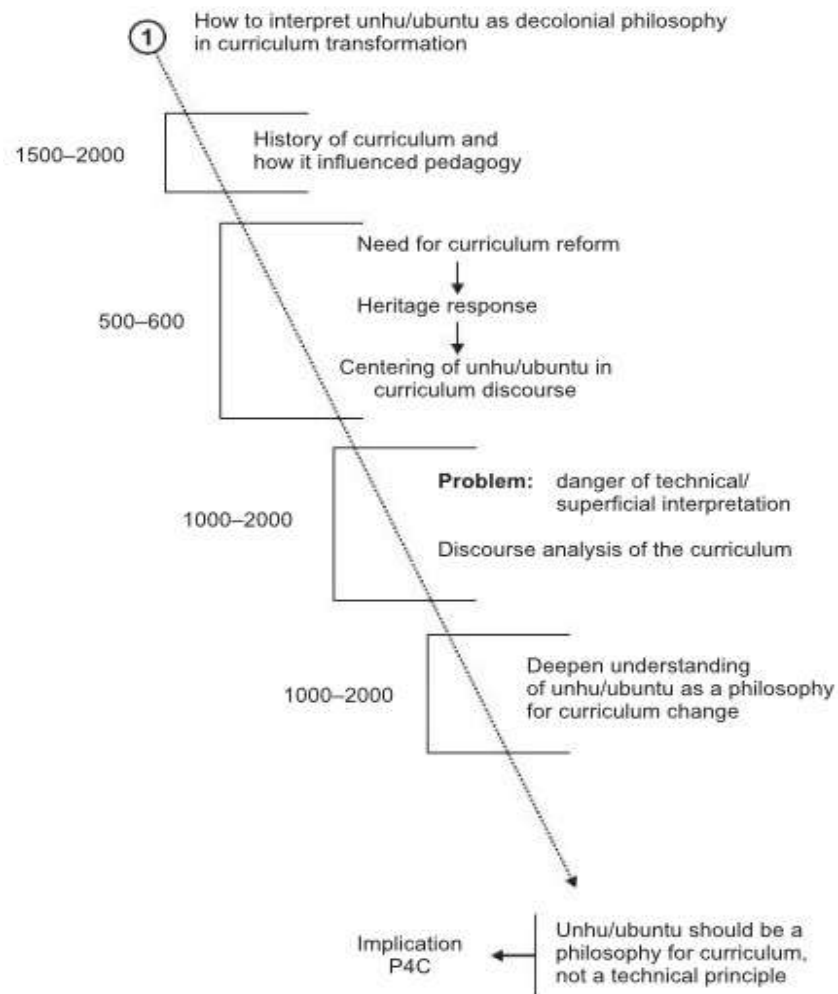


Figure 6.1a: Mind map for journal article (conceptual paper)

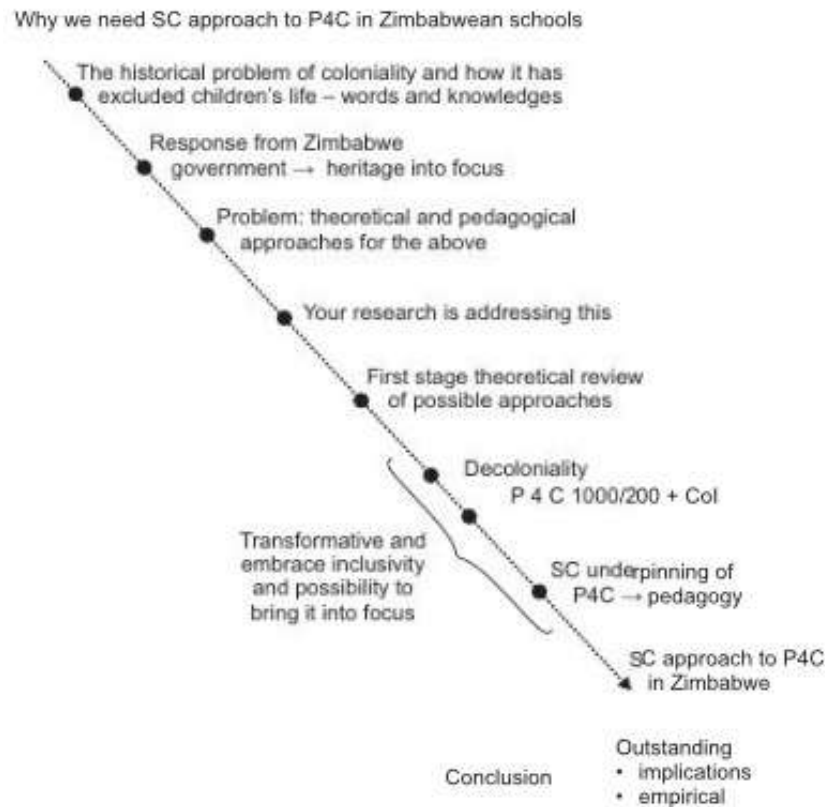


Figure 6. 1b: Mind map for journal article (conceptual paper)

The second technical aspect, which is closely related to mind mapping, is that when preparing journal articles, one must be aware of the type of article that is being written. Ordinarily, three types of articles are considered for publication by journals: conceptual papers, empirical papers, and book reviews. In some cases, journals may consider publishing a think piece. It is therefore critical to understand what information will be required for each type of article during the planning stage. In Figure 6.2, I show a mind map of journal articles that are empirical, and then I explain the difference between conceptual and empirical articles.

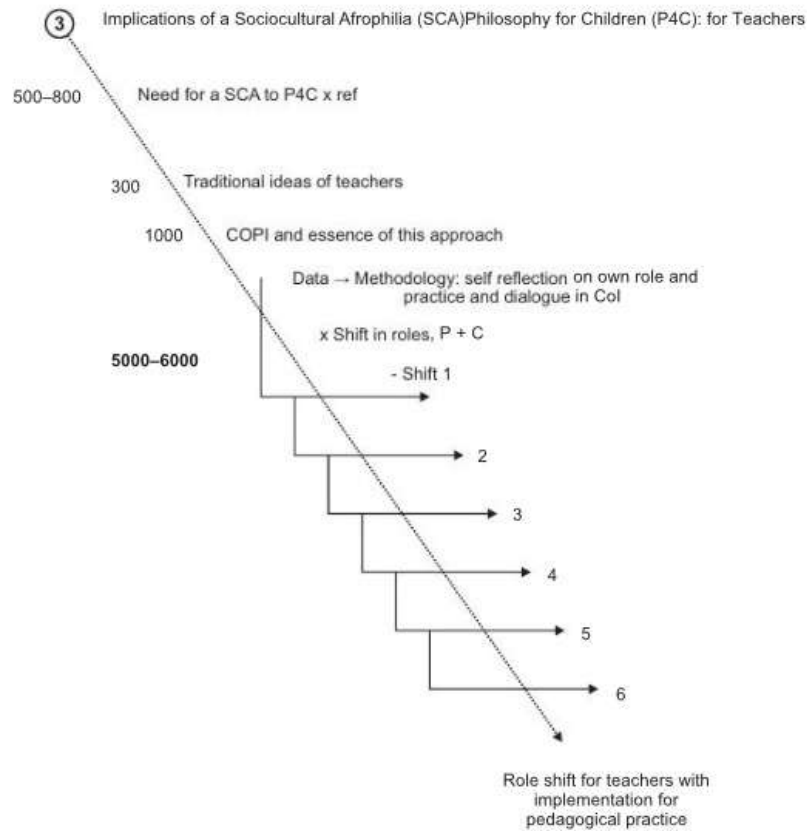


Figure 6.2a: Mind map for journal article (empirical paper)

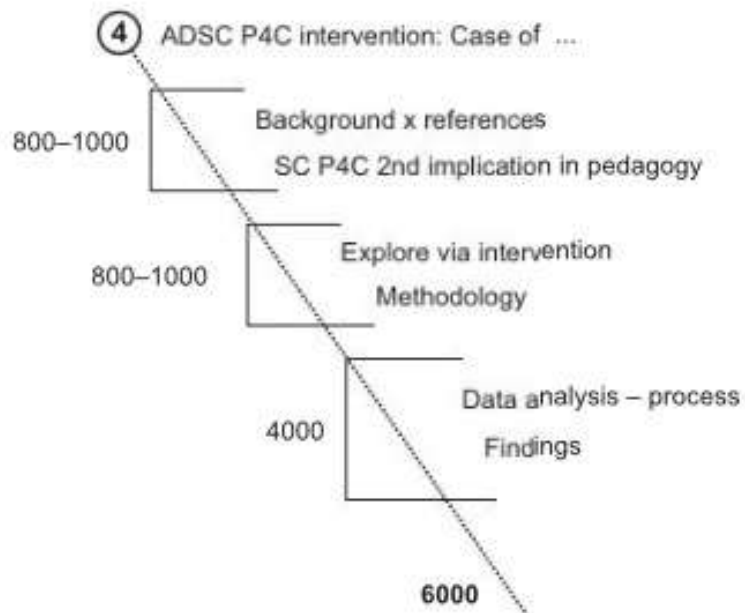


Figure 6.2b: Mind map for journal article (empirical paper)

The difference between the two figures is that while mind maps in Figure 6.1a and b are loaded with information, those in Figure 6.2 have less of the former's level of detail. This is

because with conceptual articles one presents an original concept rather than original data. Ordinarily, conceptual articles are intended to facilitate theory development and are constrained by the demands of empirical generalisation (Jaakkola, 2020). Thus, in a conceptual article, the author draws on the work of other writers to construct an argument that reflects the current state of a phenomenon or system, such as the education system. As a result, the articles are easier to think about because they deal with pre-existing theories. However, I later discovered that conceptual articles, unlike empirical articles, are difficult to get accepted for journal publication because there appears to be no commonly accepted templates to guide their development. I am not the only one who laments this; there is ample evidence that writing and obtaining publication for a conceptual article can be difficult (see Jaakkola, 2020, Cornelissen, 2017).

Empirical articles are dependent on the research design's articulateness because the design provides the article structure and logic. According to Flick (2018), when writing empirical articles, reviewers can evaluate the robustness of the research design by following a pre-existing template for reporting data findings. This explains why Figure 6.2 shows the background, literature review, methodology, and data analysis sections and does not indicate where the findings will be included. The majority of the paper is based on the study's findings, which must be discussed in relation to theory and context.

Another basic rule that has helped me get most of my articles considered for peer review is to read through the intended journal mandate and author guidelines ahead of time and then develop the paper in accordance with the journal's expectations. Journals, like any other institution, have traditions (aims and scope). Thus, reading through the journal mandate ahead of time, as well as possibly reading the journal's editorial, helps a prospective author become acquainted with that tradition and guides how to improve a manuscript in order to leave their footprints among the diverse footprints that have already left their mark on the journal.

Almost every peer-reviewed journal has author guidelines on their websites, and it is important to read and follow those guidelines to ensure that the manuscript passes the initial screening stage. Normally, a manuscript that does not follow the guidelines is returned to the author before it has a chance to move forward. In my previous discussion on the articles, one article (paper 4) was returned before proceeding to the next stage, which is the peer review

process. Some of the most common reasons manuscripts are returned that I encountered during the publication process are as follows.

- The tables and figure formatting do not adhere to journal guidelines.
- The referencing style used is not the one required by the journal.
- The manuscript does not include key words, cover letter, and, in some cases, confirmation from the language editor if the author is not a first language writer.
- The manuscript exceeds the required number of words.
- The author uses jargon instead of plain language that is easily accessible.

According to Jawaid and Jawaid (2018), authors often delay the publication process due to failure to follow instructions either at the initial stage of manuscript submission or while revising the manuscript. Jawaid and Jawaid (2018) have listed the stages that a manuscript passes through before getting to publication: internal review, editor's triage, similarity index check, formatting, external review, revision of the manuscripts in the light of reviewers' comments and suggestions. It is critical to emphasise that the author does not have control over some of these stages, and neither do the journal editors (i.e., the peer review process might take longer than expected since most journal reviewers do the work in their own free time _ it is not a paid job). Jawaid and Jawaid (2018) also warned authors to be patient to avoid being duped by predatory journals that offer quick publication in exchange for payment.

After familiarising oneself with the journal's guidelines, the next step is to begin developing a manuscript into a finished product. This stage necessitates consistency and a careful eye on language usage. Language is the medium through which one's message as an author is communicated to the public, so don't be swayed by the desire to use discipline-specific jargon or buzzwords; journals publish for a diverse readership. The rule is to keep language simple and accessible to the majority of readers, including those outside your discipline. However, by making this suggestion I am not disregarding the significance of technical language in scholarly writing. According to Adam (1982), technical language is both necessary and useful for members of a profession or other group to communicate with each other. Ordinarily, technical language allows members of a profession to express specialist concepts concisely, but the concepts need to be clear, and only the key concepts should be consistently used.

In this context, it could be argued that the use of technical language improves communication, but only if discipline specialists communicate among themselves, which is not the case with journal publications. It remains advisable that authors keep their language clear and accessible for easier communication with a diverse audience (Blake & Bly, 1993). During my publication journey I learned that there are times when jargon becomes a writing fault which may see editors returning your manuscript for corrections. This was the case with paper 6 which was returned by the editors because it was said to be jargon-heavy.

Another impediment to good writing and, ultimately, journal publication that I experienced during this journey was writer's block. According to Robert Bly, writer's block is the inability to start putting words on paper or into a computer, and it stems from anxiety and fear of writing (Bly, 1998). However, based on my experience, this anxiety may stem from reading your work as a writer. Following the publication of my first article, I became hesitant to simply let words and ideas flow naturally. To me, the writing process which, according to Blake and Bly (1993), includes numerous drafts, rewrites, deletions, and revisions, appears to be a neverending cycle. I kept rewriting and deleting, and the manuscripts were filled with jargon. To overcome this barrier, I began by focusing on writing the seemingly simple parts of the paper; in some cases, I would begin by describing the methodology because each article took a chunk of what was already described in the proposal of the larger study to which the articles contributed. In some cases, I would put the article aside and scribble diagrams that seemed to connect my ideas. If I didn't have a pen and paper nearby, I would use my phone to record my thoughts as they came to me. After a day or two, I would return to the article with the scribbled diagrams at my side and my phone, and simply type away what I had voice recorded. Some of the diagrams in my articles, such as the mind map of the critical reflective cycle within Afrophilic formative intervention and the generative onto-ethical mode of wildlife conservation participation, were created in this manner.

Another important dimension I discovered was the use of proofreaders. Instead of wasting time on an article, I would send it to a proofreader, who I would absolutely trust with my work. Proofreading is "a process of identifying typographical, linguistic ... or positional errors or omissions" (Society for Editors and Proof-readers, 2005, 4). The person does not necessarily need be someone from one's field of specialisation and needs to focus on writing

errors only. Harwood, Austin, and Macaulay, (2012) used five metaphors to describe the proofreader's role: helper, cleaner, leveller, mediator and/or teacher. As I was working on the corrections of the manuscripts from reviewers I would at times call one of my friends who acted as a position of proofreader, asking them to keep an eye of those areas that could have been raised by the reviewers to see if I had managed to address them adequately. The proofreader did not always read and offer feedback in tracked changes; mostly we would talk over the phone. I did not always agree in all areas with the proofreader, as with some comments from reviewers, and then I would offer reasons in support of my decisions. This also taught me that not all suggestions from reviewers need to be taken; at times the authors have to stand their ground and make their reasoning clearer. I considered the review process as a form of useful dialogue; the writer invites a reviewer to be part of a community of inquiry as a discussant on a topic of interest. Therefore, the author has to convince the reviewers with evidence why some decisions are worth considering.

6.9 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

Journal publication could be a pillar on which scholars can communicate their work to the general public. I have provided a narrative of my publishing journey in the preceding sections. I introduced the manuscripts that I prepared for publication and reflected on my interactions with various journal reviewers. Each article's contribution to the project and to my scholarship has been explained. In the final section of the chapter, I reflected on the lessons I learned while pursuing publication as a PhD candidate. The technical issues discussed in this chapter are not exhaustive of the issues that scholars would face if they followed my path. I have simply added my voice to the larger conversation. Other issues that I discovered during this journey could be influenced by institutional arrangements. For example, I discovered that obtaining a PhD by publication requires more writing time and interaction with other scholars who are doing the same. As I reflected on my journey, I would recommend that more writing retreats be organised for scholars who choose this path in the future.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This is the study's final chapter. It synthesises some of the main aspects of the Afrophilia sociocultural approach to p4c as examined in literature and via the formative intervention in the Sebakwe resettlement area. The chapter also considers what the study offers to an understanding of educational policy and practice. It offers a critically reflexive assessment of the study's accomplishments and limitations and draws conclusions including recommendations for further research. In particular, and given the case study focus, the chapter offers recommendations on how and why the resettlement schools that share similar conditions with the Sebakwe schools, could draw on context-based Afrophilic p4c as a curriculum innovation.

7.2 BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

As indicated across the study, and via the appendices, this is a PhD study conducted by publication. The aim of this study was to examine how establishing community of inquiry (CoI) at Kaguvi (Sebakwe Annex) Primary through the introduction of an Afrophilia orientation to Philosophy for Children could contribute to curriculum changes aimed at developing critical reflexive thinking skills among learners. As reported across the study, and in the papers 1-7, I generated ideas for re-orienting current educational practices at the primary school level through using theoretical lenses from postcolonial and decolonial theory, sociocultural theory, and curriculum theory to incorporate and work within a broader conception of African heritage knowledge/cultural wisdom without losing the contribution of other non-indigenous knowledges and practices (see papers 2-7 in Appendix A). The research has yielded a substantial amount of data on the potential contribution of Afrophilic p4c to curriculum change and the development of critical reflexive thinking skills as shown in papers 2-6. A Summative view of the study is further shared below via the themes that reflect the main findings of the study. These are considered summatively in response to the research questions. Thus, a theme will be presented then the question (s) that falls within the theme

will be presented. However, the themes are connected and so should not be considered as hierarchical. The themes include:

- Continuities of the colonial education system, in its postcolonial form (section 7.3)
- Afrophilic p4c promotes the urgency of collaborative dialogue and shared meaning making (section 7.4)

7.3 CONTINUITIES OF THE COLONIAL EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM, IN POSTCOLONIAL FORM

Research question 1: *What historical and contemporary barriers are limiting the promotion of a culture of learning in Zimbabwe's resettlement schools, particularly as it relates to the underdevelopment of critical reflexive thinking skills in learners?*

7.3.1 Barriers to the advancement of a learning culture: continuities of coloniality and abjection

Across this study, historical and contemporary barriers to the advancement of a learning culture in the Sebakwe resettlement schools were identified. The barriers presented in papers in Appendix A could be summarised as follows:

Table 7.1: Paraphrased summary of barriers that limit the promotion of a culture of learning in schools as they emerge from the papers presented in Appendix A

Historical & Contemporary barriers	Description (Evidenced by)
Continuity of coloniality	Language of instruction Teaching methods Exclusion of the learners' cultural heritage Lack of available materials or technologies Predominance of traditional forms of western science in the curriculum
Superficial interpretation of <i>unhu/ubuntu</i> philosophy	Promotion of Western Christocentric values and morals Use of doxa in advancing pedagogy
Policy dissonances	Language of instruction Subject timetabling during examinations

	Poor access to quality educational resources Financial issues Use of examinations as the only measure of assessment Minimum involvement of teachers and parents in curriculum planning The quantification, atomization, and weighing of teacher performance appraisal Inappropriate interpretation of the function and purpose of the Result Based Management (RBM) approach for teachers

As presented in papers 2, 3, 4, and 7 in Appendix A, a barrier to learning is anything that prevents a learner from being fully engaged in the learning process. Available literature and data indicate that these historical and contemporary barriers still exist in the postcolonial Zimbabwe education system especially in resettlement schools, despite new policy oriented towards hertigate-based curriculum. Following available data, it appears that genuine change (that builds to the transformation shown in this study, see papers 3, 4, 5, and 6 in Appendix A) in the Zimbabwean education system has remained elusive since 1980 as nothing much has been done in ensuring effective learner engagement in schools. Despite many cursory reforms, we paradoxically continue to face the same inequalities and social injustices as the generation before independence. Basing on the data presented in this section and in papers 1, 2, 3, and 7, it appears that coloniality and the social abjection that emerge because of coloniality continue to exist with Zimbabwe's formal education system, particularly for children in resettlement primary schools in the Sebakwe area. For example, in paper 5 Appendix A, following data from formative intervention workshops and document analysis data (see, also paper 1 Appendix A) I argue that use of English language at the expense of indigenous languages in schools continues to present a barrier in changing the Zimbabwean educational terrain in the Sebakwe resettlement area, a situation that also existed more widely during the British colonial period in the country even though the resettlement schools were not in evidence then (CIET, 1999). In Figure 7.1, I present barriers that emerged from a formative intervention workshop with teachers.

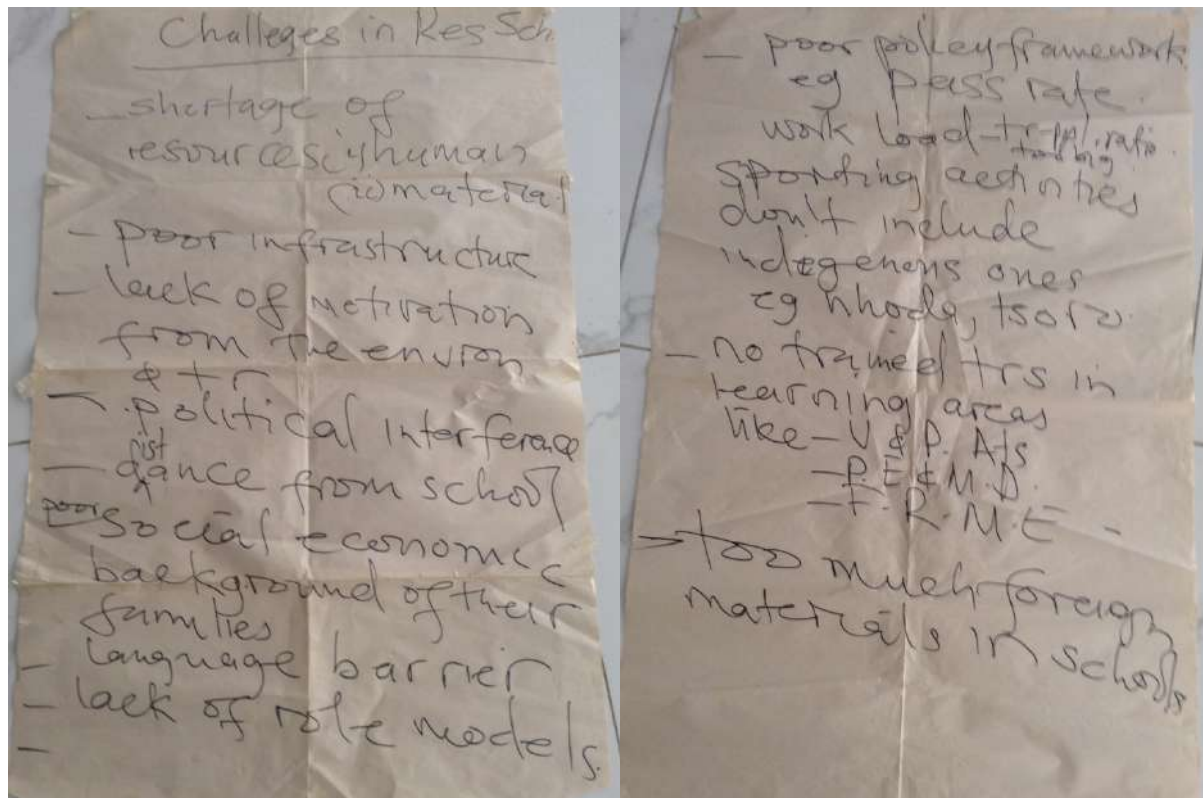
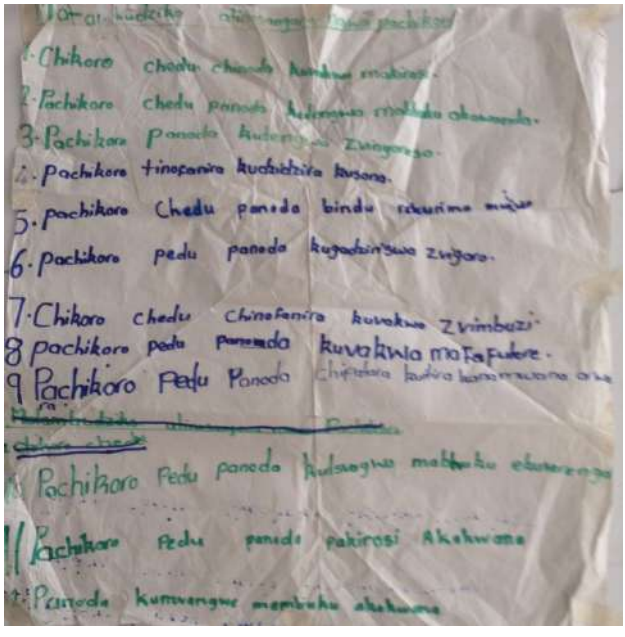


Figure 7.1: Challenges/barriers presented by teachers during the formative intervention workshop (these are also summarised in table above)

Following the data presented by teachers in figure 7.1 above (see also paper 3), I also engaged learners in a discussion to surface more barriers as seen by the learners themselves. The learners were encouraged to write a list of the barriers experienced in Sebakwe (Kaguvu) primary school and these are presented in table 7.2. A picture of the list that was compiled by the learners is presented on the left side in Shona with an English translation of the barriers on the other side. The barriers presented by the learners have a common connection with those presented by their teachers as they show the shortages being experienced in the study area and how these potentially militate against promotion of a culture of learning in schools.

Table 7.2: Challenges/barriers presented by learners during the formative intervention workshop

List of challenges presented by the learners	List of challenges presented by the learners (English)
	• We need classroom blocks at our school. • We need more textbooks at our school • We need to learn subjects such as fashion fabrics • There is need for land for garden projects • There is need for a clinic in case of emergency and we also need more toilet blocks • We need furniture in our classrooms

As shown above, the shortage of resources such as classroom blocks and furniture is a major problem in the resettlement area, and this potentially discourages some learners from taking schooling seriously. Henceforth, the development of a learning culture in schools is potentially being stifled. While under resourcing of schools for the indigenous black children was a common issue during the colonial period (see, CIET, 1999; Zvobgo 1986; Vengesai 1995), continuity of these shortages in postcolonial Zimbabwe seem to demonstrate that the country has not yet achieved much in terms of educational transformation. In the next section I discuss in brief the concepts (a) coloniality and (b) social abjection.

In Chapter Three and paper 6, I discuss **(a) coloniality** as an emergent concept from Anbal Quijano's works that Walter Mignolo later developed in order to draw attention to the connection between colonialism and the narrative of modernity (see Quijano, 2007; Mignolo, 2007). The narrative of modernity, which is frequently couched in developmental discourse in Zimbabwe, has long been understood within the epistemological foundations of the country's European colonial project (see Siyakhwazi & Siyakhwazi, 2013). As discussed in Chapter Four and in papers 1, 2 and 7 (Appendix A), this concept demonstrates that epistemological hegemony is not limited to specific locations or time periods, as the Schools in Sebakwe resettlement area continue to experience its effects.

Political interference was listed as one of the contemporary barriers to effective learning in the study area. A look at this through the ‘macro historical political sociology’ (see paper 1, Appendix A) of the Zimbabwe curriculum reform journey potentially uncovers how patterns of power (which are themselves connected to the country’s colonial history) are used to shape curriculum reform in the country (see also Appendix A, paper 7). MoPSE (2014) reveals that the call for curriculum reform in the country was political because the current reform follows the call by the president (who is a political figure) despite the fact that educators and other scholars have been advocating for educational transformation in the country (Zvobgo, 2003; Shizha & Kariwo, 2011; Chitumba, 2013).

The response to the call for curriculum reform by MoPSE (2014) took place only after the president had made such a request even though it was something scholars have been advocating for, is suggestive of an internal hegemony. In paper 7 (Appendix A) there is a decolonial quadrant under which follows a discussion that suggests that there was minimum teacher/ parent involvement in the curriculum reform journey pointing towards a suggestion that the national curriculum in Zimbabwe is a monopoly of the State. My own experience (as I have worked as a primary school teacher for more than 15 years) has shown that the State through MoPSE and the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) controls and approves educational reforms to be effected in the country and the curriculum and textbooks to be used (see, paper 5, Appendix A where parents and teachers lament over the state of some of the textbooks that were approved by MoPSE).

Following Gramsci (2000), I regard internal hegemony as a condition of rule that produces powerful effects that translate into the production of consent and the ability of a ruling class (in this case, the Zimbabwe government) to embed coercion within that consent. Events towards curriculum reform in postcolonial Zimbabwe potentially fall within this description of internal hegemony because the government used its power to introduce the current reforms (as shown in MoPSE, 2014) despite other complexities that made such reforms ineffective as suggested by the data presented above and in papers 1, 2, 5, and 7 (Appendix A).

Available data suggests that there are poor policy frameworks within the education terrain in Zimbabwe as shown in Figure 7.1 above. Despite some potentially valuable intentions such

as introduction of heritage-based curriculum, these as observed during the curriculum reform in 2014, include the enactment of the MoPSE (2014-2022) curriculum framework and the supporting syllabi into policy without engaging in wider public consultations (see, paper 5 and 7 Appendix A). The result is that the government maintains monopoly to enact reforms recommended by the 1999 Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training [CIET], despite the fact that 15 years had passed with little action on the recommendations. As a researcher and teacher in the Sebakwe resettlement for 15 years, I have noticed that teachers have no say in government programmes such as curriculum reform because they are only included as implementers, not decision makers, which devalues teachers' knowledge, professionalism and experience.

(b) social abjection

This concept describes how power is constituted through including forms of exclusion (Tyler, 2013). In Zimbabwe, the discourse of abjection by race in education was replaced in 1980 by a focus on equal access to educational opportunities (Zvobgo, 1986). The barriers unearthed in this study, evolved the theme of abjection (see, paper 2 appendix where learners and the teacher are having lessons under a tree); social abjection was also an important departure point in mapping the study's decolonial turn. Prior to 1980, Zimbabwe had two distinct educational systems, one for the imperial colonial masters and the other for the colonised (CIET, 1999; Shizha & Kariwo, 2011). Following the way indigenous knowledges, heritage-based practices and heritage-languages were excluded from the formal school curriculum (see papers 1, 5, 6 and 7 in Appendix A) it appears that education served as a tool for the creation of social abjection during the colonial era.

Contemporary forms of social abjection observed in this study include the fact that the government has utilised a most subtle form of 'inclusion exclusion' as the resettlement schools in the area continue to operate as unregistered schools 20 years after their establishment. This has made the schools continue to operate under a registered school making it difficult for them to have an established line of leadership dedicated to developing the schools. Though MoPSE has through the District Schools Inspector [DSI] appointed a teacher-in-charge [TIC] for each resettlement school who acts in the capacity of a school head, these TICs are incapacitated to make substantial decisions as their position are temporary.

Another issue that makes resettlement school children and teachers uncomfortable and which produces social abjection is the environment in which teaching, and learning is expected to take place. All four primary schools in the Sebakwe resettlement area lack proper classroom blocks. Figure 7.2 demonstrates some of the conditions experienced in the Sebakwe schools' area (see also Figure 2.4 in Chapter Two, teachers at a workshop under the tree).



Figure 7.2: Contemporary forms of social abjection observed in this study

As evidenced by available data in Figure 7.2 and in paper 2 (Appendix A), children in the Sebakwe area are still learning under trees and make use of dilapidated building as their classrooms. At Kaguvi, classrooms are housed in a dilapidated building that was the former farm owner's main house and was vandalized by farm occupiers during the early stages of land reform. Teachers' plight is worsened by the fact that they live in substandard housing for a qualified civil servant, with some having to walk more than 10 kilometres from the main road to school (see Figure 7.1 and Figure 7.2 above). Because of the difficulties that teachers

face in these resettlement schools, children frequently miss classes because teachers are constantly in town seeking transfer to better schools. One parent explained that it was difficult for Sebakwe resettlement schools to receive assistance from other development agencies because development agencies were hesitant to invest capital in resettlement areas due to the violence associated with them. The following excerpt was taken from an interview with a parent.

NGOs such as Plan international and CARE are not willing to assist us in resettlement areas because of the violence associated with the land reform. That why they are at times called '*majambanja*' [meaning resettlement areas], so we only wait for the government to assist our children... (parent, July 3, 2018).

In addition to the difficulties that teachers in resettlement schools face, the teaching profession has been de-professionalized. Political intimidation is used by the political elite, particularly in the Sebakwe resettlement area, to devalue the role of teachers. Teachers are generally considered members of the opposition because that is what the community was told by the former member of parliament [MP] in the area, who is now the president of the country.

We live in fear because, no matter how friendly they appear to be on the outside, the truth is that the people here are against teachers. If I can give you an example, remember how a lady teacher in this area was arrested after being accused of influencing people to vote for the opposition because she told her colleagues to take their positions ... Another example is when youth members of the ruling party set fire to one of our teachers' residence in the middle of the night. Recently, one of our female teachers was forced to transfer by a member of parliament [MP] due to a misunderstanding with a parent, who then reported the issue to the political party office rather than our education offices if the issue was genuine (from interview 20/7/2019).

The interview snippet demonstrates that teachers in the Sebakwe resettlement area work in an environment described by Beck, Giddens, and Lash (1994) as a "risk culture" and a "risk society" with a "growing disjuncture between objective and subjective dimensions of life" (Furlong & Cartmel, 1997, p. 4). This treatment of a group of members of a once-respected social practice in Zimbabwe in the 1980s has widened the gap between schools and communities. In an interview with one of the parents it was established that teachers were

once actively committed to working with communities to improve the learning conditions of the community's children during the establishment of the resettlement schools. The following excerpt confirms the involvement of teachers in shaping the learning conditions of learners in Sebakwe community.

At first, we used to organise with the teachers and buy commodities such as soaps, cooking oil and sugar for re-sale. Then we will use the profits to buy school textbooks. One of the teachers even brought his own textbooks when he joined the school to help the learners. The problem we face is that some of the parents are not supportive and also some of our teachers were at one point victimised due to political issues (from interview with parent June 19, 2018).

The excerpt above demonstrates how schools in the study area potentially used served as hubs for social and community activities. The parent's sentiments are evidence of the collaborative effort that existed between the community and the school order to raise funds for the school's teaching and learning materials. However, due to some of the challenges demonstrated in figure 7.1 such as political interference it appears that teachers no longer make sacrifices to improve the learning conditions of children in the Sebakwe resettlement area. This may also be because they [teachers] seem to have been made abject (see, section under social abjection); working under difficult conditions and living in poverty because their salaries can no longer sustain a decent living. Although teaching is thought to *reside in the moral and scared domains of life* (Adkins, 2006), this is not the case in Zimbabwe's Sebakwe resettlement schools, as teachers continue to feel as if they were victims of the current socioeconomic state.

7.3.2 The superficial interpretation of *unhu/ubuntu* philosophy

An emerging problem of superficial interpretation of *unhu/ubuntu* philosophy was noted in my first publication (Paper 1, Appendix A) which contained decolonial reflections on the Zimbabwean primary and secondary school curriculum reform journey. This problem of philosophical insubstantiality abounds not only in African philosophy discourse but also in Western philosophy, as evidenced by Nietzsche's promotion of multiplicity of surfaces at the expense of depth/ profundity in philosophy (Castle, 2007).

The study found out that in pre-colonial education, education for the young had an echo of the indigenous philosophy of life which in the context of the Sebakwe community is the unhu/ubuntu philosophy. According to Rodney (1972):

The following features of indigenous African education can be considered outstanding: its close links with social life, both in material and spiritual sense, its collective nature; its many-sidedness; and its progressive development in conformity with the successive stages of physical, emotional and mental development of the child. There was no separation of education and productive activity or any division between manual and intellectual education. Altogether, through mainly informal means, pre-colonial African education matched the realities of pre-colonial African society and produced well-rounded personalities to fit into that society (ibid, p. 262).

This explanation by Rodney is not in isolation as CIET (1999) observes that:

The innate wisdom of the African culture points to two important issues: it needs a whole community to be engaged in education and the aim of education is the formation of an individual who has unhu/ubuntu, that is to say, a human being in the fullest and noblest sense, ... To lead their children to have unhu/Ubuntu was the pride of parents and families ... (CIET, 1999, P. 61).

During the reflexive interviews with participants, it was revealed that the aim in underpinning the education system on the indigenous philosophy was to ensure that, [*“mwana anofanira kukura arimwana ane hunhu, chainzi kudzidza kuratidza hunhu”*] *the child was expected to be endowed with morality, and educatedness was defined by a display of humanity* (Mr Sibanda, April, 4 2019).

As I discussed in chapter one, formal colonial education, which was introduced by missionaries prior to colonialism around 1859, disrupted the existing connections between education and the indigenous philosophy of the community. As a result, formal education became anchored on an unrelated philosophy that promoted Western Christocentric values and morals. The detachment of education from its local context resulted in a new purpose and approach to education that emphasized literacy and numeracy.

Following independence, the government-initiated education reforms, initially focusing on more quantitative forms of educational decolonization and later shifting to a focus on

qualitative forms of curriculum reform. The 1999 Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training [CIET] shed some light on the decolonial turn in educational planning, management, and curriculum reform following independence. The CIET inquiries helped to focus attention on the importance of underpinning Zimbabwe's education system on unhu/ubuntu philosophy. For example, CIET (1999) states that; *"the concept of unhu/ubuntu should be introduced, developed and be the torchlight of our [holistic] education"* (ibid., p. 69). The same CIET document further elaborates that, *"the curriculum should provide for the education of 'the head, the heart and the hand,' in developing unhu/ubuntu"* (CIET, 1999, p. 75). Figure 7.3 puts across the points that were raised by participants during the formative intervention workshop.

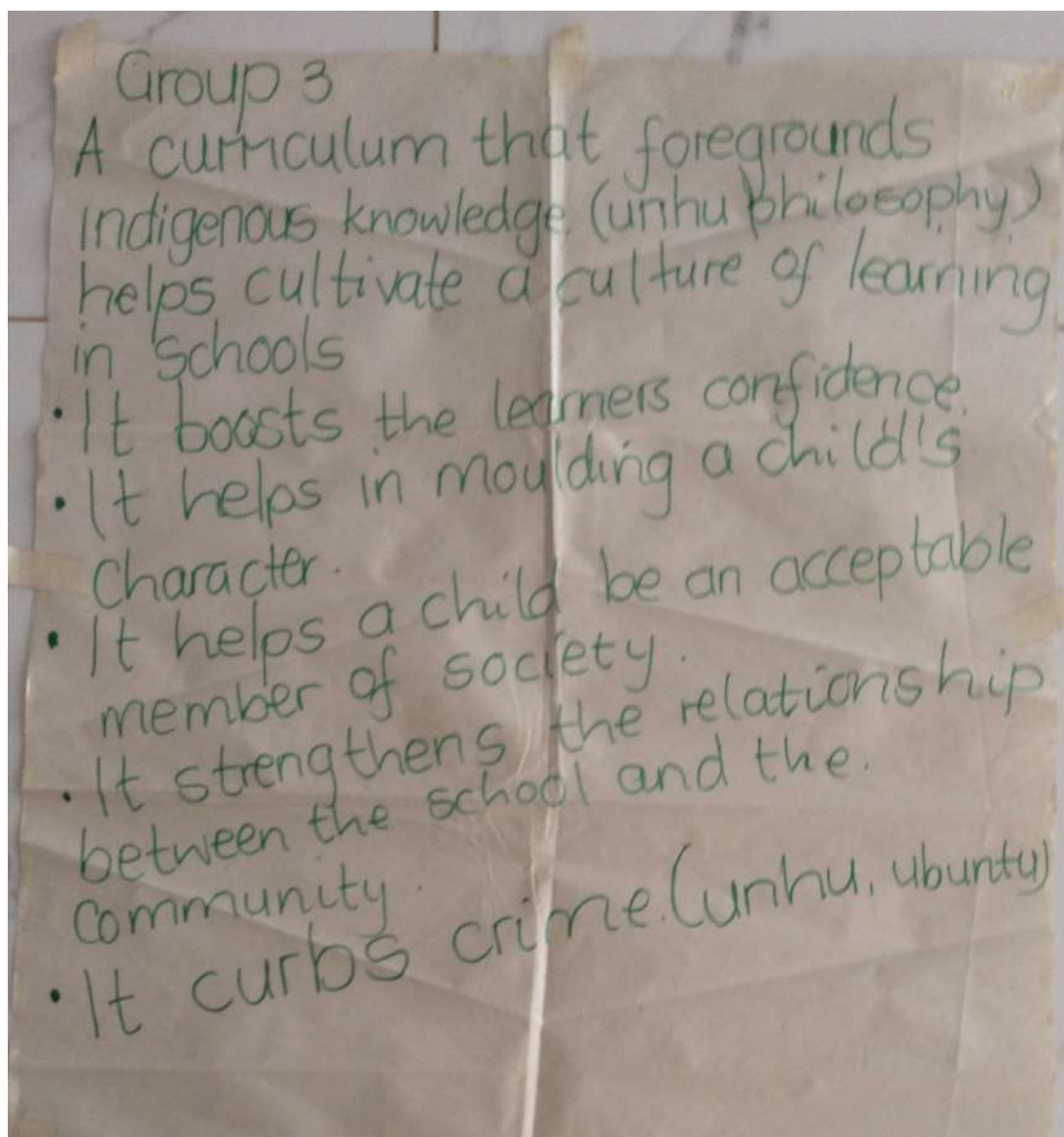


Figure 7.3: The benefits of anchoring the curriculum on *unhu/ubuntu* philosophy as seen by participants during a formative intervention workshop

In light of the points raised above one may surmise that the introduction of unhu/Ubuntu as an anchored to curriculum processes emerged as a counter-cultural initiative to colonial formal education. However, as I discussed in my publication (see Appendix A1), the superficiality with which the philosophy has been interpreted limits its ability to effect critical pedagogical reforms.

7.3.3 Neo-liberal policy dissonances: education remains unfit for the public good

The neoliberal policy approach, as seen through the lens of the study in relation to resettlement schools, and the approach that the MoPSE has taken in education, imply that economic reality and rationality have been made more powerful than any other rationalities. As a way of example, both CIET (1999) and MoPSE, (2014) reveal that the curriculum was

- Not linked to commerce and industry
- The curriculum was narrowly constructed and did not respond to changes in the economy (see, MoPSE, 2014, p. 13).

As a result, the reforms that were implemented following these observations [by CIET and MoPSE] and the International Monetary Fund's [IMF] economic structural adjustment programs (ESAP) in the country are shaped by market and business principles. Henceforth, MoPSE (2014) recommends that “*pupils should make choices from three pathways which are: academic, business/commercial and technical /vocational*” (ibid, p. 13). Following this the Zimbabwean government which since 1980 has provided nearly free basic primary education in public schools stated charging school fees especially after 1990, when the government authorized the charging of school fees as a cost-cutting measure (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011).

In this case, the government followed the advice of neoliberal scholars, who argued that; “*education systems in developing countries should be financed more directly by private households...*” (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011, p. 43). Following the five years of ESAP trade and market reforms in the country, the IMF and World Bank imposed yet another five-year reform program, the Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation

[ZIMPREST] between 1996 and 2000, with the goal of enacting social reforms aimed at human resource development. One noticeable condition that comes along with the imposition of these neo-liberal policies was the removal of price controls and subsidies resulting in retail shops [stationary shops] charging exorbitant amounts for services without checks and balances from the government. The existence of such policies meant that resettlement schools with parents who are low-income earners cannot afford some of the charges associated with the day to day running of the school. As a result, this impacts on development of a culture of learning in these schools as they end up experiencing shortages of resources as noted in chapter 1 and in paper 5 in Appendix A, and above.

The implication of these policies in education particularly focusing on resettlement schools, where the majority of the people in the area are low-income earners, with some making a living from subsistence farming, is that children now spend a lot of their school days outside of school. This is due to the fact that each school term, school children are expected to pay school fees, and those who do not do so are sent home. One parent who was interviewed says:

... at times some children fail to attend school because their parents cannot afford to pay school fees. This is a problem especially when the farming season was bad because we rely on farming as a source of income... (parent, July 3, 2018).

Though the government encourages school development committees (SDCs) to charge what members of the community can afford, this is rather contradictory because (1) school administration costs are relatively higher across contexts, and (2) members of communities such as the Sebakwe resettlement primary schools are concerned that mandating children to pay low tuition fees will result in the schools remaining underdeveloped. One common argument raised by participants, particularly school administrators, is that:

Stationary and other school operating costs are incredibly expensive because we pay for most things in US dollars [which is not a legal tender in the country] rather than the RTGS [which is considered the legal tender] that we charge for school fees. The ministry also expects these schools to participate in sporting activities and other competitions, just like other well-established schools, so if you compare that to the fees we are charging, you will see that we still need to charge more fees in order to build

proper classroom blocks and take care of the high costs encountered in the day-to-day school business.

To be more precise, communities in the Sebakwe schools' area are concerned that, while the government wishes to make education more affordable, it will remain inaccessible in their case because low tuition charges result in underdevelopment of schools that are already in crisis, and worse, schools will be unable to acquire learning materials.

In addition to paying school fees, access to school textbooks has been commercialized, and the government seem to have done nothing much but to wait for external stakeholders such as UNICEF to assist the schools. In 2018, UNICEF assisted schools by providing textbooks and primary science kits. The textbooks, however, were not for all of the subjects taught in primary school, and in most cases, as the findings revealed, the number of textbooks supplied to schools may be less than the number of learners enrolled (see, Figure 7.1 and figure 7.2 where learners and teachers demonstrate the critical shortage of textbooks and other resources experienced in the study area). As a result, schools will need to purchase additional textbooks. During my study observations I noticed that in some subject areas it was only the teacher who had a textbook and learners had to wait for the teacher to write the information on the chalkboard or to read for them from the only source. In such a scenario one could argue that the textbook situation in Sebakwe resettlement schools presents a huge hurdle to both learners and teachers leading to them failing to establish a culture of learning in school.

Education in Zimbabwe (resettlement schools included) is now a significant predictor of one's buying power, as the government has made access to education a self-provisioning process rather than the public good that it should be. CIET (1999) states that; "*the financing of education should be subject to a major paradigm shift from dependence syndrome to self-reliance*" (ibid, p.154). The implication of this is that families have to find ways of paying schools fees on their own including those that cannot afford. Henceforth, at the end it appears that only those that can afford will be able to send their children to school. The excerpt from Musavenga cited before demonstrates that access to quality education now appears to be determined by the child's family income, as seen in the Sebakwe resettlement schools.

This is potentially disastrous for the development of a learning culture in schools due to learner dropouts as a result of failing to pay tuition fees. In my observations as an insider-

formative researcher I have noticed that some children in the area would transfer from one resettlement school to another because their parents could not afford school fees, or that a child could repeat a grade because fees had not been paid (Research journal, 20/02/2019). This situation as I observed it in my more than 15 years working in the area seem to have been worsened by the introduction of examination fees starting at grade 6 level as some parents seem not to be able to afford to pay tuition and examination fees at the same time. One of the teachers explained to me that; *“in some cases we allow children to register for examinations without paying tuition fees, but they will have their examination results withheld by the school until they pay tuition fees”* (Teacher 1, July 4, 2019). The implications of this as seen in the study area are that some learners may fail to proceed to secondary school as they will need their results to apply for form one placement.

7.3.4 Emphasis on quantitative measurement in the evaluation of teacher and learner competence

As Zimbabwe was making a shift from quantitative educational reforms in the 1980s that saw primary and secondary school enrolments rising as well as the building of new schools especially in rural areas the next concern was to improve on quality (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011). This move to consider the quality of education offered in the country coincided with the imposition of neo-liberal policies as discussed in the section above (see, paper 5 Appendix A). As a result of the market-based reforms and the enactment of social reforms aimed at human resource development, Zimbabwe adopted the teacher performance appraisal model around the same time that ZIMPREST was adopted (see, also Chapter 1 for a discussion of reforms related to this). The focus of the teacher performance appraisal was on enhancing learners' quality academic achievement through implementation of quality teaching strategies (MoPSE, 2014). However, the weaker side of the teacher performance appraisal model which paradoxically became the primary focus of the government was its quantification, atomization, and weighing into separate elements to be measured, and then ticked off against the teacher's work. As an insider-formative intervention researcher I observed that at the start of each school calendar year teachers have to make their activity plans related to the key areas of the performance appraisal and then at the end of the year these will be weighed, and mark scores awarded will be submitted to the district offices.

The government later introduced another model which is the Result Based Management (RBM) to try and improve on the weakness of the performance appraisal model. The model is

not so much different from the teacher performance appraisal aimed to improve efficiency, accountability, and transparency of government operations. In 2005 the Paris Declaration on AID Effectiveness described the RBM as an effort to work together in a participatory approach to strengthen country capacities and to promote accountability of all major stakeholders in the pursuit of results (UNESCO, 2008). The Zimbabwe government did not only introduce the RBM model in the education sector but across the entire public service around the years 2005-2006, only to be fully adopted by MoPSE in 2010.

Teachers who participated in this study seem not to be comfortable with this model for the reason that they considered it not to be an indicator of the learning process but rather it aims to quantify the work that they do. According to one of the teachers who were interviewed (teacher, July 4, 2019):

The model does not support establishment of communities of inquiry for creation of a culture of learning because it forces teachers to focus on giving learners activities that are measurable such as giving learners written work, monitoring the learners' attendance register and other measurable activities that could be marked and ticked off.

The excerpt above seems to suggest that the model evaluates what the teacher does to learners rather than how teachers engage learners in the real learning process. As such the RBM model appears to foster a teacher centred approach in education (see Paper 4). Moreover, following insights from the teacher quoted above the model appears to have the potential to only evaluate the teacher based on the learners' quantitative achievement such as examination test scores, number of written exercises the child has completed per week or per day but does not measure the learners' potential level of development which is critical in the development of critical reflexive thinking (see Chapter Three on discussion of the learner's zone of proximal development).

Another barrier that was identified in the study is the over emphasis on learner examination test scores (see paper 5 in Appendix A). In Figure 7.1 teachers listed this as a poor policy framework. During the study I observed that because of the need to improve examination percentage pass rates in schools especially in the Sebakwe resettlement schools [previously associated with poor pass rates (Zazu, 2013)] teachers now seem to focus on initiating learners into examination-thinking rather than engaging them in learning for critical thinking development (see paper 5 in Appendix A). Learner initiation into examination-thinking in

Sebakwe resettlement schools is done through offering learners repetitive examination revision exercises and coaching learners on how to approach different examination concepts. Observations made during the study suggest that teachers prepare learners for examinations through giving them examination revision papers as homework or holiday revision work.

In paper 2 (Appendix A) I argue that this potentially limits the child's interaction with and involvement in activities that involve adults at home ending up creating a gap between child worlds and adults, a situation that potentially creates a barrier to development of a culture of learning in school because it limits children's time for either informal learning at home or formal learning in school as they are coached for examination pass marks. Moreover, the child is most likely to spend more time interacting with examination content than with peers and adults, thereby limits the scope for collaborative engagement in learning activities because progress in examination revisions is monitored according to individual performance.

7.4 AFROPHILIC p4c PROMOTES THE URGENCY OF COLLABORATIVE DIALOGUE AND SHARED MEANING-MAKING

Research question: *How can the Philosophy for Children Afrophilia curriculum intervention help promote a culture of learning in Zimbabwean resettlement schools that focuses on developing critical reflexive thinking skills in learners?*

Available data demonstrates that unlike the traditional teacher-centred and examination driven approach, the Afrophilic p4c curriculum intervention, as developed in Sebakwe resettlement schools, seem to foster development of critical reflexive thinking and promote development of a culture of learning in schools (see papers 3, 4, 5 and 6 in Appendix A). This is because it promotes collaborative engagement in learning activities between adults and children in a community of inquiry (see paper 2 in Appendix A). For clarity on this collaborative engagement and how it promotes a culture of learning in schools I elaborate on the working definition of a culture of learning (see also paper 6 in Appendix A).

In this study a culture of learning is regarded as a set of collaborative thinking habits, self-beliefs and work processes that lead to sustained critical learning. The implicit premise in applying the definition is that culture is at the core of quality learning and learning is the main purpose of school (see, Taylor, 2013; Heick, 2014). There is a strong connection with indigenous cultural heritage (Afrophilia learning lens) which plays an important role in enhancing learner agency, which translates into quality learning and a culture of learning in schools. Ordinarily the study considers education,

as John Dewey states: 'Education is not preparation for life; education is life itself'. Here, Dewey's key message is that each stage of life involves its own way of seeing the world and cannot be reduced to mere preparation for the next stage.

The practice of philosophy for children, as done in the Sebakwe resettlement primary schools through use of Afrophilia artefacts (storytelling, music, poems, etc, see paper 3 in Appendix A) in this study, enabled shared understanding of the artefacts and imaginative engagement with the characters in these artefacts as well as the life worlds of the participants. Here use of Afrophilia intangible heritage such as music and dance foster the aspect of call-and-response (see paper 7 in Appendix A) observations during the community of inquiry sessions suggest that call-and-response is a pattern of democratic participation because children and the teachers including other participants have an opportunity to participate.

7.4.1 The Afrophilic p4c intervention promotes a re-establishment of indigenous learning processes

Research questions:

- (a)** *What would it mean if Sebakwe resettlement communities used unhu/ubuntu to leverage their knowledge, and how could this apply to primary school?*
- (b)** *How can unhu/ubuntu-based Afrophilia epistemologies help children develop critical reflexive thinking skills?*

Findings give pointers to the fact that the Afrophilic p4c intervention has potential to create a third space where children consolidate their life experiences with curriculum content (see paper 6 in Appendix A). By so doing the intervention might have successfully helped to re-establish indigenous learning processes such as storytelling, music and dance, use of proverbs, riddles, and many other Afrophilia reflexive artefacts (see paper 3 and paper 7 in which learners utilised stories, totems and taboos during community of inquiry). In Sebakwe resettlement areas through daily activities the child progressively is exposed to a kind of informal education whose aim is cultivation of responsibility and nurturance. This kind of education as mentioned above makes use of Afrophilia artefacts and is normal contacted during the evenings during family time. Though most of the Afrophilia reflexive artefacts in use may take the form of entertainment they have a greater educative purpose of introducing the child to a wide range of oral literature and also sharpening the child's verbal creativity as well as speeding up development of critical reflexive thinking skills, which are part of the formal curriculum, thus connecting these forms of learning to the curriculum and its

requirements (paper 6). Table 7.2 below shows one of the Afrophilia artefacts that which were used which takes the form of song and dance but is educative in scope see also lesson plan activities in the draft teachers' booklet in Appendix B.

Table 7.2: A pre-recorded song for nature played by a teacher (Chihera) used as start-up capital in community of inquiry sessions and takes up the form of entertainment but is educative

	Song for Nature Nyika yazara utsvina Nzizi hadzichina utsanana Piles of junk in the street People just walking with bare feet Todiniko baba vangu Todiniko nenyika yedu Tichengetedze nature yedu Hahahaa hahahaaa hahahaaaaa How I wish my child could see Fields so green, trees so tall To protect our nature To protect our environment Environment is the key Repeat!

As observed in the study, use of these artefacts in Sebakwe resettlement primary schools through a socio-cultural framing of the Afrophilia p4c formative intervention provided stimulus material to engage participant learners, that catalysed meaning making and critical thinking skills (see papers 3 and 7 in Appendix A). This is because after the presentation of such start-up capital learners were capable of generating their own questions and engaged in dialogue (for learners' dialogues, see papers 3 and 7 in Appendix A). In the section above, I reflect on the call-and response contribution of music and dance to the study, therefore here I reflect on how storytelling and use of proverbs in philosophy for children hold the potential to connect to community of inquiry notions of critical reflexive thinking and lifelong learning.

Storytelling has remained an integral part of the African community including the Sebakwe resettlement area. According to Agatucci (2010), Africans have had well-respected stories and storytellers well-versed in oral cultures and traditions (herein Afrophilia lens – see paper

3 in Appendix A and the draft teachers' booklet for examples of some of the stories that were used in this study). As demonstrated from stories told (see paper 2 in Appendix A) and in the draft teachers' booklet (Appendix B), the stories that are told in the African context personify animal characters, but again they are aimed at transmitting the virtues valued by the society.

Children are expected to participate with the storyteller as they listen to these stories, as most of them include musical mimicking. As a result, storytelling requires the collective participation of all members. An example of how learners may participate with the storyteller is as follows:

Storyteller: *Paivapo (once upon a time)*

Learners: *Dzepfunde*

Storyteller: *Paivapo (once upon a time)*

Learners: *Dzepfunde*

The storyteller may repeat this on and on until they notice that all participants are paying attention then they start narrating their story. At times the stories will be a mix of narratives and song and when the storyteller gets to the part where they have to sing everyone is expected to sing back to the chorus:

Storyteller: *Vasikana wee sarai (girls remain behind)*

Learners: *Kwatinoenda kunemakomo mashava (where we go there are red hills)*

Storyteller: *Hakunaminda chinodziwa ihona (there are no field crops we eat bones)*

Storyteller: *Vasikana wee sarai*

Learners: *Kwatinoenda kunemakomo mashava*

Storyteller: *Hakunaminda chinodziwa ihona*

According to Olusola (2010), training in a specific culture's oral arts and skills is an important part of children's traditional indigenous education that leads to full human development. Similarly, the proverbs, folktales, and riddles employed as an Afrophilia lens are not simply doctrines handed down through generations, but rather concepts that must be critically examined by all individuals involved. According to Ndofirepi (2012), proverbs are intended to improve children's critical reasoning skills. Again, the use of Afrophilia lenses

such as proverbs, folk tales, and poems shapes an educational approach described by Callaway (1975, p.29) as an education that gives children a heightened awareness of moral values, ethical discernments, and the comic and tragic dimensions of human life.

7.5. CHILDREN APPRECIATED PARTICIPATING IN THE p4c COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY

Research question: *How can the Philosophy for Children Afrophilia curriculum intervention contribute towards the promotion of a culture of learning in resettlement schools in Zimbabwe that is oriented towards development of critical reflexive thinking skills in pupils?*

Learners took a while to progress to a stage of engaging meaningfully in Community of Inquiry, however as they gained familiarity with the dialogical approach, they become more delighted in participating in Philosophy for Children sessions (see, paper 4 Appendix A). The other signal to the learner's delight apart from prolonged engagement was a reduction in the number of absentees. The improved number of children's attendance was a significant indicator of the fact that children appreciated participating in the Afrophilia p4c intervention. This was also indicated by the way children in the class ended up showing willingness to engage in discussion even during lessons that were not dedicated to being community of inquiry sessions.

7.5.1 P4c community of inquiry fosters questioning and inquiry

Research question: *How will the Philosophy for Children experience influences the attitudes of learners, teachers, and parents on learning/what learning is, and how will it contribute to development of critical reflexive thinking skills in learners?*

As reported earlier in the study (see also Appendix B), the facilitator or one of the invited participants would present the start-up capital during the community of inquiry sessions. Following the presentation of the start-up capital, the children would be given the opportunity to formulate their questions and create a list from which they would choose the most appropriate question for discussion. One intriguing finding was that as children grew accustomed to participating in community of inquiry sessions, they would ask their peers to explain why they had come up with the type of question they would have asked.

This aided in reformulating some of the questions and unpacking the worthiness of each one. As the children and the facilitator discussed the reasons for the formulation of a particular question, it occurred to me that, while some questions may not be philosophical in nature, the depth of inquiry with which participants approach the question can transform the discussion into a philosophical discussion. According to Mohr Lone (2012) children's questioning can constitute the most primary of philosophical activities. This is because it allows them to reflect on the meaning of ordinary experiences and concepts in order to develop an understanding of the world, others and themselves. This study also noted how children were able to shift from a point where they could only listen and take instruction from the teacher to one where they could actually engage with the teacher and among themselves by participating in community of inquiry.

Similarly, for teachers and parents who attended some of the community of inquiry sessions, it became natural for them to appreciate the way children ask questions, even on seemingly obvious topics, by following the aspects of community of inquiry. The way the community of inquiry sessions encouraged questioning and inquiry in both children and adult participants facilitated in changing the perspectives of people in the Sebakwe community on learning and the development of critical reflexive thinking in children (see Paper 2, 4, 5 and 6) in Appendix A for further evidence). Adult participants began to realize, through their participation in community of inquiry sessions, that learning, whether informal or formal classroom learning, does not always need to be adult driven; there is need to consider the child's experience and allow children's voices to be heard. This realisation as it emerged from the findings could be further proof that the Afrophilic p4C approach explored through the pedagogy of the community of inquiry has the potential to transgress methods and traditions associated with formal classroom learning in the Sebakwe resettlement primary schools, while also expanding children's meaning making and critical reflexive thinking skills.

7.5.2 Children can follow the logic of an inquiry

One of the games which – as I reflected on the lessons – seemed to have helped learners develop the ability to follow the logic of an argument is the 'Keep the Question Going' energiser. Here, learners collaborate in formulating a question (one word after another) and indicate that they have come to the end of the question by clapping (see paper 4 in Appendix A). Moreover, the participant learners were able to give examples and counter-arguments,

proving that they had capability to follow the logic of an argument during discussion. In this case, learners demonstrated the ability to offer examples not simply as illustrations but as speculation or a general hypothesis of what might be the case.

In the study I developed an analytical tool kit (see papers 4 and 6 Appendix A), that teachers or P4C lesson observers can utilise to see whether the lesson process involves justification of claims made by participants. Findings on the dialogues recorded during community of inquiry sessions in this study, indicate that children were capable of giving reasons to justify their claims in line with the logic of the inquiry (see paper 6). The following example from a community of inquiry session [week 7 on leadership and responsibility] also demonstrates how children were capable of giving reasons in support of their claims. During the session learners were grouped in groups of three [making a total of five groups] and then in groups they would formulate questions emanating from their engagement with the Afrophilia reflexive artefact presented. Following the recitation of a folklore story that demonstrates how communities used to reward the brave and honest by awarding them leadership positions, one of the groups asked the following question: *'Is it true that losers [or those perceived by society as losers] are in reality bad leaders?'* This prompted the learners from the other group to make the following comment,

Tarisai: *The question from Tatenda's group is interesting though I do not seem to understand why they come up with the question.*

Anorld: *Well, when I was listening to the story I was reminded of when we elected the school prefects, everyone thought Tadiwanashe was going to be a good prefect because he always comes first in class...*

Abel: *[interjection] but he was elected to be a prefect*

Anorld: *Yes, but he later was removed because people complained and voted for someone else who is not even in the top five. So, I think leadership is about one getting the opportunity then we judge on how they perform not how they behave elsewhere.*

This in practical terms influences other children to reinforce their suppositions and consider whether to agree or disagree. Lipman (2003) posits that this is common in P4C because the main activity in community of inquiry is to help children in thinking about their thinking. The ability shown by children in the study in following the logic of an inquiry proved that the Community of Inquiry approach to learning has capacity to openly facilitate critical interactions among participants and, more importantly, the approach can even necessitate such interactions among learners as young as 8 to 11 years old (Cassidy & Christie 2013).

7.6 THE AFROPHILIC p4c INTERVENTION SURFACED NEW TEACHERS' ROLES CHARACTERISED BY PRACTICES, AND COMPETENCES

Research question: *How will the Philosophy for Children experience influence the attitudes of learners, teachers, and parents on learning/what learning is, and how will it contribute to development of critical reflexive thinking skills in learners?*

The literature review on Philosophy for Children that was undertaken to inform this study especially (cf. Chapter One and Five) shows that educators who want to advance the philosophical tradition of inquiry should remember the following lessons:

- All major concepts should be operationalised, and these operations should be properly sequential.
- Intellectual inquiry should begin with the interests of the student.
- One of the best ways of stimulating people to think is to engage them in dialogue.
- Excellent thinking is logical and founded upon experience. (It is also as we know from Plato, imaginative.) Thinking skills programs should therefore, stress both formal and creative reasoning (Lipman, Sharp , & Oscanyan , 1980 , p. xv).

Beyond these well documented lessons and the teachers' traditional role as curriculum agent, this study surfaced new teachers' roles characterised by competences and practices (see, paper 3 in Appendix A for depth discussion on this topic). Findings, especially during the first formative intervention work that surfaced barriers that prohibit effective learning in the study area, demonstrate that learners in the area felt alienated in education also because of the pedagogical approaches that teachers used in the classrooms. According to Tadiwanashe one of the learners interviewed in this study

At times teachers just write exercises on the chalkboard and tell us to answer the questions without even giving us example on how it is done. In some subjects this becomes difficult for us because we do not have enough textbooks... (learner , 04/06/2019).

The above quoted learner's claims are not isolated for they seem to be inline with another learner who was interviewed on the same day and she says;

We only have teachers' copies of textbooks in some subjects, so the teacher sometimes just explains things that we cannot see or understand because we do not have textbooks. There are times when we spend a lot of time copying notes from only two textbooks, so we can learn only two subjects per day... because of this some learners do not come to school everyday... (learner , 04/06/2019).

The above interview snippets with learners demonstrate how teachers in the area used what they [teachers] later on identified as traditional forms of teaching (see, posters in paper 3 in Appendix A where teachers made comparisons between the traditional teacher and the facilitator or 21st century teacher). According to Freire (1972) teaching methods explained by the learners could be identified as the lecture method or the banking method. The implication of this to the learners is that they would find no direct correlation between the school experiences and their life world. Moreover, what I discovered as I discussed in chapter five was that teachers (myself included) are teaching the current generation of learners out of its own historical traditions and experiences, by depending on traditional forms of teaching.

From my observations as an insider formative intervention researcher and teacher, what seem to influence this is the fact that there appears to be minimum teacher empowerment in regard to curriculum development in the Sebakwe resettlement area. The syllabus, textbooks and other curriculum documents for use in schools are developed and designed higher up in the hierarchy by experts in the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU) and textbook publishers and suppliers with teachers only involved as mere receivers, appliers and implementers, as discussed in section 7.3 above. In this regard teachers felt that the curriculum offers them limited space for ownership of the curriculum thereby thwarting their creative power. Teacher in the study (T8) states that;

The curriculum comes as a full package, it does not give us enough room to be creative, as we have already stipulated objectives and goals to achieve.

In this way we are left with no option but to parcel-down the information in the syllabus to the learner... (22/02/2018).

Contrary to this, in the Afrophilic p4c formative intervention, I involved teachers not only as implementers, but in the selection of the Afrophilia artefacts that were used as start up capital in community of inquiry (see papers 2, 3 and 4; Appendix B). Results suggest that there was greater mutual co-operation between all participants involved in the design stage of the intervention (parents, teachers, education inspectors and children) thereby influencing a change in teachers' roles characterised by competences and practices. The posters below [additional to those in paper 4 in Appendix A] surfaced from the activities in which teachers were creating posters to demonstrate new teachers' roles characterised by competences and practices.

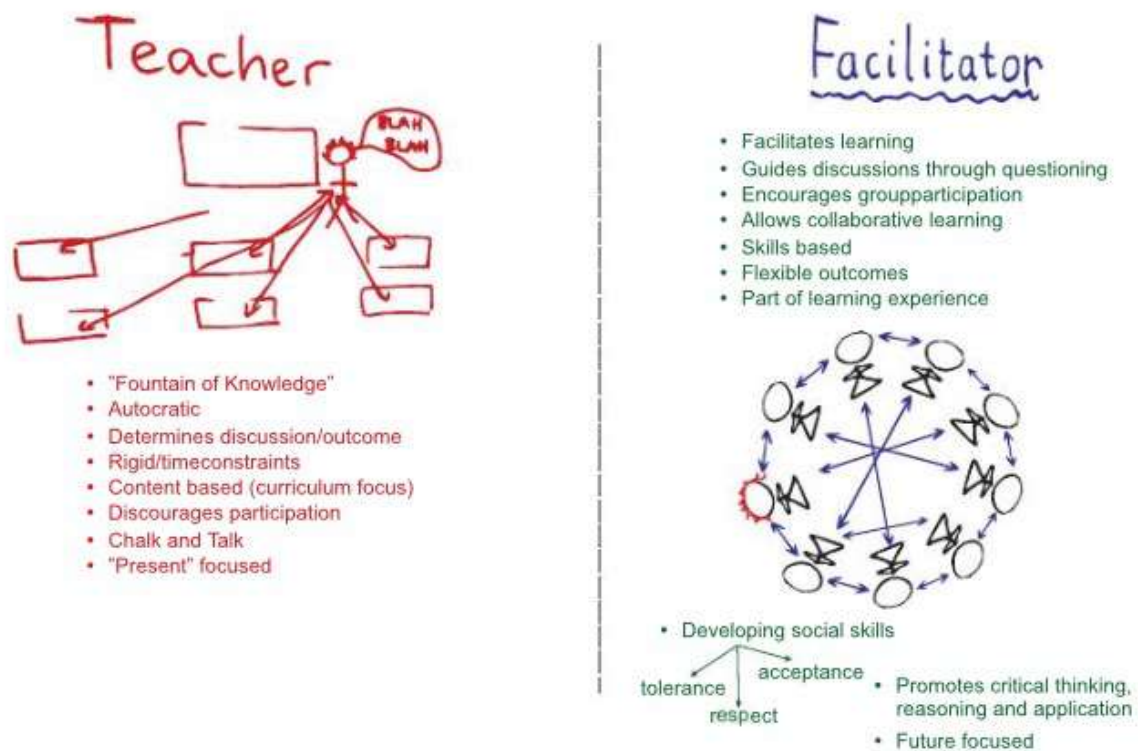


Figure 7.3:

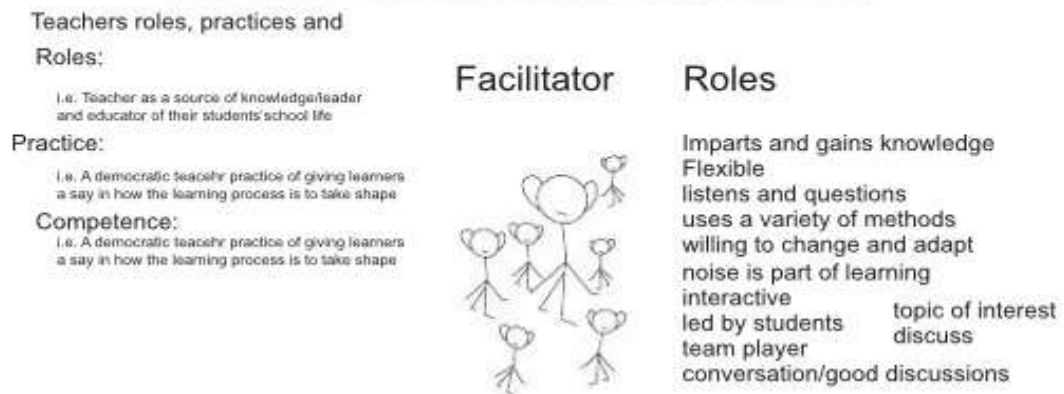


Figure 7.4

The emerging new roles characterised by competences and practices as shown in the posters above and in paper 4 (Appendix A) suggest that “teaching is more than the activities defined within the classroom walls” (Hecht et al., 1999, p. 152). This is because from the six dimensions of teachers’ roles characterised by competences and practices identified in paper 4 (Appendix A), teachers also take-up more social responsibilities. For example, a teacher may serve as an ideal custodian, cultivating in learners the ‘best’ attitudes, values and behaviour. The emergence of new teachers’ roles characterised by competences and practices from a study done in resettlement schools in Zimbabwe, while bound by the specific case, may have some potential insights that could be usefully explored in relation to policy and practice implications in wider contexts beyond the case.

7.7 POTENTIAL MEANINGS OF THE STUDY FOR ZIMBABWEAN EDUCATION, POLICY, AND PRACTICE

This research represents a carefully constituted, literature informed, and in-depth case study of an evidence-based formative intervention that considered curriculum innovation related to the advancement of children's learning and critical thinking skills that resonates with and helps to implement heritage-based curriculum reform intentions in Zimbabwe's resettlement primary schools. As indicated in paper 7, it worked with a field-based approach involving literature and policy review as well as formative intervention research. The formative intervention research programme was designed using a field-oriented and participative approach involving parents, teachers, education inspectors, and children to systematically integrate the intervention and implementation in resettlement schools. Findings presented in Papers 1 to 7 share two key characteristics with the theories used in this research: (1) integrating indigenous cultural heritage practices into the curriculum, and (2) improving learner agency, which is reflected in the development of critical reflexive thinking skills as the goal of intervention. The study, for example, used heritage-based knowledges within a community of inquiry pedagogy, utilizing what indigenous people already have while also enriching the p4C approach and curriculum intentions to strengthen learners critical thinking skills and various forms of content knowledge (e.g., environmental ethics). This appears to offer potential to realise part of the agenda of decoloniality and sociocultural theory in creating space for other ways of knowing and being that the colonial education system did not adequately account. Postholm (2020) contends that bodies of evidence-based research are not commonly adopted, hence I revisit the evidence-based foundations of the study here.

7.7.1 Interpretation via sociocultural theory

In paper 2 and 4 I discuss how philosophy for children informed by sociocultural theory has informed alternative roles for teachers characterised by practices, and competences. As elaborated in the study, learning, according to Vygotsky (1987), is an active meaning-making process for the child, and this should inform educational practice (Scott, 2008). Again, in sociocultural learning theory (see, chapter 3; and paper 2 in Appendix A) which was designed as a practical tool, learning is viewed as a social practice driven by cultural and historical practices. The theory suggests processes by which culture becomes a part of each person's nature and these include collaborative engagement between the learner and the more knowledgeable other in learning activities. This collaborative engagement points towards a

multi-layered approach to teaching and learning in which both the teacher and the learner enrich each other's understanding of a concept through inquiry-based interaction. The practice of P4C, and its Afrophilia orientation developed in this study, is based on such collaborative engagements in community of inquiry. But that collaborative inquiry does not mean overlooking individual autonomy or development of higher order thinking skills by members of the community of inquiry. Members gain autonomy and develop critical reflexive thinking skills as they start to see that there are actually various possibilities for the situation presented within a community of inquiry during a philosophy for children session.

Secondly, there is the process of fostering development of critical reflexive thinking skills and augmenting a culture of learning in resettlement primary schools based on sociocultural theory notion of the zone of proximal development. As evidenced in this study, the process of collaboration required in developing critical reflexive thinking and improving a culture of learning in schools requires teacher, parent and learner involvement from the initial stages. This is because curriculum and pedagogical transformation processes and discourses must be made transparent so that teachers can have a framework for 'de-reification' of abstracts curriculum documents into their classroom practices. Without planning for teachers' participation in the negotiation of curriculum meanings, curriculum developers themselves become marginalized, and the cultural objects they have developed will be adopted in unanticipated ways. Thus, the study potentially brings to the fore the importance of seeing educational transformation is an activity for collaborative engagement. Moreover, implications of this research point to the possibility of understanding how integrating context-based knowledges (heritage knowledges and practices) and the learners' home language into the curriculum via a multi-dimensional pedagogical practice such as Afrophilic p4c may influence transition in the zone of proximal development. Figure 7.3 below offers a summary of the sociocultural interpretation of the Afrophilic p4c formative intervention in the Sebakwe resettlement schools in Kwekwe district in Zimbabwe.

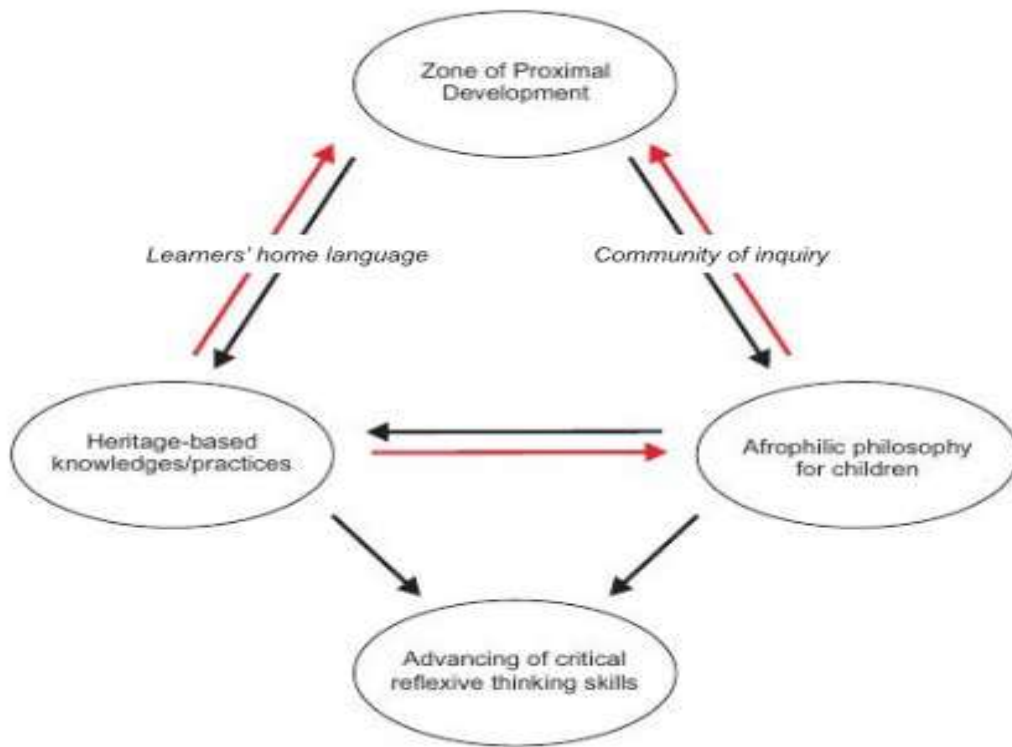


Figure 7.5: The sociocultural interpretation of the Afrophilic p4c formative intervention study

Figure 7.5 shows how the integration of heritage-based knowledges and practices and the Afrophilic p4c may have the potential to establish a synergy between p4c and heritage-based educational curricula, enriching both while also influencing how the zone of proximal development is understood. As shown in this study, this led to advancement and or strengthening of learners' critical reflexive thinking skills, meaning making and enjoyment of learning. As indicated before, the study suggests greater collaboration between teachers and parents, thus also potentially opening an opportunity for parents to negotiate zones of proximal development between their children and the teachers. As observed in the study, parental involvement appears to provide parents with an opportunity to talk about their children (giving the child a specific history), and this conversation enriches the relational context of the ZPD between the teacher and the learner. It may also aid the teacher in gaining insider knowledge about the learner, allowing him or her to better guide and design teaching models that will assist the learner in developing as a critical reflexive thinker.

7.7.2 Interpretation via decolonial theory

Part of my literature review goal (see Chapter Four and papers 1, 2 and 6 in Appendix A) was to theorise decolonising the context of postcolonial education reform in Zimbabwe. I demonstrated that while there are similarities in regards decolonial aims and objectives, but ultimately the meanings, actualization, and challenges of decolonising the curriculum varied depending on the context. This is one of the lessons that this research has brought to the Zimbabwean educational landscape; my focus on the context of resettlement schools provides practice-based examples of how curriculum decolonisation can be enacted in different contexts. That is, while decolonial theory advocates recognizing constraints, disrupting, and/or accommodating alternatives, the latter manifested differently depending on context (see, Walsh, 2015). From the finding of this study, it could be noted that actualising decolonising education and curriculum transformation took the following forms (a) probing the positionality of knowledges, (b) developing an inclusive or generative curriculum, (c) inquiry-based teaching and learning, or (d) bridging school curriculum and the entire institution with the community or sociocultural historical practices that inform the life worlds of the learners. In paper 6 and 7, I provide evidence on how these forms could be achieved.

7.7.3 What philosophy can do: A justification for doing philosophy in schools

The content of the instruction offered in Africa has always been of great concern since the introduction of formal colonial education (Hailey, 1938; Rodney, 1981). Simultaneously, questions as to how the content was to be related to the other influences that were potentially transforming the African society were asked. These questions and the concern of old days persist in contemporary postcolonial Zimbabwe. However, what education appears to be looking for is what I would call ‘flexible thinking,’ which allows children to unlearn old ways of doing things and enable them to think about something in a new way. Here, I offer justification for doing philosophy in schools and I stand guided by Michael Burroughs who reasons that:

... the philosophical cannon is not “child friendly”. There is need, then, for justifying philosophy for young people within the disciple of philosophy. Canonical philosophers continually overlook children as potential students of philosophy or, what is more, actively argue against children as proper subjects of philosophical pedagogy. (Burroughs, 2013, p. 180)

An immediate example of those philosophers who disregard children as potential candidates for philosophy is Plato who argue that if young people are introduced to the discipline they will 'discredit' the discipline (Plato, 2004, 235). Responding fully to this would take a thesis in itself.

Suffice to say in response, that the findings presented in this chapter and in paper 2, 3, 5 and 6 (Appendix A) offer evidence that engaging children or young people in philosophy helps them to develop analytic skills, which according to Burroughs (2013) are critical for young people regardless of their specific areas of interest in life. For instance, listening to someone reciting a totem poem during a community of inquiry session is unlike listening to popular contemporary music, children learn to examine the poem, trace the contours of its broader contents, and develop an informed position which they will have to communicate to others in a logical and concise manner. Thus, the skills developed in philosophy help the children to enrich their discussions as they can ask philosophical questions that keep the dialogue going (Burroughs, 2013).

In the findings of this study, it was noted that the Zimbabwean education system like other postcolonial education systems is premised on standardised test scores both at national and at school level. This has been noted as one of the barriers to development of critical reflexive thinking and development of a culture of learning in schools as teachers end up resorting to rote learning for purposes of initiating children into examination thinking. But, philosophy as discussed in chapter 5 has potential to bring about a different key in educational practice. Goering, Shudak, and Wartenberg (2013) point out that apart from enhancing diversity in reasoning and ensuring that children are equipped with skills that allow for abstract conceptualisation, philosophy in schools also advances children's writing and reading skills. This is shown in Appendix A in a composition written by a child where he made connections between his everyday knowledge and knowledge from other subject disciplines (see paper 4). Viewed in this context the skills developed in philosophy for children could be greater tools for achievement of higher levels in standardised examinations. As Burroughs (2013) argued, philosophy is more than a means to the end of standardised testing.

Though learner success could be a strong justification for introducing philosophy especially in resettlement schools that have experienced poor pass rates in standardised examinations, it

is important to stress the next point. Children in resettlement schools are children at the periphery and are curious to figure out who they are. The introduction of philosophy then with its focus on questions often not included or considered in standardised testing (i.e, what is justice? what makes a good or bad leader?) finds resonance in the lives of the children as shown in this study. Philosophy for children therefore provides a ‘third space’ in the school for formative engagement with these questions and many more, thereby helping children to critically encounter their social world and analyse and understand their location within it (Lipman, 2003, Goering, Shudak, & Wartenberg, 2013). Thus in a broader sense of the practice of philosophy in schools it could be argued that the pedagogy offers children tools for participation in their society. In the context of this study, use of an Afrophilia lens, enabled children to learn to take on a critical relationship with their heritage knowledges, values and beliefs. According to Jacobson (2013) the pedagogy of philosophy for children builds an awareness in children of their social, cultural and historical norms that shape their identities.

Another important issue evidenced in the findings is that philosophy in schools directs children’s “wondering into collaborative inquiry into questions about ethical, aesthetic, epistemological, political, and other philosophical aspects of experience” (Goering, Shudak, & Wartenberg, 2013, p. 70). This, happens to be one of the key competencies required in 21st century education in general and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in particular. As a result, philosophy for children becomes a key element in education and Education for Sustainable Development (also see, page 31). Target 4.7 of the SDGs urges governments to integrate education for sustainable development principles and practices into their lifelong learning systems. The reason behind this is that education is perceived as both a goal in itself for achieving sustainable development and is also essential in attaining all of the SDGs. As a result, having learner sustainability exit competencies is a crucial contribution of the study and the practice of philosophy for children in general.

Lipman (2004) is of the idea that philosophy for children instantiates Dewey’s fundamental insight that education and ESD means learning to interact more intelligently and purposefully with the problems and opportunities that confront us in this 21st century. This is made more possible when learners develop competences such as creativity and innovation, systems thinking competence, critical thinking competence, and communication competence

evidenced in this chapter and in appendix A2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7. Philosophy for children as evidenced in this intervention study is capable of influencing the emergency of these competences because it is a pedagogy that offers learners agency to do their own philosophical inquiry, to be aware of the aesthetic or the ethical in their own experience of the world (Goering, Shudak, & Wartenberg, 2013). Learners and participants doing philosophy are given a chance to think through the problems and opportunities with which the experience of philosophy for children presents them, thus empowering them to develop problem solving skills needed in order to be able to solve the sustainability issues the world is encountering.

7.8 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

In summatively viewing the contributions of the study, this thesis suggests that utilisation of the philosophy for children approach, as developed in this study via an Afrophilic lens, is compatible with the heritage-based curriculum reforms and has capacity to improve learning opportunities for children in resettlement areas thereby strengthening a culture of learning in children. As mentioned earlier on curriculum decolonisation and transformation, as developed in this study, is a multi-voiced, multi-age-grouped approach, and as demonstrated in this study, involved an open and participant driven methodological approach that foregrounds multi-vociedness in research and curriculum innovation practice.

In this study, it was noted that the continuity of coloniality is a barrier to effective curriculum transformation in the country. According to Quinjano (2000) coloniality is the systematic structure for the distribution of epistemic, moral, and aesthetic resources, and in the African context this has seen African cultural diversity subjected to the ongoing rigours of Eurocentric domination. A close analysis of this problem in the study, however, revealed that coloniality is not only reflected by the Westphalian template of modernity that represents Africa's development as only possible if initiated from the West (Mamdani, 1996), but is also rooted in significant postcolonial decolonisation processes. An example was offered of how, upon updating the curriculum, Zimbabwe did not fully consider the power relations that influence the way schools are structured, and how policy and decision making is initiated or controlled. This includes how teacher-learner relationships and learner assessment are authorised and controlled by the post-independent / post-colonial state. A further example

was offered in the paradoxical superficial interpretations of uhnu/ubuntu as philosophical foundation of curriculum reforms.

This study contributed to an understanding of alternative teachers' roles, practices and competences with the findings offering insights into the importance of broadening new ways of thinking about teaching and putting into context the relationship between learners, teachers, and the curriculum. Furthermore, the study hopefully managed to reveal the changing constellations in educational praxis and theory with regards curriculum implementation in schools, and what this takes when giving depth interpretation to decolonial intent. It is also hoped that the learners' activities, teaching guidance developed (Appendix B) and the onto-ethical mode of participation established in this study can be beneficial for further developing an Afrophilia p4c approach that can strengthen learners crucial reflexive thinking, meaning making and enjoyment of learning, thus developing children's agency and expansion of their learning potential, even in the most marginalised circumstances as was shown to be possible by this study's findings.

7.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

One of the challenges that I faced which manifested itself as a significant limitation was lack of previous research from which to draw as I conceptualized and designed this study. My search for previous research reports during the formative stages of this study yielded very little information. While there are so many research reports on philosophy for children these were done in contexts outside the country. The available literature that I found even if it provided useful insights into philosophy for children was arguably not substantial enough to provide the desired insights upon which to take a solid stand. This under-exploration of P4C in Zimbabwe and in the region was a limitation that I had to accept, and that this study would be exploratory, contributing to making a case for a need to engage in more context based P4C research within the region. This observation was therefore also a motivating factor.

Moreover, the study was a small-scale and qualitative one, wherein P4C was used as an intervention approach towards addressing learner disinterest in learning and effecting curriculum transformation in Sebakwe resettlement schools in Zimbabwe. The reason for adopting a largely qualitative approach was for an exploration of how P4C would help participants change their perception towards learning and contribute to curriculum change

and educational transformation. The recommendations are therefore constructed to the case under study and future similar studies may be needed to further strengthen the approach.

Another additional important aspect which I exhibited was that in Zimbabwe the 1st generation of people to do philosophy for children are those to whom the program was introduced at MEd Philosophy of Education in University. As such the children involved in the study become the 2nd generation to do philosophy for children. Though the 1st generation studied the theoretical underpinnings of the philosophy for children program the study could have had gain depth knowledge had there been some form of collaboration with the 1st generation.

Furthermore, I worked with the indigenous heritage languages (Shona, Ndebele, and Tonga) that are spoken in the Sebakwe community. Notably, the Sebakwe community is an indigenous group that has unique oral songs, folklore stories, proverbs and poems that reveal their way of life. These oral Afrophilia reflexive artefacts as I referred to them in the study are replete with cultural references and are loaded with specific meaning to the indigenous people. The implications of this were that I had to translate participants' responses and contributions from source languages to English, especially for papers submitted for publication. Ordinarily, such a process may result in meaning loss, especially in capturing the cultural symbolisms in English. Considering that for indigenous Zimbabwean's language is part of their holistic way of life and hence cannot be detached from culture future studies may explore how in a translated work of the indigenous people's responses and contributions to research how much of their culture can be transferred.

7.10 IMPLICATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Problems

Poor family educational background exacerbates a weak schooling ethic.

A teacher who has taught in Sebakwe resettlement area knows that times without number they have heard of a primary school girl dropping out to marry at a young age (usually 12-14 years) or a boy of the same age dropping out to join illegal gold miners or work on a nearby farm. This happens so often without substantial intervention by responsible authorities that it has become a symbol of the resettlement school child's precarious position in Zimbabwe in my opinion. According to the findings of this study, the majority of these undereducated

youth become parents of children enrolled in resettlement schools, and the children struggle to read and complete their homework because they have no one to guide them at home. It has been observed that the learner's social position affects their individual opportunities. Further research could look into the following question: To what extent does poor family educational background account for a poor learning culture in schools?

Resettlement schools in the study assert that the government has addressed the education of children in resettlement schools in a random manner thereby failing to ensure adequate funding for these schools. In effect, the government places the liability for all expansion and improvement of the resettlement schools and educational services on the parents of the children enrolled in these schools. This seems to have a negative impact on development of creation of a culture of learning in these schools as parents end up struggling to send their children to school leading to most children failing to attend lessons.

Context-relevant curriculum

The ad hoc approach to education in resettlement schools has meant that curricula are designed without the assistance or the requisite experience gained from such contexts. Further observations indicate that curriculum reforms remain under threat from colonial continuities, post-independence and postcolonial policy weaknesses and the impact of political and economic instability in the country. The Afrophilic p4c curriculum intervention in this study has demonstrated how communities could participate in designing a generative curriculum. However much more work is required to ensure that the children and adults in resettlement schools have access not only to education but to an education that is significant to their heritage knowledge and cultural history of practice. In order to offer context-relevant education, the study suggests that MoPSE may first rigorously involve stakeholders from diverse contexts and there is need to define alternative assessment methods. Future research could address the following questions: What are appropriate goals and targets for sustainable decolonial curriculum reform in postcolonial Zimbabwe? How can MoPSE most effectively design a learner assessment model that is not examination dependent?

Successes

Afrophilic p4c formative intervention

This exploration into how a sociocultural, context-based philosophy for children (Afrophilic p4c) intervention could contribute to curriculum changes that are oriented towards development of critical reflexive thinking skills among learners. It has established that Afrophilic philosophy for children does have capacity for educational decolonization and subsequently curriculum transformation. The sociocultural framing used in the study supports bringing children's heritage and cultural lens to bear on curriculum and pedagogical praxis. Furthermore, the findings in this research reflect those benefits commonly held dear to practitioners of P4C. As a way of example, critical reflexive thinking skills are evidenced, along with deep inquiry, and a learner-centered approach that builds enthusiastic engagement while also encouraging listening to others. A connection to the natural environment and cultural identity is evidenced when the Community of Inquiry is infused with Afrophilia reflexive artefacts such as African proverbs, music, images, and folklores. Viewed in decolonization terms the approach utilized in this study resonates with the aim of decolonizing the curriculum and supporting a pedagogy that is embedded within, and sensitive to, a specific cultural context. Overall, the Afrophilic p4c formative intervention affords a synergy between philosophy for children and the Zimbabwean heritage-based educational curriculum, serving to enrich both. A draft teacher training booklet has been designed for future use and reflexive development (Appendix B). A possible follow up study might try to test the transfer value of Afrophilic p4c to other contexts in the country and elsewhere. Though a draft teacher training booklet has been developed, teachers may need the support of a qualified philosophy for children facilitator, this is where I strongly suggest furthering the study. Also, in line with philosophy for children facilitation and curriculum evaluation we (as the group) did not fully map out how the Afrophilic p4c generative curriculum could be evaluated hence this could be another area of future research.

7.11 RECOMMENDATIONS

The exploration undertaken in this thesis case study has proven to be an informative journey. It gives confidence for the potential expansion of the practice of philosophy for children in Zimbabwe by establishing it as a possible learning area and the community of inquiry as a key pedagogy for curriculum transformation praxis. With this in mind, including the limitations of making wide recommendations from a case study, I consider the following recommendations from this study:

7.11.1 Recommendations for government (MoPSE)

The recommendations suggested in this section are made with my full understanding that Zimbabwe had to take major leaps to address the social abjection brought about by the country's inherited colonial system of governance and the postcolonial system of internal hegemony created by the postcolonial government. This is not to say that no strides have been made to address the social ills, however, much still needs to be done.

One characteristic of state hegemony is in the monopolization of the curriculum, in the findings it was established that curriculum design in Zimbabwe is centralized with MoPSE in charge of the Curriculum Development Unit (CDU). The top-down centralized approach has been critiqued for its failure to meet the needs of the learners. Considering this, and based on the insights gained in this study, I recommend that MoPSE take more steps to consider teachers as major stakeholders in curriculum design, development, and implementation. According to (Barrow, 2015) curriculum is best developed by practicing teachers rather than non-teaching research experts. For any curriculum reform, the government should win the support of teachers by involving them in the design process. It should be MoPSE's concern therefore to make sure that teachers are empowered to be curriculum agents in the true sense of the word, as they are often closest to learners needs, as in the case of the Sebakwe case study investigated.

Though examinations have been localized, the country's education policy and assessment criteria still seem to be biased towards urbanized contexts that exclude the reality experiences of those in rural areas, and worse still resettlement schools. Considering this, I recommend that the country still needs to continue to re-model its education system that will become peculiarly Zimbabwean and will ensure epistemological access to knowledge for all including rural and resettlement school's context.

7.11.2 Recommendations to p4c practitioners

As an inside formative interventionist working with the philosophy for children approach to spearhead curriculum transformation in resettlement schools, I can offer the following recommendations to Philosophy for Children practitioners. Though I have targeted Philosophy for Children practitioners, the recommendations are applicable to those who

support critical, creative, collaborative, and caring thinking in their classrooms. Furthermore, the recommendations are aimed at making P4C doable and sustainable.

From the findings reported in paper 1 through to 7 and in this chapter, it has been established that P4C empowers children to take agency in their learning and it helps them to develop critical reflexive thinking skills. The children involved in the study demonstrated capacity to ponder the most basic elements of life and society. However, unlike countries in Europe and Latin America, for example, Zimbabwe doesn't have a tradition of including philosophy (particularly Philosophy for Children) in the school curriculum. In view of this, I therefore recommend that children should get a substantial p4c session every week if we are to expand and support their capacities for serious thought. According to Sara Stanley "A classroom that introduces philosophical thinking, playing and storytelling become a classroom alive with possibilities for past, present and future understanding". This is because in Philosophy for Children learners are taught to listen and think in a way that extends beyond the self and the present (see Goering et al., 2013; paper 4 and 6 in Appendix A). Furthermore, the community of inquiry dialogues should not take the form of pseudo-dialogue in which the children are engaged so that their skills can be assessed, or their knowledge evidenced.

Lastly, I suggest that P4C practitioners should step up and theorise their practice developing a theory and recommendations that will make their work recognisable and adaptable. This study has demonstrated that if teachers take an active role, they can effect meaningful reforms rather than waiting for government led initiatives. The deliberative actions by the intervention researcher, who is also an insider together with other teachers and parents led to emergence of a creative solution to a practical problem. Deliberation here is the key word that both MoPSE and P4C practitioners should take note of, according to Null (2011), it is an ongoing curriculum design activity that is uncontrollable by an single individual or cannot be controlled by a group of people but is rather a public good to which citizens can contribute. Through this a hybrid third space for connecting theory and practice is potentially built. Null (2011) tacitly explains that:

Deliberation joins theory and practice not by making them antagonists of one another or by making practice a handmaiden of empirical science; rather, deliberation brings the strengths of theoretic knowledge to bear on practical problems in a way that is appropriate to the problems at hand.

When deliberation guides curriculum making, theoretic knowledge informs practical reasoning, but it does not control what practitioners do (ibid, 2011, p. 152).

7.11.3 Recommendation on the adoption of *unhu/ubuntu* philosophy

In my first publication I recommended considering *unhu/ubuntu* episteme rather than doxa. The recommendation has occasioned a wealth of comments and criticisms. In this section I tacitly elucidate on the demands and expectations that motivated me to follow in the footsteps of such philosophers as Paulin J. Hountondji and Emmanuel C. Eze and consider fostering rationality and diversity in reasoning over doxa. One of the reviewers of the paper argued that by so doing one will be re-inscribing Western values into the curriculum, the criticism sounded to me like a misreading of the pedagogical suggestions of contemporary Zimbabwean education that continually faces inescapable questions about learner autonomy and development of higher order thinking skills (MoPSE, 2014). However, I like the criticism because it suggests there is an African thought from outside Africa already extant in the curriculum. A voyeuristic African thought.

In response to the criticism, my argument is that the solutions to questions about how we should educate the children, which constantly intersect with questions about why we should educate children, cannot be founded on doxa or absencing logic from a context-based philosophy of education, particularly *unhu/ubuntu* philosophy of education. This concern concerning allowing children develop the capacity for autonomy and allowing them to take charge of their lives and figure out what a good life is, calls for an episteme-based approach to pedagogy and theory of education, rather than injecting ethnocentric norms and values into the curriculum. This is because the justifications for the solutions we chose today require rational judgement in order to sustain them. At this point then we can ask the following questions: At what ends does a decolonial philosophy of education aim in postcolonial Zimbabwe? What are its methods? Ordinarily, we need to be aware (through taking deliberative steps) of the non-rational factors that have influenced scholarship on *unhu/ubuntu* and its superficial adoption in the curriculum, so that we are enabled, not to manipulate them to good advantage, but to avoid them.

7.12 CHAPTER CONCLUSION

This chapter offered a summary of the meaning of the study to Zimbabwean educational policy and practice. Reflections on what philosophy can do, study conclusions, research implications and recommendations were informed by the research findings. What emerged from the study is that the philosophy for children approach has capacity to foster a critical and generative approach to considering the heritage-based curriculum foundations of Zimbabwean primary schools. A focus on Afrophilia foundations of learning other than the hegemonic Westernphilia understanding of the world lends this study its most decolonial and transformative taste. In conclusion it is suggested that local heritage knowledges should not become discursive strategies that give the appearance of change, while at the same time promoting interests that further fragment, co-opt, and defy ancestral collectivities, knowledges, territories, and sensibilities, in the name of curriculum transformation, progress, and development. Rather, generative, co-engaged approaches to advancing Afrophilia approaches can be considered for their meaning and relevance in the lifeworlds of children and as meaningful learning opportunities for transformative change. As shown in this study, an Afrophilia philosophy for children approach has much to offer in this direction.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: ARTICLES PREPARED FOR PUBLICATION

A1: Decolonial Reflections on the Zimbabwean Primary and Secondary School Curriculum Reform Journey

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Abstract

The Zimbabwean curriculum reform journey is shaped by the weight of cultural technologies of domination employed in the country during British imperial rule (1890–1980). Moreover, these imperial forms of domination that, paradoxically, continue to exist today influence the sociocultural and political institutions in the country and delineate what is epistemologically feasible. In addition, the inherited education curricula, specifically at primary school level (the focus of this study) were theoretically and pedagogically disengaged from the lifeworlds of the learners they intended to educate. In this conceptual article, I challenge this colonially inherited education and the paradox of superficial interpretation of unhu/ubuntu (ironically, a doxa in the postcolonial Zimbabwean education system). Further, I suggest considering epistemic depth in pedagogy as an experience that transforms education and society.

Keywords: decolonial philosophy, curriculum reform, superficial philosophy, cultural technologies of domination, heritage education, social abjection

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Context and Background

Zimbabwe is currently in a phase of curriculum reform that, with its emphasis on heritage, promises to contribute to decolonialising an inherited and culturally hegemonic, colonially

shaped curriculum (Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training [CIET], 1999; Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education [MoPSE], 2014). Shizha and Kariwo (2011) and Mqgwashu (2016) concurred that Zimbabwe, like many African states, co-opted imperial educational values that became valued as crucial vehicles of development in postcolonial states. The history of colonised peoples all over the world, including Zimbabwe, was shaped through *cultural technologies of domination*¹⁶ that continue into the present day (Terreblanche, 2014). In the Zimbabwean case, these continuities exist in the form of epistemic and ontological exclusions in curricula despite 40 years of independence from 98 years of British colonial rule.

Much has been written about the colonial history of education in Zimbabwe (Chitumba, 2013; Masaka, 2016; Siyakhwazi & Siyakhwazi, 2013) but there is inadequate scholarly analysis of the continuity of imperial cultural hegemony in curriculum and pedagogy. This continuity is paradoxically making its way into the current education reform process with its interest in foregrounding heritage. In reality, British colonial education in Zimbabwe created secular hierarchies incompatible with precolonial, heritage learning pathways (MoPSE, 2014).

This paper offers a critical macro historical political sociology of the colonial history of curriculum and how it has influenced pedagogy. Then, the analysis is deepened in the contemporary context of curriculum reform via a critical postcolonial discourse analysis of key policy texts (CIET, 1999 and MoPSE, 2014) that emphasise unhu/ubuntu philosophy as the foundation of the educational reform. The intention of the two-part analysis is to open up a landscape for curriculum and pedagogical development in a way that rigorously engages the potential of the heritage-based commitment of the current educational reform process.

In Part 1 of the analysis (an in-depth literature review to scope the history of curriculum in Zimbabwe as influenced by the cultural hegemonies of colonialism), the curriculum as constituted via the histories of missionary and colonial education is shown to have produced social abjections that caused a decontextual impasse—with curricula and pedagogy being

¹⁶ *Cultural technologies of domination* represent the synthesis of religion, culture, political economic development, ideology, and monolithic epistemic access options into the curriculum in order to suppress the culture, knowledges, religion, and ideologies of the colonised people (see, Terreblanche, 2014).

theoretically and practically disconnected from the lifeworlds of African children (CIET, 1999). This differs substantively from precolonial forms of education Rodney (1983), and it is this disjuncture that has motivated a contemporary focus on heritage as the foundation for curriculum reform.

In Part 2 of the analysis, I focus on the ubuntu/unhu discourse where I found a paradox of superficial interpretation of unhu/ubuntu that has, ironically, become a doxa¹⁷ in the postcolonial Zimbabwe curriculum. This indicates a need for deeper engagement with the unhu/ubuntu philosophy and associated heritage discourse if they are to meet intended aspirations of decoloniality in contemporary times. In practice, this has implications for reframing curriculum in ways that can realise epistemic depth in pedagogy to avoid the limitations of the doxa. This, in turn, has implications for pedagogy, the role of the teacher, and the sociocultural foundations of educational theory and practice. The paper does not offer theory or a methodology of practice but, rather, a critical historical sociological vantage from which to develop this theory and methodology of practice to inform subsequent educational transformation.

Problem Statement and Methodological Approach

The brutal histories of colonial education and the paradoxical continuity of coloniality mentioned above have influenced an educational reflex that has paved the way for the unhu/ubuntu philosophy to become significant in the Zimbabwean education discourse (CIET, 1999; MoPSE, 2014). However, the continuity of colonial patronage systems and a deficit of diversity in reason make it difficult to take the unhu/ubuntu decolonial narrative into the methodology and learning processes in classroom context. According to Prinsloo (2013), this creates a substantial deficit in methodological examples—making it a real challenge to develop a coherent position and line of argument in curriculum transformation. This problem has influenced a number of methodological approaches such as the critical macro historical political sociology (Subrt, 2017) and critical postcolonial discourse analysis (Sawyer, 2012).

¹⁷ “Doxa” in this article is a commonly believed public opinion that is an unjustifiable ideological doctrine; “episteme” is a more justified belief.

This paper begins to address this problem via offering, in Part 1, a critical macro historical political sociology of the colonial history of curriculum and how it has influenced pedagogy. Critical macro historical political sociology as a methodology implies a multi-paradigmatic approach in research with the aim of gathering evidence and communicating ideas about the past (Subrt, 2017). This methodology aims to achieve a number of objectives: mapping metaphysical and epistemological exclusions in colonially inherited education, tracing those cultural hegemonic exclusions to their source, and seeking ways on how heritage education reform intentions could recast new educational existentialities for the Zimbabwean learner. Thus, the methodology denotes the collecting and synthesising of earlier research with the aim of accessing collective evidence in a particular social phenomenon (Tranfield et al., 2003). To this end, critical macro historical political sociology has the capacity to shed light for researchers in education on the observable gaps that surface when one engages with critical issues in education such as curriculum transformation and the embedded continuities of coloniality (Sever, 2012). Through this, the intention in this paper was to bring to the fore a historically sensitive and yet generally relatable elucidation of the emergence of cultural technologies of dominance, epistemic and ontological exclusions in curricula (CIET, 1999) and other core features of the Zimbabwean education landscape.

In Part 2, this analysis is deepened in the contemporary context of the curriculum reform via a critical postcolonial discourse analysis of key policy texts that emphasise unhu/ubuntu philosophy as the foundation of the educational reform (CIET, 1999; MoPSE, 2014). According to Fairclough and Wodak (1997), discourse analysis is a theoretical and methodological approach that helps researchers study “how power relations, and ideological standpoints, are exercised and negotiated in discourse” (p. 272). In this paper, critical postcolonial discourse analysis was applied to analyse Zimbabwean educational discourse in socio-political contexts and helped to unveil underlying discursive educational practices such as cultural alienation, creation of social abjection, and continuities of a resilient colonial epistemological mechanism.

I undertake this two-part analysis to give meaning to the point made by Houtondji (1996) and Wiredu (1998), who argued that any philosophy of curriculum transformation must aim to be the main informant to a process where the theoretical framework of the culture is critically examined and enacted. As argued earlier, the postcolonial Zimbabwean education system

inherited a culturally devoid colonial education (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011). Results from the two-part analysis are presented in the next two sections. Of particular attention in the first is how the colonial history of curriculum has influenced pedagogy in contemporary Zimbabwe.

Part 1: Colonial History of Curriculum and how It Influenced Pedagogy

In Part 1 of this analysis (where I employed an in-depth literature review to scope out the history of curriculum in Zimbabwe as influenced by the cultural hegemonies of colonialism [Terreblanche, 2014]), I found that the curriculum as constituted via the histories of missionary and colonial education produced social abjections¹⁸ and a decontextual impasse—with curricula and pedagogy being theoretically and practically disconnected from the lifeworlds of African children (CIET, 1999; MoPSE, 2014). The history of colonised peoples all over the world, including Zimbabweans, was shaped through “cultural technologies of dominance” (Terreblanche, 2014, p. 88) that continue into the present day.

The history of colonised people . . . was shaped through cultural technologies of dominance. Colonial and imperial domination operated through mechanisms *education, religion and political economic development* [emphasis added] that resulted in cultural imperialism, that is, a debasement and negation of the values of colonial people that undermined their cultures. . . . Cultural strategies were more subtle than other forms of colonial control, such as policing and the law, and had some success, in that the colonised internalised inferiority. (Terreblanche, 2014, p. 88)

One may surmise that British colonialism in Zimbabwe, and other territories where it was enacted, was educationally and ontologically oriented through Christian missionary doctrines in ways that would deny indigenous people of viable philosophical systems and meaningful and organised learning programmes (Masaka, 2016; Shizha & Kariwo, 2011). Imperial British colonial education is viewed here as not being meaningful because it was, according to Rodney (1983), not an outgrowth of the values and needs of the people it sought to

¹⁸ “Social abjection” in this article is associated with a process where exclusion is elected as a way of constituting power for the sole benefit of the elite or ruling class.

represent. He argued that “under normal circumstances, education grows out of the environment; the learning process being directly related to the pattern of work in the society” (Rodney, 1983, p. 375). And he cited an example of children from the Bemba community of present-day Zambia who “by the age of six could name fifty to sixty species of tree plants without hesitation, but they knew very little about ornamental flowers” (Rodney, 1983, p. 376); these children were able to name the trees because knowledge of trees was a necessity in an agricultural community that often-employed slash-and-burn techniques.

In precolonial learning institutions in Africa, Zimbabwe included, education was a process through which continuity was maintained between the elder generation and their children because learning was largely a means of social integration (Kallaway, 1984; Masaka, 2016; Rodney, 1983). Christian missionary institutions and British formal education changed the function of education through their use of cultural technologies of domination that created discontinuities by making school knowledge accessible only to the neophytes (Kallaway, 1984), and by focusing on literary training, technical training, and teaching of crafts and agriculture to provide for the labour needs of the colonial administration, with English as medium of instruction for grades above lower primary (Lugard, 1922). Rudimentary training in elementary hygiene, religious and moral education, and colloquial English constituted part of the African education curriculum in many rural schools (Lugard, 1922). As a result, imperial British education in Zimbabwe failed to effect conceivable notions of cultural development. Wa Thiong’o (1986) and Achebe (2000) concurred that one of the main objectives of colonialism, especially via its Christian missionary institutions of education, was to destroy as much as possible the psycho-cultural being of the Africans (Wa Thiong’o, 1986).

According to Abdi (2012), the discontinuities and annihilation of the psycho-cultural being of Africans that resulted in the production of social abjection and a curriculum decontextual impasse during the colonial period (1890–1980) were to ensure that schools served as a key means of Christian conversion. Hence, the main aim of the colonial education system was to bring “light” and “civility” to “barbaric” communities. To this end, Christian missionaries designed an education system that would foster the belief that the African learner’s lifeworld was myopic and superstitious (Wa Thiong’o, 1986). Once this belief was implanted, the colonial school became an abject space responsible for the social uprooting of the African

child. Abdi (2009) noted that the process of colonialism saw indigenous ways of learning rooted in the cultural history of practice of oral societies being regarded as stagnated in the past and lacking innovative alternatives that would make them attractive and acceptable in the new modalities of colonial relationships. The colonial pedagogy was based on objectives of education that were premised on othering, cultural dislodgment, epistemological domination, and implanting mediocrity—rather than stemmed from the interests of the child (Hailey, 1938; Masaka, 2016; Shava, 2008; Shizha & Kariwo, 2011). Said (1985) and Masaka (2016) argued that power and dominance were the variables used to carve privileges for the colonial masters at the expense of the other citizens.

Rodney (1983) described the colonial schooling system as an “education for subordination, exploitation, the creation of mental confusion and the development of underdevelopment” (p. 380). The situation, according to Marechera (1980), was made worse by the fact that the social abjection that learners experienced emerged as a manifestation of the overbearing hegemonic relations, narratives, and institutions of late modernity that were brought into Zimbabwe by British imperial colonial rule—and were decided for the learners in their absence. Marechera (1980) exclaimed, “I was hot with resentment and pain. So, this was school. From all sides my head was being jammed with facts. With ideas” (p. 17). The African child suffered deficiencies in accessing knowledge to the same level as those undertaking a European education curriculum (Lugard, 1922; Rodney, 1983) because there was a dual system of education—one for Africans and one for Europeans. Selection of knowledge for African learners was set—and there were no choices regarding what was to be taught; the focus was on surface learning with memorisation and chorusing as part of the learning process (Hoadley, 2018). According to Chung (2006), “African education in the country was a frenzied and irrational race through a jungle of facts that had to be mastered to pass the Rhodesian Junior Certificate” (p. 50). The situation was worsened by the fact that African schools were under the instruction of “native” teachers who focused on the 3Rs (reading, writing, and arithmetic) and imparting elementary religion (Lugard, 1922).

Part 2: The Contingent Path of the Zimbabwean Curriculum Reform Journey

Curriculum updating is not principally historically predetermined—the curriculum updates in Zimbabwe can be viewed as invaded by contingency, especially given the country’s postcolonial education reforms. The social trajectories and realities that surfaced after the

colonial period (from the 1980s) in Zimbabwe influenced a shift from curriculum abstraction to a more contextualised curriculum that spoke to local needs and global germaneness or relevance (MoPSE, 2014). During colonial hegemony, cultural technologies of domination were used, but, with the shift in systems of governance, a new social order emerged based on a macro social discourse and ensuring the equality of humankind (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011).

Pre-independence (1966 and 1979) education reforms included a two-year junior secondary school curriculum (ZJC) and an Education Act that limited access to education for black Zimbabweans (CIET, 1999). The postcolonial Zimbabwean community had to redefine this segregated system of education in a stratified society designed to serve graduates of the colonial education system (Moyana, 1989). The first step taken by the Zimbabwean government was to ensure access to education for all its citizens by building new schools and reopening schools that had been closed during the war for liberation (Gwarinda, 1991). To give traction to the principle of education for all during the years 1980 to 1986, free primary education was introduced to boost enrolment in schools and teacher training was accelerated through programmes such as the Zimbabwe Integrated Teacher Education Course (Maravanyika, 1990).

The early 1990s to mid 2000s marked a shift from reforms that were mainly planning and efficiency reforms to a more focused approach to ensuring educational quality and relevance (CIET, 1999; Ndawi & Maravanyika, 2011). Talk of revisioning approaches to content, technologies, teaching methodologies, and skills provision became prominent. For example, there was more focus on employment-related skills (CIET, 1999), which culminated in the introduction of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics and the Education 5.0 policy (MoPSE, 2014). Another notable shift towards educational quality and relevance was the localisation of all national examinations following the establishment of the Zimbabwe School Examination Council as the country drifted away from the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate in the United Kingdom.

The blind side of the reforms enacted so far is that they seem to exceed the capacity of the education system to deliver (Ndawi & Maravanyika, 2011). For instance, the government advocates mass education amidst a critical resource deficit and this appears to be having effects on the educational output of the current curriculum. Thus, it becomes axiomatic to state that Zimbabwe still needs to reform the curriculum so that it becomes anchored in a problem-centred approach to learning in pluralistic contexts and, at the same time, is aligned

with the system's capacity to deliver (Ndawi & Maravanyika, 2011). Waghid et al. (2018) suggested that the educational decolonisation process entails rupturing the dominant ways of meaning making aligned only to a few people and ensuring that education becomes reflective of the diverse knowledges inherent in the society. It is expected that new reforms will also need to be designed in such a way that learning enables the development of cognitive maturity and opens a hybrid space to recognise contradictions in terms of diversity (Higgs, 1998; Lipman, 2003).

The above propositions demand the strengthening of traditional African institutional structures through reconnecting the learners to their cultural heritage (Zazu, 2012). According to Zazu (2012), precolonial communities in Africa were able to venerate their heritage, a condition that was changed by the advent of colonial rule when the colonisers deliberately caused a dislocation between indigenous people and their own culture. This resulted in the marginalisation of colonised people's knowledge systems and practices in formal education (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011). This differs substantively from precolonial forms of education, and it is this disjuncture that has motivated a contemporary focus on heritage as a foundation for curriculum reform.

The Contemporary Heritage Response

Colonial education was premeditated to absorb colonised children into British imperial power (administration) structures by stripping away their indigenous learning configurations (Gwarinda, 1991; Hailey, 1938; Lugard, 1922; Masaka, 2016). It is essential therefore to include in the postcolonial curriculum, heritage practices such as storytelling, axioms, and songs in tandem with indigenous learning lenses that provide start-up capital for curriculum transformation. The next section discusses what heritage is, and its possible implications for education.

What Is to Be Understood as “Heritage”?

O'Donoghue et al. (2013) postulated heritage as an amalgam of the “tangible and intangible aspects of embodied livelihood practices (some every day and some occasional), is embedded in culture, and is located in diverse contexts and carried across time” (p. 9). The contextualisation of heritage by O'Donoghue et al. (2013) is in accordance with Hountondji's (1996) observation that heritage is never univocal and, hence, can be recognised as plurivocal and contradictory—like all embodied livelihood practices. Furthermore, it has to be

understood that heritage has many facets including social, cultural, historical, ethnological, technological, and environmental aspects (Zazu, 2012).

Implications of a Heritage Response to Education

Given the reform needs highlighted above, it becomes indispensable for postcolonial education systems to embrace heritage education because heritage knowledge and practices form part of people's daily lives. As noted by Hountondji (1996), heritage offers people the right traction to define themselves and acquire an identity. Resonating with Hountondji (1996), Magwa (2019) concurred that heritage education has the capacity to develop a sense of ownership, identity, and responsibility in communities and consequently ought to be perceived as fundamental to people's lives. Also, heritage education has the potential to promote students' understanding of themselves and others in relation to place, time, belief, identity, and culture (Hountondji, 1996). An educational programme that values local heritage knowledges and practices is essential in postcolonial Zimbabwe because these aspects were once eclipsed in the "trajectories of colonial and modern expansion" (O'Donoghue et al., 2013, p. 11).

In recent scholarship, there seems to be an emerging reconfiguration of the relationship between heritage knowledge and the communities from which it emerges (Hountondji, 1996; Magwa, 2019; MoPSE, 2014). This reconfiguration has seen some education programmes being reimaged, creating space for the inclusion of heritage education. In Zimbabwe, the quest for a heritage turn has influenced the publication of a book entitled, *African Culture and Heritage in Zimbabwe* (Magwa, 2019). Arguments proffered in the book buttress the perception that a heritage shift in education is a timely signification for cultural exorcism, which ought to detoxify Africans and, to a larger extent, Zimbabweans and enable them to be more appreciative of their own culture and heritage. Heritage-based education reinforces the idea of exploiting African learning foundations that are aimed at effecting constructive affiliations between educational praxis and theory (rooted in unhu/ubuntu philosophy) and other disciplines and other cross-cutting issues in education (Zazu, 2012). Moreover, educational institutions can also make use of heritage sites (such as Great Zimbabwe, Matopo Hills), which seem to have vibrant educational programmes that could be used as start-up capital in shaping and informing schools' heritage education programmes.

Centring of Unhu/Ubuntu in Contemporary Curriculum Discourse

CIET (1999) and MoPSE (2014) emphasised the need to underpin the Zimbabwean education system with unhu/ubuntu philosophy as an antithesis to coloniality and demonstrated the authority of this philosophy in strengthening and deepening contemporary Zimbabwean education. Talk, as reasoned by Fairclough (1995) in reference to discourse, is never neutral because it is grounded in language and text that is socially situated and as such has embodied meanings (Pinar et al., 1995). In Zimbabwe, the conversation is based on critical insights from diverse scholars that the postcolonial Zimbabwean education system was informed by cultural technologies of dominance that seem to have their orientation in Kant's notion of *universal reason*¹⁹ as contradistinguished from unhu/ubuntu philosophy, which is communalistic in outlook (Hountondji, 1996). These cultural technologies of dominance have curtailed opportunities in Zimbabwean "civilization" (Gwarinda, 1991; Moyana, 1989).

Abdi (2005) resonated with this, theorising that the colonial education system had deleterious power in that it unsettled "the values of pre-settler and pre-colonial notions of learning [that] were essential in reflecting the social and cultural needs and expectations of the community" (p. 29). The cultural imperialism described by Abdi (2005) was perceived by Shizha and Kariwo (2011) to be what kept Zimbabwean citizenry in perpetuity in a position of inferiority to Europeans and influenced their internalisation of the racial stereotypes of the coloniser. Evidently, the discourse foregrounds a shift from what Giroux (1988) observed as a macro socio-political level of understanding curriculum. At this level, Giroux (1988) reasoned, the aim behind reorienting curriculum towards incorporating local heritage knowledge is to link curriculum content to the learners' reality.

It follows that the postcolonial community found it worthwhile to deconstruct the values entrenched by the coloniality (which sought to immortalise colonial hegemony) through centring postcolonial learning on the indigenous philosophy of unhu/ubuntu (CIET, 1999; MoPSE, 2014). In line with this viewpoint, Shizha and Kariwo (2011) echoed the need for decolonisation, reasoning that "as Africans, we need to invent ways of rewriting or changing those dominant narratives and deconstruct 'White' superiority and the misrepresentation of indigenous people and their cultures" (2011, p. 14).

Given the viewpoint above, and the supporting literature from CIET (1999) and MoPSE

19 According to Marshall (2004), Kant advanced the notion of universal reasoning by arguing that improvement of humanity was to be achieved through the critical use of reason in its universal applications.

(2014), it appears that anchoring the curriculum on an indigenous philosophy could open the channel through which Zimbabwe can demythologise (Mbembe, 2015) the colonial history of curriculum, and usher in innovative perspectives to teaching and learning. Additionally, underpinning the education system with the unhu/ubuntu philosophy is important in order to “explicate, understand and criticize” (Hirst, 2010, p. 37) preliminary principles of the Zimbabwean education system. Here, unhu/ubuntu can become the benchmark for approaching education from a situated local context and can give to the education system what Lotz-Sisitka et al. (2017) described as a paradigm of *learning as connection*, which bestows on education a social function that Dewey (1944) anticipated in his ideas on democracy and education.

The significance of unhu/ubuntu in contemporary Zimbabwe was first highlighted by Samkange and Samkange (1980) who intimated that the philosophy “inspires, permeates and radiates . . . regulates our well-planned social and political organisations” (p. 34). Though Samkange and Samkange (1980) did not explicitly advocate for unhu/ubuntu to be the anchor of the Zimbabwean education system, they described how, in precolonial indigenous societies, “education of the individual was not only by members of the immediate or extended family; it was also by any member of the community” (p. 77). Thus, they positioned communalism, a key aspect of unhu/ubuntu philosophy, as the basis of African education.

Samkange and Samkange (1980) therefore can be seen as the precursors of centring unhu/ubuntu in curriculum discourse in Zimbabwe. Makuvaza (1996) took this further, advocating that unhu/ubuntu become the philosophical foundation of modern Zimbabwean education. Several others joined the conversation (CIET, 1999; MoPSE, 2014; Ramose, 1999), with Ramose (1999) reasoning that:

[Unhu/] Ubuntu is the root of African philosophy. The being of an African in the universe is inseparably anchored upon [unhu/] ubuntu. Similarly, the African tree of knowledge stems from [unhu/] ubuntu with which it is connected indivisibly. [Unhu/] Ubuntu then is the wellspring flowing with African ontology and epistemology. (p. 49)

It follows that education for the African child should take root from the philosophy that connects and speaks to their lifeworld, and this philosophy is the philosophy of unhu/ubuntu—important and well-known amongst mainstream citizenry. As noted by

Prinsloo (2013), referring to South Africa but applicable to southern Africa more generally, “it promises to respond to the fragmentation” of the sense of southern African place (p. 2).

Post-Colonial Discourse Analysis of Unhu/Ubuntu Discourse in the Curriculum

According to Fairclough and Wodak (1997), discourse analysis is a theoretical and methodological approach that helps us study “how power relations, and ideological standpoints, are exercised and negotiated in discourse” (p. 272). To understand what underlies arguments in support of centring the curriculum on unhu/ubuntu, I have used postcolonial discourse analysis. According to Sawyer (2012),

postcolonial theories adopt the concept of discourse to examine how modern thought, which is understood as “the complex of signs and practices that organize social existence and social reproduction within colonial relationships” (Ashcroft et al., 2000, p. 42), resists decolonization. (p. 39)

In this study, the focus was more on the macro elements and politics of discourse than the micro linguistic type of discourse analysis. The macro elements in postcolonial discourse analysis are useful in revealing how language, power, and ideology are often hidden from people in written text, the spoken word, or in other optical signs (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997).

In light of the above, intertextual analysis was employed to show how texts build on other texts to make meaning (Sawyer, 2012). Intertextuality and metaphors are useful in unearthing the ideological positions and cultural claims of a text or discussion in education. The current school curriculum made extensive use of other texts, especially the CIET (1999), to explore unhu/ubuntu and for reimagining the curriculum underpinned by an indigenous philosophy. Given that the updated school curriculum is said to be anchored on unhu/ubuntu, this analysis hopes to uncover some of the pitfalls at the level of unhu/ubuntu interpretation that may become barriers to the implementation of the curriculum. Venter (2004) cautioned that unhu/ubuntu seems to carry a flawed interpretation that results in its meaning becoming ambiguous or unclear, an observation that seems useful because it helps to unearth the postcolonial paradox of superficial interpretation of unhu/ubuntu that, ironically, can become a doxa. Moreover, it mirrors the limitations and successes that have thus far been encountered in educational reforms aimed at decolonising the curriculum.

Evident in CIET (1999) and MoPSE (2014), is the identification of unhu/ubuntu with communalism, humanism, and holism or the interpretation of unhu/ubuntu as one of the principles that guide educational provision in Zimbabwe. The following quotations from the updated curriculum framework *The Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education 2015–2022* (MoPSE, 2014) provide a good starting point for exploring how unhu/ubuntu is construed in the curriculum.

“Respect (ubuntu/unhu/vumunhu)” is the fifth principle underpinning the curriculum (p. 5 and p. 16).

In addition, we see “self-respect and respect for others (ubuntu/unhu/vumunhu)” on page 6 and “the processes of building consciousness and patriotism is possible through drawing on ubuntu/ unhu/vumunhu” on page 19.

On the list of learners’ exit profiles, ubuntu/unhu/vumunhu is listed among values such as discipline and honesty (p. 17).

The updated curriculum framework mentions unhu/ubuntu under the heading: “Philosophy underpinning the national curriculum” as follows: “Unhu/Ubuntu/Vumunhu epitomises universal human inter-dependence, solidarity, humanness and a sense of community common in African societies” (p. 13).

From the foregoing, there is no doubt that MoPSE (2014) built its understanding of unhu/ubuntu through making reference to the CIET (1999) report which included the following recommendations and interpretations on unhu/ubuntu:

“The concept of unhu/ubuntu should be introduced, developed and be the torchlight of our moral education” (p. 69).

“Unhu/ubuntu then is a concept that denotes a good human being, a well behaved and morally upright person, characterized by qualities such as responsibility, honesty, justice, trustworthiness, hardworking, integrity, a cooperative spirit, solidarity, hospitality, devotion to family and the welfare of the community” (p. 62).

“The school should promote holistic education and expound the unhu/ubuntu philosophy” (p. 79).

It is evident from the two documents that emphasis is on the development of a morally upright person inclined to a communal approach to social and personal problems. While communalism, humanism, and holism can be considered aspects of unhu/ubuntu philosophy,

Hapanyengwi and Shizha (2012) cautioned against mistaking the part for the whole. The principle of holism is rooted in the African belief that reality is to be perceived as a whole and not fragmented (Wiredu, 2008), while that of humanism emanates from a consideration of human needs, dignity, and welfare (Gyekye, 1987). According to Hountondji (1996), there is a dialectical relationship between a philosophy and its principles. However, this does not mean that the essence of unhu/ubuntu philosophy can be adequately captured by these principles (Chitumba, 2013; Hapanyengwi & Shizha, 2012). Thus, in advocating unhu/ubuntu as an educational philosophy centred on holism, CIET (1999) and MoPSE (2014) may have masked ethnocentric norms and values. Here, unhu/ubuntu appears to be a postcolonial façade popularised to mask ideas from non-indigenous sensitivities.

Furthermore, in positioning unhu/ubuntu as an epitome of human solidarity, CIET (1999) and MoPSE (2014) seem to be committing the fallacy of *ad populum* in which there is no deep conceptual analysis behind a theory or belief but simply reliance on popularity of that belief or theory (Lau, 2011, p. 179). Considering the Zimbabwean cultural, religious, and knowledge practice disparities that can be equated with those more generally in southern Africa, it could be observed that unhu/ubuntu is not the great integrator of all human understanding into a unified view of humans (Hountondji, 1996). One may therefore surmise that ideological persuasion may have been used to conceal the idea of cultural pluralism in depth. Such a conclusion arises from the fact that ideologies are also regarded to be a form of social cognition used to capture the way that people share broader ideas about the way the world works (Machin & Mayr, 2012). However, unhu/ubuntu philosophy cannot be equated with an ideology if we consider Althusser's definition of ideology as a process that obscures the fact that dominant forces in society are operating in a systematic manner to oppress people (Machin & Mayr, 2012). This is contrary to philosophy that aims to analyse sociopolitical issues in depth and uncover the hidden reality (Hountondji, 1996; Waghid et al., 2018). Moreover, ideologies have the potential of creating a dualistic hybrid co-engagement characterised by the internalisation of oppression by indigenous people, which also translates into the oppressed assimilating habits and mannerisms of the oppressor (Freire, 1970). The resulting effect of this is creation of the problem of superficial interpretation of concepts in education.

An Emerging Problem of Superficial Interpretation of Unhu/Ubuntu Philosophy

The second part of my analysis focused on the discourse of ubuntu/unhu and found a contradiction in the superficial interpretation of this philosophy in the postcolonial Zimbabwe curriculum. In so doing, unhu/ubuntu has plunged into a state of philosophical fragility due to the superficial ascriptions in both CIET (1999) and MoPSE (2014), Zimbabwe's national school curriculum review documents. The problem of superficiality seems to have misled other thinkers to believe unhu/ubuntu could be applied as a blanket that covers all in solving educational problems in the country (CIET, 1999; MoPSE, 2014)—particularly those related to decolonising the curriculum and centring issues of indigenous knowledge. While superficiality abounds in philosophical discourse with philosophers such as Nietzsche foregrounding it by promoting the absencing of depth/profundity in favour of multiple surfaces (Castle, 2007), Marxist sociologists tend to disregard superficiality on the grounds that it appears to be a façade aimed at concealing the possibility of exploring other critical alternatives (Hardt & Weeks, 2000). The superficial positionality of unhu/ubuntu philosophy in the CIET (1999) and MoPSE (2014) curriculum review documents has a negative pedagogical influence in the Zimbabwean education system because it focuses mainly on the ontological being. This focus on the ontological is paradoxically an emergent problem piloted by the locating of African philosophy largely in prehistorical epochs (Higgs, 2012), and it presents the need to define a philosophy of the future that could be achieved through offering a deepened understanding of unhu/ubuntu as a philosophy for curriculum transformation.

Discussion

The question that now arises is how the postcolonial African focus on curriculum transformation can avoid the *dialectics of opposites* Eze (2008), especially those that emerge between a need to maintain an African identity (ontological being status) and the need for deep epistemic engagement in pedagogy that calls for inclusion into the curriculum of a diverse conception of knowledge heritages from diverse geo-epistemic locations. In response, I argue that a deeper engagement with the unhu/ubuntu philosophy and associated heritage discourse is essential if we are to meet the intended aspirations of decoloniality in contemporary times.

Curriculum transformation should be grounded on unhu/ubuntu, and it should consider being responsive to the African human condition (Waghid et al., 2018). This entails that people exposed to unhu/ubuntu as a philosophy of curriculum transformation should be capable of

thinking through a variety of life's problems and facing all the facts impartially. Basically, unhu/ubuntu in Zimbabwe should take educational graduates through a process of reflecting on and criticising their deeply held conceptions and beliefs (Chitumba, 2013)—especially those beliefs that were propagated in them through coloniality.

Furthermore, as argued by Hountondji (1996) and Wiredu (1998), any philosophy of curriculum transformation must aim to be the main informant in a critical examination of the conceptual framework upon which the thought of a culture is erected. Critical examination here entails that unhu/ubuntu pedagogical philosophy is positioned as a critique of the colonial education conceptual inheritance and assessed for its practicability through a nuanced understanding of the inheritance's procedural terminology and paradigms associated with it (Hountondji, 1996; Wiredu, 1998). In practice, unhu/ubuntu should foster development of a third space in which colonially designed historical narratives are challenged and reshaped, paving the way for new alternatives in educational thinking (Bhabha, 1990). In this regard, unhu/ubuntu takes the form of a decolonial philosophy that sought to disentangle people who were once colonised from the continuities of coloniality (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2013). Thus, where indigenous people were regarded as primitive with nothing to offer in terms of knowledge construction, their heritage knowledge should be seen as part of the broader ecology of knowledge commons (Hailey, 1938). In so doing, an Afrophilia learning lens can become a space for collaboration and resistance in which indigenous peoples have room to negotiate their identities—not based on identity politics but on epistemic depth. The unique aspect of an Afrophilia learning lens, an offshoot of unhu/ubuntu philosophy within third space narrative, is that the third space, as argued by Bhabha (1990), is not locked in the past but is a channel that has potential to let other positions emerge.

To accomplish the above propositions, unhu/ubuntu has to be the foundation upon which rationality and reasonability are enacted because this will give it depth and the analytic tools that are a necessary condition for any philosophy of education (Hountondji, 1996). Wiredu (1998) has argued for a move beyond surface-level interpretations to deeper levels of understanding that question existing assumptions. Henceforth, in the context of unhu/ubuntu as decolonial philosophy of education, analytic tools need to help the philosophy chart deliberations on the question of values and the purpose of education.

Emerging insights on unhu/ubuntu as a decolonial paradigm that surface from a reading of

Hountonji (1996) and Waghid et al. (2018) are suggestive of the notion of divesting African philosophical thinking broadly, and unhu/ubuntu in particular, of all undue influences emanating from the colonial history of curriculum. Hence, the proposition that unhu/ubuntu be considered as the missing humanistic approach in education theory and praxis. This will allow for an integration of the subject content with the feelings, emotions, experiences, and lives of the learners (Wiredu, 1998). The vantage point in taking a humanist approach is that instead of letting learning be abstracted, the learners become fully engaged in learning processes that draw on content and methods from their heritage knowledge.

From the above discussion, we note that the aim of schooling under the guidance of the unhu/ubuntu philosophy of curriculum transformation should be twofold. It should aim firstly, to extend the learner's knowledge of the data of human experience and secondly, as argued by Higgs (1998) and Lipman (2003), to perfect the child's acquired knowledge by teaching the child what he or she needs to know. Unhu/ubuntu should not be superficial. Hountondji (1996) believed that African philosophy must be an episteme rather than a doxa. Considering this point of view, I am of the opinion that schooling, starting from early childhood education, should take an epistemological and ontological shift in which it aims to arrive at a rational and systematic comprehension of reality. According to Lipman (2003), inquiry in schooling processes should aim to investigate the nature of knowing itself.

Need for Curriculum Praxis and Pedagogical Development

In practice, this has implications for reframing curriculum in ways that can realise epistemic depth in pedagogy as a means of avoiding the limitations of doxa. The unhu/ubuntu heritage focus should open a hybrid space through which Zimbabwe could avoid a decolonisation process that tends to represent teleological curriculum reforms that are linear and unidimensional (Magwa, 2019). A shift from unidimensional curriculum reforms has potential to help Zimbabweans move beyond self-location and create space for critical reflection that translates into a deeper analysis of the present reality—from which the Zimbabwean identity would evolve as a continuation rather than a fixed identity (Hountondji, 1996). This, in turn, has implications for pedagogy, the role of the teacher, and the sociocultural foundations of educational theory and practice.

The likely implications invoke a need for an intervention such as a “philosophy for children” (Lipman, 2003, p. 43), which promotes in learners the habits of critical reflexive thinking.

Introducing philosophy for children seems useful in that it could help learners and teachers navigate pathways that lead to the avoidance of knowledge transmission and the presenting of sanitised and neatly packaged information that overlooks diversity and, unwittingly, reinforces a particular worldview (Hountondji, 1996; Lipman, 2003). The intervention has traction in learning contexts that emphasise a curriculum grounded in local heritage because here, learning is perceived as an outgrowth of the learners—hence, encouraging learners to be able to think out problems for themselves.

Conclusion

This paper provides an opportunity for historical and historical social critique, from which future studies can provide an understanding of the advanced theories and methods that translate into later educational change. The broader discussion of the paper is that Zimbabwe's education system should not blinker itself by focusing only on the ontological, which leads to superficiality, but should also acknowledge diversity in reason. Reasoning in diversity based on unhu/ubuntu values creates space for ethical critical thinking and creativity that takes into account local heritage knowledge in educational reform, an experience that is both educational and social. With this in mind, unhu/ubuntu as a decolonial philosophy should focus on promoting deeper epistemological participation in education, which I have identified in the article as a necessary link to bring about change in education.

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A2: A socioculturally framed Philosophy for Children (P4C) approach based on unhu/ubuntu philosophical foundations: A Zimbabwe primary schools' context.

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Abstract

Zimbabwe's educational system is wrought by the weight of binaries between the adult and child worlds imposed by a colonially informed conventional pedagogy. Regardless of how far curriculum reform has progressed, an inherited epistemological and pedagogical muddle imposed on Zimbabwe's indigenous children persists. Moreover, through exposing children to a rigorous examination process, the emphasis on examination assessment scores widens the gap between the adult and child worlds, as well as the gap between contextual realities and examination content. This article provides qualitative empirical evidence to support the claim that a Philosophy for Children approach can be socioculturally framed and anchored on

unhu/ubuntu dialectical rationality. As a result, it provides opportunities for delinking and relinking with the broader praxis of curricula and pedagogical decolonisation. Hence, to support children's learning, it is recommended that educational reforms in the country consider the Philosophy for Children approach, which is underpinned by a sociocultural medley that appears to give teachers appropriate agency to modify and adapt their pedagogies in alignment with the learners' life worlds. Through this research, teachers, parents, education administrators and children will be able to examine the ways in which they negotiate relationships and influence the classroom social context.

Keywords: sociocultural theory, curriculum reform, philosophy for children, unhu/ubuntu dialectical rationality, discourse analysis

Background and Context

The current Zimbabwean educational system recognises the importance of seeking new forms of mediation in curricular reform and suggests anchoring reform strategies on an Afrophilic perspective that appears to be more sociocultural in orientation by recommending that "the education system be underpinned by a philosophy of Ubuntu/Unhu/Vumunhu" (Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education [MoPSE], 2014, p.11). This sociocultural and humanistic turn emerged as a counter-cultural project to colonial rule's "marshal[ed] authoritarian possibilities in indigenous culture" (Mamdani, 1996, p.286). Moreover, the anticolonial standpoint is informed by the realisation that the colonial education system was a legacy of discrimination, pyramidal structure and unequal investments engraved along racial lines (Rodney, 1981; GoZ, 2015–2022). MoPSE (2014) adopted a superficial interpretation of Unhu/Ubuntu decolonial philosophy, addressing the matter more nuancedly than can be the case for decolonisation in curriculum in the global south.

In decolonial theory and practice, curriculum reform must engage with contextual realities at deeper levels than a surface-level historical-hermeneutical perspective (Eze, 1997; Mignolo, 2014). Avoiding surface-level historical-hermeneutical perspective may entail 'delinking' the education system from focusing exclusively on literacy and numeracy, and instead considering opening opportunities for learners to acquire and develop relevant competencies (Rodney, 1981; Mignolo, 2014; WEFUSA, 2015). In postcolonial nations (Zimbabwe included) where colonial education was used to disrupt "the most rational use of material and

social resources” (Rodney, 1981, p.240) such competencies might include collaboration, creativity, and problem-solving, as well as character qualities such as persistence, curiosity, and initiative. This is consistent with Eze's (2008) principle of developing diversity in reason, which he describes as the primary generative condition of autonomy. In the context of this study, developing diversity in reasoning appears to be the much-needed missing link in finding a solution to the colonial-era inherited epistemology and pedagogical muddle imposed on Zimbabwe's indigenous children.

This inherited disorder has subsequently become a barrier to the development of competences, character qualities and diversity in reasoning, and appears to be perpetuated by what has been identified as a "pendulum swing" between the adult and child worlds (Paradise, Mejia-Arauz, Silva, Dexter, & Rogoff, 2014). In this pendulum swing, for example, teachers resort to top-down forms of schooling, or what Freire (1972, p.70) refers to as "banking education", which negates the role of learner agency. The situation is amplified by the fact that learning in the Zimbabwean context is measured through standardised examinations, which have the tendency to assess "the same skills in different children" (Hinton & Chesters, 2013, p.266) and thus cannot be regarded as a true reflection of the learning that is or is not taking place at any given school. These issues mentioned above align themselves to the resilient presents of colonial forms of education that disadvantage the learner which have not been satisfactorily resolved. This led me to conduct this research in which I use the Philosophy for Children approach, which is socioculturally framed and anchored on unhu/ubuntu philosophy to offer an Afrophilic perspective, to support children's learning in resettlement primary schools in Zimbabwe's Kwekkwe district. Essentially, the article seeks to explore the role of sociocultural learning theory in bridging the gap between informal learning in the community and formal learning at school.

A review of the literature on the historical nominal forms of education decolonisation in Zimbabwe.

Three decades after the country's political independence, the postcolonial Zimbabwean government conducted a comprehensive review of the country's education system (Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training [CIET], 1999). This was done in the hope of reducing the influence of the colonial education system's remnants. However, the majority of schools in the country continue to be associated with the British-

Christocentric system, which is slow to adapt to the life worlds of indigenous learners and employs an inflexible examination-driven approach to learning (MoPSE, 2014; Shizha, 2013). According to Gory, Jayanti, and Reddy (2021) Zimbabwe, like other former British colonies, follows the British prototype education system. Zimbabwe has added another year (form 6 secondary level) to increase the likelihood of all students closing their learning gaps with an additional school year. As a result, the Zimbabwean educational system is divided as follows: 4 years infant education (ECD A & B) which officially begins at age 3 or 4 years and (grades 1 & 2), 5 years junior primary (grades 3–7), 4 years O' level (forms 1–4), and 2 years upper secondary (forms 5–6). Assessment for a learner progressing through the Zimbabwean primary and secondary education system begins in grade 3 with the Zimbabwe Early Learning Assessment (ZELA) and continues through grade 7 examinations to mark the end of primary school, O' level examinations, and then A' level examinations for those who would have progressed to upper secondary level, all of which are set by the Zimbabwe School Examinations Council (ZIMSEC).

While the country made progress from the 1980s to the 2000s in terms of improving enrolment, teacher training and the availability of teaching and learning resources, particularly at the primary school level, the year 2008 halted and, in some ways, reversed the earlier gains (Gory, Jayanti, & Reddy, 2021). For example, several qualified and experienced teachers left for countries with better remuneration, and some schools resorted to offering the traditional Cambridge curriculum and registering for Cambridge examinations, potentially derailing the country's decolonial progress of localising its education system even further (as evidenced by my 15 years of teaching in Zimbabwe). According to Shizha and Makuvaza (2017), the setback is generally attributed to the country's volatile economic and political conditions from 2008 to 2009. Following the great downturn, Zimbabwe launched a full-fledged curriculum reform in 2013, culminating in the presentation and publication of the Zimbabwe Curriculum Framework in 2014 [MoPSE 2015–2022].

The major difference between the old and updated curricula is the shift from an emphasis on content knowledge acquisition to a competence-based framework with a bias toward the acquisition of higher-order thinking skills (MoPSE, 2014; Gory, Jayanti, & Reddy, 2021). Ordinarily, the goal of a competency-based curriculum is to enable a learner to completely master a skill, subject, or knowledge, which does not always occur in the traditional teaching

and learning approach (Ngwenya, 2019). Furthermore, the competence-based curriculum aims to inspire learners to value their Zimbabwean identity, heritage, history, and cultural traditions, as well as to prepare them for participatory citizenship (MoPSE, 2014). However, the shift from content mastery to a focus on higher-order thinking skills via an ostensibly competence-based curriculum appears to be theoretical rather than practical. An argument is made in a study by Nyamayedenga and De Jager (2021) that teachers were ill prepared to improve knowledge-building through the implementation of competence-based curriculum. Reasons given support of Nyamayedenga and De Jäger's claim include: critical resource shortages, poor planning, and time constraints. Other barriers to the practical implementation of a competence-based curriculum in the country included teachers' insistence on teacher-centered learning, generalised incapacity, and not being consulted on the development of the updated curriculum.

In general, one teacher is assigned to teach all subjects in primary schools, and the learner-to-teacher ratio is still higher than the recommended 20. According to EMIS (2020), there are 16 298 early childhood teachers, 653 130 early childhood learners, 75 960 junior primary school teachers, and 2 869 735 students. The statistics, however, could not be considered accurate because EMIS (2020) takes for granted that an external audience will know whether, for example, resettlement schools and private schools are included in the document. This noticeable inaccuracy in information provision may make it impossible for the government and other stakeholders to effectively schedule a proper decolonisation plan. According to scholars such as Shizha and Kariwo (2011), Mawadza (2009), and Tonini (2005), while the government acknowledges that teachers have left Zimbabwe for countries with better remuneration (MoPSE, 2014), the government has not mentioned de-professionalisation²⁰ of

²⁰ While Frostenson (2015) defines de-professionalisation as a loss of professional autonomy, particularly at the level of practice, the term is expanded in this study to refer to a situation in which, for example, teachers approach the government as their employer with a genuine professional argument, such as a salary increase or consideration of working conditions, but instead of the government addressing this as a genuine labour issue between the employer and the employee, the government conflates this with oppositional politics. This includes instances in which teachers were compelled to attend Zanu-PF youth camps in the evening after spending the day in class with the children (Bourne, 2011).

the teaching occupation in Zimbabwe because teachers have come to be perceived as members of the opposing political party and thus targets of government security agents. Because of the perceived government position on teachers, it was impossible for MoPSE to fully engage teachers during the curriculum reform process; thus, the government considered relying on recommendations from CIET (1999) with only a minimal contribution from mostly urban consultations of the post-CIET reforms.

Unhu/Ubuntu Dialectical Rationality and the Afrophilia orientation

In the African context, this philosophy falls under one of the two critical philosophical currents. According to Bell (1989), there are two critical philosophy currents in the African context: universalistic, as advocated by Bodunrin, Wiredu and Odera Oruka, and dialectical, as advocated by Paulin Hountondji, Eboussi Boulaga, Towa, and Amilcar Cabral. Ordinarily, unhu/ubuntu dialectical rationality could be viewed as a process of joint discovery because of its emphasis on social interaction and finding solutions to problems through engaging in critical conversation. This is coherent with the Afrophilia focus of my research.

The abstract noun Afrophilia means ‘love of Africa and Africans’, but in this context, the noun is a ‘metonym’ (Prinsloo, 2013) – a ‘discourse’ that serves as a source of philosophical reflection which is embodied in the study area (Rettova, 2004). As I worked with the Afrophilia learning lens in my research (see, Author, 2020; 2021a & b), I possibly created a hybrid space (Bhabha, 2004) in which the African decolonial narrative on cultural expression and cultural inquiry is presented. This includes applying and analysing unhu/ubuntu epistemology (the goal of Afrophilia learning) and unhu/ubuntu dialectical logic, using the learner's native language and other oriented artifacts. A reading of the writings of African philosophers Hountondji (1996) and Eze (2008) reveals that the Afrophilia viewpoint, which is the result of African postcolonial philosophy (unhu/ubuntu philosophy in Zimbabwe), contributes to education and pedagogical practices. As a result, studying within an Afrophilia context can be a place of cooperation and resistance, where indigenous peoples like those in the Sebakwe resettlement area can negotiate their identities based on the depth of epistemology rather than identity politics (Hountondji, 1996; Author 2020). The co-option of heritage-based learning and the need for developing higher-order thinking skills in the study is compatible with Zimbabwe’s updated curriculum.

The approach to developing heritage-based learning and critical thinking is generally compatible with the Zimbabwean curriculum framework and revises the framework with African philosophy, particularly articulation of African philosophy by Hountondji (1996) and Eze, (2008). Therefore, a proposal to anchor the school curriculum on unhu/ubuntu African philosophy CIET (1999) and MoPSE (2014), establishes that unhu/ubuntu's destiny as an African decolonial philosophy potentially able to replicate the ebb and flow of transnational politics of knowledge production and meaning making (Flikschuh, 2017). Perspectives on the most controversial topics in African philosophy – *is there anything distinctive about African philosophy* – compels one to surmise that lurking behind the question of positioning unhu/ubuntu as an anchor to the curriculum is the need to retrieve Africa's lost concepts and metaphysical frameworks (Eze, 1997).

However, the idea of an Afrophilia orientation to the curriculum and the re-alignment of pedagogic praxis with epistemic depth implies a movement from conceptual parochialism, which Rabaka (2009) perceives as a form of theoretical myopia to epistemic openness which entails globalised applicability. Similarly, there is an objective complementarity between the sociocultural approach to philosophy for children and the unhu/ubuntu Afrophilia learning lens, inasmuch as engagement with the philosophy as a modern decolonial philosophy of education (Author, submitted for publication) leads to development of a historically shared sense of purpose. This development is emerging as the Afrophilia learning lens couched within a postcolonial African philosophy has the capacity to initiate in people a process of reflecting on and criticising their deeply held conceptions and beliefs (Hountondji, 1996).

Again, an Afrophilia orientation has great traction if we consider Eze's (2008) concept of reasoning in diversity explained earlier; Hountondji's (1996) argument that heritage (here in heritage education) is never univocal but rather plurivocal and contradictory; Vygotsky's (1978) recognition of the historical-cultural context in collaborative learning activities and how these ideas chime well with the Afrophilia concept *padare*. Bartoli, Kennedy, and Tedam, (2008) define *padare* as a Shona term for a meeting place where ideas are generated and exchanged. Here it appears axiomatic that implementation of the sociocultural approach to philosophy for children couched within an Afrophilic perspective leads to sociogenic development of knowledge and meaning making, and also extends children's learning in the Zone of Proximal development.

This is done inclusive of a broader conception of other potentially useful knowledges that may necessarily not be from Africa but are applicable within the African context. Thus, though an Afrophilia learning lens allows learners and educators inward to retrieve from their oral heritages concepts, proverbs and social practices that are to be re-thought in the light of postcolonial African societies' requirements and self-understandings (Eze, 2008), it also allows them to look outward in order to counteract continental epistemic isolation. Again, unlike the Westernphilia perspective which seems to advocate moral sovereignty of individual personhood, the Afrophilia learning lens draws attention to the moral and ontological significance of the community Flikschuh, (2017), hence, delinking educational thinking from the dominant hegemonic Westernphilia traditions and re-connecting it to the African conceptions of personhood.

Sociocultural underpinning of the Philosophy for Children approach

According to (Leng, 2020), research on philosophy for children has been viewed through a variety of theories for many years. Multicultural educational theory, social constructivism learning theories, learner-centred ideology, identity exploration theories (Makaiau, 2010, 2013), constructive grounded theory (Miller, 2013), social cognitive theory, community of inquiry theory (Newell-Jones, 2012), and Deweyan and Vygotskyian theories are examples of these (Bleazby, 2007; Makaiau and Lukey, 2013). In this study, I preferred Vygotsky's sociocultural theory to other theories because it appears to develop a construct of academic engagement in classrooms that is anchored on "intellectual and affective involvement" (Leng, 2020, p.3). In this case the theory avails itself as a more supportive theory to the practices that Lipman and his colleagues considered central to education (Green, 2017). These include the notion that children's cognitive development occurs through social, emotional, and motivational investment in activities that blend well with the community of inquiry approach (Lipman, 2003), in which activities designed in classrooms are socially shared (Goering, Shudak & Wartenberg, 2013). Again, a philosophy for children approach based on sociocultural theory creates a highly literate environment in which children and the teacher/facilitator can effectively give-and-take ideas.

Aspects of sociocultural theory, according to Rogoff (2003), have the potential to provide a framework for human interaction and learning through the use of language and other cultural

tools. As a result, as learners and their teacher engage in a rigorous community of inquiry process, more capable peers and the teacher are very likely to guide and support the learners' learning and thinking. Cam (2006, p.45) says "it would be a natural extension of Vygotskian psychology to suggest that children come to think for themselves through the internalization of social practices". In this case, social matrixes influence learning, which is often supported by interconnected social relationships and interactions (Vygotsky, 1978) that create a supportive environment in the classroom. Here, it is most likely that the learner's life world is changed as the child is changed through interaction with others and the physical environment (Rogoff, 2003; Cam, 2006). This is consistent with Lipman's intention of wanting to create a practice that would change human thinking and behaviour when he started the philosophy for children movement in the 1970s (Green, 2017). The change in this case is influenced by the fact that human beings use tools and signs that are culturally specific and historical in nature and context and are appropriated through social mediation processes such as dialogical engagement in community of inquiry (Daniels, 2001; Green, 2017). The tools and signs are transgenerational and could be modified in line with the 'changing constellations of culture' Correa-Chavez, Mejia-Arauz & Rogoff (2015) to meet the needs and aspirations of individuals and communities. Sociocultural theorists (Vygotsky, 1962; 1978; Erikson, 1963; Rogoff, 2003; McLeod, 2014) argue that with these tools, humans can better manipulate their environment and interact with one another.

Ordinarily, the community of inquiry in philosophy for children is practised in such a way that the learner's cultural development manifests itself in two stages (Leng, 2020). This is due to the fact that learners construct their own questions on an individual level before voting on the best philosophical question and discussing it on a social level. According to Rogoff (1990), this entails constructing bridges from the children's current understanding and skills to new understanding and skills. In most cases, this means broadening the context in which children navigate in order to improve their cognitive development (Rogoff, 1990). The community of inquiry in philosophy for children provides a broader context through its emphasis on open-ended questions that allow children to explore complex realities as they draw examples from their diverse life experiences (Goering, Shudak & Wartenberg, 2013; Green, 2017). It is this broadened contextual approach that appears to be the most valuable missing link in the Zimbabwean education space where children seem to be confined to the

narrow space of examination thinking. This point is expanded further in the following sections, which discuss the problem statement of this article.

Problem statement and Methodological Approach

In Zimbabwe, nominal forms of curriculum decolonisation began four decades ago with the goal of improving the effectiveness of educational processes. The Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education [MoPSE] (2015–2022) aims to integrate indigenous knowledge systems (IKS), and places greater emphasis on Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM). However, less emphasis has been placed on resettlement primary schools (the subject of my research), the learner, or to teacher agency. It is unclear, in particular, how teachers, especially in resettlement areas, can modify and adapt their agency in accordance with the learners' life worlds while working within a pre-planned competence-based curriculum that places emphasis on teacher professional standards that are predicated on examination assessment scores. Consequently, emphasis on examination assessment scores widens the gap between the adult and child worlds, as well as the gap between contextual realities and examination content.

This article begins to address this issue by implementing a qualitative research approach. According to Gay, Mills, and Airasian (2011), qualitative research is the collection, analysis, and interpretation of comprehensive narrative data that is most often non-numerical, to gain insights into a specific phenomenon of interest. As a result, the qualitative research I conducted sought to delve deeply into the research setting in order to gain a thorough understanding of how the Philosophy for Children approach, which is supported by a sociocultural medley, could support children's learning and development of higher-order thinking skills. Data findings were corroborated from across data sets to reduce the impact of potential bias and to provide a confluence of evidence that breeds credibility (Bowen, 2009) as data were collected through different methods.

Document analysis, formative intervention workshops, lesson observation, and reflexive interviews with teachers, parents, education inspectors, and children were used to collect and triangulate data. Two public documents from the Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education [MoPSE] were examined: The Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training [CIET] report from 1999 and the Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and

Secondary Education [MoPSE] report from 2014. To uncover information about the macrohistorical political sociology of Zimbabwean educational curriculum and pedagogy as well as the philosophy underlying the curriculum, I used an interview technique in which I treated the documents as respondents or informants who had to respond to pre-written questions (Author, 2020; O'Leary, 2014). The formative intervention workshops were utilised as part of a collaborative expansive learning process which positions participants in an activity as active agents in their own transformative rethinking of their work together and its objectives (Engeström & Sannino, 2010). By utilising formative intervention workshops, the research was able to elicit data (drawn from contextual realities) that was used as start-up capital during the community of inquiry session in Philosophy for Children lessons.

Audio and video recording were used as data collection techniques in both formative intervention workshops and community of inquiry lesson observations. The purpose, timing, and context of an observation, according to Wragg (2002), significantly influences its methods. The community of inquiry lesson observations were done for purposes of gaining knowledge and a deeper understanding of the participants, interaction, scene, and events that take place during Philosophy for Children sessions. The reflexive interviews were utilised as a process that allows the researcher and participant to engage in a collective understanding of the participant's perspectives and experiences, thus allowing participants to share the meanings of their life worlds without being interpreted arbitrarily by the researcher alone (Pessoa, Harper, Santos & Da Silva Gracino, 2019). Reflexive interviews in this study provided me with an opportunity to gain a better understanding of the context in which I worked, as well as of the patterns of behavior that are a reflection of Sebakwe cultural practices.

Data analysis: Decolonial critical discourse analysis

I used decolonial critical discourse analysis to examine data elicited from document analysis, formative intervention workshops, community of inquiry lesson observations, and reflexive interviews to determine how parents, teachers and education inspectors produce understandings of supporting indigenous children to be autonomous critical thinkers. Both Decolonial Theory and Critical Discourse Analysis are preoccupied with resisting social structures based on unequal power relations (Sanz Sabido, 2019). Critical discourse analysis is used by researchers to gain "more insight into the crucial role of discourse in the

reproduction of dominance and inequality [through] an account of intricate relationships between text, talk, social, cognition, power, society, and culture" (Van Dijk, 1993, p.253). Discourse analysis, according to Willig (2008), helps researchers understand how discourses legitimise existing social and institutional structures while also validating certain discursive constructions. As a result, this type of analysis was especially appropriate given my use of a decolonial theoretical lens to guide my research. The approach enabled me to comprehend not only how discourses related to assisting children in learning and developing higher-order thinking skills are used to reinforce and resist colonial structures, but also how colonial structures validate the discourses that are produced.

The starting point was to code the document analysis notes, formative intervention workshop, community of inquiry lesson observation, and reflexive interview transcripts systematically and identify key themes within the data such as empowerment, power, collectivism, and cross-generational tolerance. I then listened to all the audio recordings and read the transcripts again to familiarise myself with the data and understand how children's learning was constructed in the notes and transcripts using a Philosophy for Children approach that is underpinned by a sociocultural medley. The second stage involved situating these discursive constructions within the larger discourses identified in my literature review (e.g., how is learning constructed in relation to the wider discursive production of curriculum decolonisation in Zimbabwe?). Later, I looked at what these discourses accomplished in terms of supporting children's learning and developing higher-order thinking skills.

The fourth stage of my analysis focused on the subject positions that emerged as a result of how certain discourses were adopted by participants, particularly teachers and children. Discourses, according to discourse analysis, construct subjects and "make available positions within networks of meanings that speakers can take up" (Willig, 2008, p.176). As a result, participants adopt subject positions based on how they use specific discourses and their positionality in relation to each discourse. According to Brooks-Cleator and Giles (2020), subject positions provide participants with the possibilities and constraints of action with a specific discourse. For example, how do participants use specific discourses, such as one about power sharing, to position themselves, and what are the consequences of the participant adopting this subject position through the use of the specific discourse? Finally, I investigated

the implications for a philosophy for children approach within a sociocultural medley with regard to curriculum decolonisation and improvement of learning in schools.

Findings and Discussions

The findings highlight the complexities and tensions that parents, education inspectors and teachers face when it comes to supporting indigenous children's learning and developing higher-order thinking skills. Moreover, the discourse analysis reveals four major discourses related to the participants' perspectives on decolonising the curriculum and supporting resettlement school children's learning and development of higher-order thinking skills: (a) Zimbabwe's decolonial curriculum reforms are complex and fraught with competing goals; (b) a Philosophy for Children approach underpinned by a sociocultural medley empowers teachers to modify and adapt their pedagogies in accordance with the learners' life worlds; (c) socioculturally framed curricular reforms are critical in the Sebakwe resettlement's emerging constellation of practices, such as actively involving children and encouraging intergenerational learning in a variety of school, family and community activities; and (d) a socioculturally framed philosophy for children inquiry influences power sharing beyond teacher-child relationships. In the following section, I will examine each of these discourses and their implications for a Philosophy for Children (P4C) approach in Zimbabwe that is socioculturally framed within unhu/ubuntu philosophical foundations.

Zimbabwe's decolonial curriculum reforms are complex, with many contradictions and paradoxes

The findings of this study appear to contradict MoPSE's intention to foster a more engaged teacher-learner relationship. In theory, the MoPSE updated curriculum appears to promote a learner-centred approach to pedagogy (MoPSE, 2014), but in practice, the colonial-hierarchical transfer of knowledge persists. In the context of resettlement schools, this is largely attributed to the schools' lack of teaching and learning materials, as well as standard classrooms. Figure 1.0 in Appendix A depicts a teacher and grade 4 school children at one of the participating schools having their lessons outside in the shade of a tree because the school does not have enough classrooms for all grades. Furthermore, contradictions between educational reforms and the reality of rural and resettlement schools have been observed. For example, the MoPSE introduced ICT subjects and adopted a STEM-oriented approach to

education, even though most of the schools, particularly in resettlement areas, appears to be lacking the resources to support such an approach for the reasons stated above (see also Appendix A), and because the majority of teachers in these schools lack a STEM and ICT background. Again a paradox emerges, in which anyone who had the opportunity to attend school at an institution that supports esoteric curriculum reforms in Zimbabwe would believe that postcolonial education reforms have elevated national education standards, forgetting that while education is adopting high-level technology, the community/society is still far behind, to the point where the reforms made thus far have become irrelevant to the context because they make such a giant leap forward, leaving behind the learners' life world. One of the parents said, *“our schools are facing a significant challenge; children do not even have basic necessities like tables and chairs; do you think we can afford the computers and other resources teachers are asking our children to bring to school as a result of the new subjects introduced by the new curriculum?”*

This seems to reflect that while the government has made efforts to increase school enrolment, no similar efforts to increase access to quality education, particularly in resettlement and rural schools, appear to have been made (Garira, Howie & Plomp, 2019). One of the teachers stated:

I think the worst thing is that the government wants to compare our schools to those in urban areas when it comes to exam results. We even have teacher professional standards that are similar to those of teachers in well-resourced schools, as if we were teaching in similar circumstances. I understand that learning can occur anywhere, but it now depends on the nature of the examination process; otherwise, we will be accused of not doing our job properly; all that the ministry requires are examination results, regardless of the circumstances in which learners learn.

Similar views on the government's over-emphasis on quantitative measurement in the evaluation of teacher and learner competence were echoed by one of the School Inspectors who said,

There is a tool or framework for teacher evaluation or in some cases we use grade 7 analysis and the mark schedules to reflect the performance of the school and the performance of the teachers but these seem not to reflect

whether or not real learning is taking place, some of our teachers do not even understand how the continuous learner assessment is implemented.

These observations are consistent with the literature, which indicates that schools via the medium of standardised examinations have the tendency to assess "the same skills in different children" (Hinton & Chesters, 2013). Some teachers and parents attributed this to a lack of participation by key stakeholders such as teachers during curriculum reform updates. Others believe that the government is only interested in "forging national homogeneity ... re-energising its patriotic metafiction ... and underpinning ... an aesthetics of heroism" (Muchemwa, 2010, p.504) by incorporating elements such as the National Pledge and Heritage studies into the updated curriculum, that appear to push for a nationalist discourse. The findings presented demonstrate the act of subject-positioning, which is the discursive process by which individuals comprehend a discourse, as well as a shift from a concern for improving learning to a concern for preventing the perpetuation of hegemony. This is also noticeable in MoPSE's act of canvassing the lack of teacher autonomy in schools by imposing teacher professional standards for both teachers and their administrators. In this case, each subject position not only reveals who the participants are, but also the possibilities for and constraints on action within the decolonial curriculum reform discourse.

Philosophy for children with a sociocultural medley empowers teachers

Beyond acknowledging that Zimbabwe's decolonial curriculum reforms are complex, with many contradictions and paradoxes, participating teachers, parents and education inspectors agreed that a Philosophy for Children approach underpinned by a sociocultural medley empowers teachers to modify and adapt their pedagogies to the learners' life worlds. Even though the documents that I analysed do not make mention of the philosophy for children approach they put emphasis on a need for creating "a culture of inquiry" in a classroom context in which the teacher acts as "a co-explorer and facilitator in knowledge discovery" (MoPSE, 2014, p.41). Moreover, the documents seem to be making a recommendation for a sociocultural medley through putting emphasis on grounding the curriculum reforms within the cultural historical orientation of unhu/ubuntu philosophy (CIET, 1999, MoPSE, 2014). During formative intervention workshops and reflexive interviews, teachers expressed the feeling that a philosophy for children approach within a sociocultural medley seems to have the potential to integrate practical experience into the classroom not only for them but for the learners too. One of the teachers interviewed said,

what I noticed when I joined the community of inquiry session is that we all [teachers, parents and learners] were using examples from our own experiences and these prompted the desire for further inquiry. It was something that not even our lecturers at teachers' college taught us.

However, the teacher also expressed concern that with the current competence-based curriculum, it would be difficult for many teachers to adopt the approach at all grade levels because,

the upper grade levels (grades 6 and 7) have extremely busy schedules with regard to their final primary school examinations. Regardless of this situation, I believe the programme is beneficial to everyone because, for example, if all children were involved at lower levels, by the time they reach grades 6 and 7, they would have developed into true critical thinkers ... It also encourages us to take charge of our classroom learning by limiting our use of textbooks and the chalkboard and engage in true dialogue with the learners ...

A strong salient issue that emerged from the interview is how the philosophy for children approach seems to inspire teachers to shift from what Freire (1972) has described as the banking concept of education, to one where they integrate theory into practice. This could consolidate school activities with emerging and culturally historical indigenous knowledges found in the community.

Critical issues in the Sebakwe resettlement's emerging constellation of practices

Figure 1.1, Appendix C depicts the researcher conducting a reflexive interview with one of his participants, Mbuya MaDube, a seven-year-old boy who was allowed to join the interview session. Previously, children were not permitted to attend adult meetings owing to colonialism and Christianity, as explained by Mbuya MaDube, who claims that society no longer teaches children secrecy but instead chases them (children) away rather than teaching them. Mbuya MaDube described how, as children, they were expected to participate in family activities because that is how they were expected to learn. Because of a lack of manpower in the resettlement community, this trend of involving learners in family and community activities appears to be re-emerging within the Sebakwe community. According to one education administrator, children were expected to collaborate not only during formal

lessons but also during other, non-formal learning activities at their schools. The researcher's emphasis on the open classroom policy, which allowed adult participants to join the community of inquiry sessions with children, may have reinforced this emerging trend. In Appendix D, a parent can be seen in front of the classroom, narrating a folklore story that was used as a start-up stimulus in community of inquiry sessions with children. These cross-generational meetings in different activities, such as the cross-generational reflexive interview Appendix C and bridging the gap between the adult and child world, Appendix D, may potentially create space for what has been identified in theory as the appropriation of cognitive activities, in which children have the opportunity for both acquisition and possible modification of the previous generation's capabilities (Green, 2017).

Important considerations for influencing power sharing beyond teacher-child relationships

One of the documents I examined, MoPSE (2014), is concerned with the role of the teacher in the classroom, emphasising that "teachers become facilitators of learning" (p.9). The goal of the curriculum frame is to create classrooms in which learners are engaged in addressing real-world problems within a networked learning context in which teachers and learners are connected into a learning community (MoPSE, 2014, p.41). In the context of this study, this appears to have influenced how we (researcher and participants) thought about the way in which teachers and children use or limit their use of power to negotiate relationships and influence the social context of the community of inquiry session. The following excerpt from an interview with one education inspector describes how power dynamics complicate relationships in any given community.

I have been a teacher for over 20 years, and what I have noticed is that the classroom, like any other community, is affected by power dynamics, whether between the teacher and the learners or between the learners themselves. This is why the government discourages teachers from abusing their authority when dealing with students, and why

The inspector then referred to the MoPSE document, which she stated should be used as a guide in the classroom by all teachers. In terms of power dynamics, MoPSE is guided by the Zimbabwean Constitution, which emphasises inclusivity and fairness while prohibiting inhuman or degrading treatment of individuals (MoPSE, 2014, p.14). In discourse analysis,

power is seen as being constantly in motion and shaped by human interaction, and it is acknowledged that power influences and shapes human action (Van Dijk, 1993). The practice of community of inquiry in philosophy for children is critical in shaping how children and teachers use power in the classroom to negotiate relationships. Though they were not self-conscious about the use of power dynamics in the classroom, two children interviewed by the researcher (coded as janLC2020 & janLC29) clearly indicated how power is shared during the community of inquiry sessions:

janLC2020: *We are given time to think about our own questions before voting on the best one. We are discouraged from cheating because our teacher also participates.*

janLC29: *... some of the games we play help us take turns during lessons, and the teacher participates in the activities as well. When the teacher joins us during the games or when we vote on the topic for discussion, it encourages us to participate as well.*

Although these children were unconcerned about their use of power in the classroom, they demonstrated how power was shared in the classroom during the community of inquiry sessions, as I previously stated. One common rule for effective power sharing during the community of inquiry was that philosophical discussants follow the 'Listen and Respond' approach; discussants were discouraged from interjecting while others spoke before they finished expressing their ideas. The listen and respond approach is where philosophical discussants value the ideas of others through verbal, facial and other body movements – it encourages discussants to listen first in order to be able to give a valuable respond. Again, the 'Listen and Respond' has affinities with Afrophilia practices such as the Call and Response, which is used in many indigenous musical approaches in Sebakwe area, such as Ngororombe. Typically, the first discussant speaks first while others listen, and then they respond. In Ngororombe, an example of call and respond (Listen & Respond) is as follows:

Call: *unouya wega*

Call: *it manifests on its own*

Response: *mudzimu wababa*

Response: *the spirit of our forefathers*

Call: *unouya wega*

Call: *it manifests on its own*

Response: *hautengwi*

Response: *it cannot be bought*

According to Yorshansky (2014), if the classroom community of inquiry is used appropriately, it has the potential to generate more qualitatively different and equal power relations among the philosophical discussants. The implication is that philosophical discussants are more likely to develop habits of sharing the experiences they have gained from their diverse life worlds both in and out of the classroom. Furthermore, this appears to affect power sharing because not only the facilitator, but all philosophical discussants, will be responsible for “shaping the way the conversation develops” (Goering, Shudak & Wartenberg, 2013). This explains the reason why scholars have identified the practice of community of inquiry as a model for democratic and respectful human interaction (Sharp, 1995; Cam, 2011). According to Kennedy and Kohan (2021), including the approach in the school curriculum has political implications because it emphasises aspects of life such as fairness, justice, rules, responsibility, good and evil.

Conclusion and future directions

According to the data obtained for this article and the study to which it contributes, it can be asserted that by emphasising the empowering of teachers, inclusive engagement in cross-generational settings, and power sharing in the classroom, the practice of philosophy for children in sociocultural settings has the potential to disrupt the traditional colonially structured curriculum. By situating the study within the unhu/ubuntu dialectical rationality, I attempted to offer the approach as an emergent curriculum reform strategy in resettlement schools with an epistemological focus: to give teachers appropriate agency to modify and adapt their pedagogies in alignment with the learners’ life worlds. This appears to have also influenced the way in which parents, teachers, education inspectors and children negotiate relationships and influence the classroom social context. However, because of the many contradictions and paradoxes that work against effective curriculum decolonisation, it appears that for the resettlement school child, inclusion and empowerment through education may remain a fleeting illusion, to be pursued but never attained, unless the following suggestions are heeded and addressed in good faith.

The findings suggest that some of the contradictions and paradoxes that work against effective curriculum decolonisation are influenced by a lack of resources in schools, particularly resettlement schools. As a result, the study recommends that the government prioritise improving resource supply in these schools, including building appropriate classrooms where such classes do not exist. Literature has also shown that the teacher-learner ratio is still higher than the recommended 20; therefore, the study recommends that this recommendation be implemented. Since the study has shown that using the philosophy for children approach with a sociocultural medley in resettlement schools has benefits for both the teacher and the learner, it would seem appropriate if the government considers expanding this project to include many schools or even including it as one of the cross-cutting approaches within the school curriculum.

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Appendix A: Discourse analysis: Data transcripts

Level of communication	What I analysed
Vocabulary	Transcripts of document analysis, formative intervention workshops, community of inquiry lesson observations, and reflexive interviews were examined for ideological associations, formality, and euphemistic and metaphorical content. This was accomplished, in part, by closely examining the words and phrases used by the participants and in the main texts that I analysed.
Grammar	This was especially helpful during document analysis, when I was looking at how sentences are constructed in the main text (e.g. verb tenses, active or passive construction). I focused on how participants used imperatives and questions in the workshops, observations, and interviews to reveal aspects of intended meaning.
Structure	Because the documents I examined were public documents published by the government through MoPSE, I looked at their structure to learn more about how they emphasise or construct a narrative (e.g. how documents create a narrative that maps the otherness of the colonial education system).
Genre	Every text has a genre, and it is critical to analyse it in relation to the conventions and communicative goals of its genre. For example, I examined the findings in order to assess their decolonial goals in curriculum and pedagogy.
Non-verbal communication	This was useful as I analysed video clips of the workshops, reflexive interviews, and lesson observations, paying attention to nonverbal aspects of speech (these included participants' tone of voice, pauses, gestures, and sounds like "um," "aah," as they have the potential to reveal aspects of a participant's intentions, attitudes, and emotions).
Conversational codes	During the formative intervention workshops, community of inquiry lesson observations, and reflexive interviews, as well as when I was analysing the videos and audio recordings, I paid close attention to the interaction between participants in a conversation, such as turn-taking, interruptions, and listener response, as these could reveal aspects of cultural conventions and social roles.

Appendix B: Contradictions & paradoxes in resettlement schools



Figure 1.0 Due to a lack of classrooms at the school, a fourth-grade teacher and his schoolchildren are conducting lessons under a tree. The lesson is teacher-centred, notice the learners staring at the teacher as he explains. There are no tables in the classroom, so children will have to write on their chairs.

Appendix C: Cross-generational meetings within the community



Figure 1.1 Cross-generational meeting. This 7-year-old boy pays close attention to a reflexive interview between the researcher and his grandmother. He asked if his parents could join in because they know how to help him with his homework.



Figure 1.2 Bridging the gap between the adult world and the child world in school. The children in grades 3 and 4 listen to an adult participant narrate the Tsuro na Gudo folklore story. Children contribute to the story's call and respond section: **Call:** *Paivapo*; **Respond:** *Dzefunde*. **Call:** *Tsuro na Gudo*; **Respond:** *Dzefunde*. **Call:** *Tsverere tsvegu tsve-e*; **Respond:** *Taibikana*. **Call:** *Tsverere tsvegu tsve-e*; **Respond:** *Gudo ndokutsva*.

A3: The Teachers' Roles Characterised by Competences and Practices in a Sociocultural Approach to Philosophy for Children (p4c): A Sebakwe Resettlement Schools Formative Intervention Study

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Abstract

Teaching is a complex and indefinable practice, and one's motivations for pursuing the profession should be carefully considered. It is important to pay attention to teachers' voices and what they do in the classroom because this may result in increased educational quality and the closing of the achievement gaps for all learners. My goal in this paper is to draw on work that I did as a formative intervention researcher in Sebakwe resettlement schools in Zimbabwe and contribute to the understanding of the teachers' shifting roles as characterised by competences and practices. The question to be addressed in this paper is, "*what is the teacher's role in the context of the reforms taking place in the Zimbabwean education system?*". An insider formative intervention approach was framed in ways that offer teachers support (through engagement with the sociocultural theory and community of inquiry embedded in philosophy for children) on how to deepen epistemic engagement with the heritage-based reform. In essence, the sociocultural approach to philosophy for children formative intervention (Afrophilic P4c programme) which involved teachers, parents, education inspectors and children was one where adult participant do not only foster children's learning but allow them to learn from their involvement and collaboration. I, together with the participants, was involved in identifying learning barriers inherent in the study area and selecting Afrophilia learning lenses in the form of music and dance, proverbs, folklore stories, and other context-based learning activities and practices. In referring to the formative intervention data, I want to draw attention to the six dimensions of teacher's roles characterised by competences and practices that surfaced from the study, how they reflect the complexities of teaching in resettlement schools and how this paper may broaden thinking about teaching. In conclusion I suggest the possibility of looking into further research that focuses on learner participation in philosophy for children as this may contribute knowledge on how heritage-based learning activities, couched within a sociocultural approach to

philosophy for children, may help advance development of critical reflexive thinking skills in children.

Keywords: community of inquiry, pedagogical renewal, teachers' roles, formative intervention

Introduction

Constellations of schooling and pedagogical practices in postcolonial Zimbabwe are largely inclined to the contemporary history of pedagogical renewal in East and Southern Africa (ESA), where there is a long history of coloniality and structurally defined exclusions (Masaka, 2016; De Sousa Santos, 2016; Mignolo and Walsh, 2018). The shifting constellations in pedagogical practice as influenced by the specificities of ESA's past (Zimbabwe included), the politics of its future, and the complexities of its current socioeconomic condition are delineated not only by the broader national and regional version of curriculum decolonisation but also by the global application of new learning technologies (Reynolds & Webber, 2009).

In the Zimbabwean case, where the 1980 government inherited a colonially framed system of education that was fractured along numerous lines of man-made prejudices, educational reform documents, the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training [CIET] (1999), and the Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education [MoPSE] (2014) instigated heritage-based curriculum reforms with a perspective that articulates social justice and equity as a discourse of possibility (Reynolds & Webber, 2009). The heritage-based curriculum reforms and articulation of social justice and other democratic ideals exist as an expression of Zimbabwe's cultural values and social vision (Masaka, 2016). This foregrounding of curriculum reforms on Afrophilic foundations of learning (endogenous heritage-based knowledges) as refracted and reflected in primary schools contexts, and the shifting politics of pedagogy that has placed strong emphasis on learner autonomy and enhancement of diversity in reason (Eze, 2008), has implicit implications for the teachers' roles characterised by competences and practices. For example, MoPSE (2014) reiterates

that the role of the teacher has shifted from that of an educator to that of a facilitator (for a summary of pedagogical and curricular shifts in education see MoPSE 2014, p.10).

My goal in this paper is to draw on work that I did as a formative intervention research in Sebakwe resettlement schools in Zimbabwe and contribute to the understanding of the teacher's shifting roles characterised by competences and practices. The question to be addressed in this paper is "*what is the teacher's role in the context of the reforms taking place in the Zimbabwean education system?*". An insider formative intervention approach was framed in ways that offer teachers support (through engagement with the sociocultural theory and community of inquiry embedded in philosophy for children) on how to deepen epistemic engagement with the heritage-based reform. In essence, the sociocultural approach to philosophy for children formative intervention (Afrophilic p4c²¹ programme) which involved teachers, parents, education inspectors and children, was one where adult participant do not only foster children's learning but allow them to learn from their involvement and collaboration. I, together with the participants, were involved in identifying learning barriers inherent in the study area and identifying and selecting Afrophilia learning lenses which surfaced in the form of music and dance, proverbs, folklore stories, and other context-based learning activities and practices. In referring to the formative intervention data, I aim to draw attention to the six dimensions of teachers' roles characterised by competences and practices that surfaced from the study and how they reflect the complexities of teaching in resettlement schools. I also draw attention to ways in which this paper may broaden thinking about teaching.

The first part of this paper considers sociocultural theory which informs the broader sociocultural approach to the philosophy for children formative intervention study to which this paper contributes. Especially interesting in this revisiting of the learning theory is how it reconnects the Zimbabwean education system to its heritage ways of teaching and learning and influences teachers to acknowledge the collective experiences of learners from marginalised areas such as the Sebakwe communal area. The other part of the paper focuses

²¹ Lowercase Afrophilic p4c refers to the context-based version of philosophy for children that I utilised as a formative intervention approach in Sebakwe resettlement schools in this paper and the study to which it contributes, whereas uppercase P4C refers to the original Lipman version of philosophy for children.

on the formative intervention research process and includes the data collection procedure, findings, discussion, and conclusion.

Revisiting sociocultural theory

According to Rogoff (1990) children learning within sociocultural theory frames have potential to become part of a historical community in which they can learn through discovery. Here Rogoff (1990) points out the potential that sociocultural learning has in influencing the inclusion of learners as active participants in learning activities. Literature is replete with evidence that children's learning in contexts that are socioculturally framed was historically part of the Southern African experience (Rodney 1983). According to Rodney (1983), historically, the learner's social and cultural heritage formed the foundation for teaching and learning. Henceforth, citing examples precolonial Africa Rodney affirms that,

indigenous African education can be considered outstanding: its close links with social life, both in a material and spiritual sense; its collective nature; its many-sidedness; and its progressive development in conformity with the successive stages of physical, emotional, and mental development of the child. (Rodney, 1983, p. 262)

What could be learned from Rodney (1983), especially in a nation that has shown interest in making heritage-based reforms in curriculum as a way of making students' learning more meaningful is that heritage-based learning as situated learning is linked to making pedagogy significant (Moss, 2006). Moss further states that "significance refers to pedagogy that draws clear connections with students' prior knowledge and identities, with contexts outside of the classroom, and with multiple ways of knowing" (2006, p. 7).

Scholars on philosophy for children (P4C) (Lipman, 2003; Juuso, 2007) acknowledge the approach's rootedness in social and cultural contexts. Lipman (2003) further highlights the relationship between thinking and social formation of experience. This correlates positively with the tenets of sociocultural theory which characterise collaborative approaches to learning (such as p4c) as reacculturative processes embedded in social relations (Vygotsky, 1978). In Vygotsky's view, knowledge and skills acquisition takes place through social forms of mediation.

In light of the above, my focus on taking a sociocultural approach to philosophy for children in Sebakwe resettlement schools was tilted towards foregrounding social forms of mediation in the area. According to Rogoff (1990) the foregrounding of socially attuned forms of learning ensures a contextually relevant curriculum. In such curricular contexts, teaching and learning involves utilisation of knowledges and heritage-based practices that are already in existence in the area. When endogenous knowledges and heritage-based practices become foregrounded in learning activities, as it is in the sociocultural approach to philosophy for children in the Sebakwe area, the outcome is a paradigm of learning as connection (Lotz-Sisitka & Lupele, 2017).

Social forms of mediation that influence a paradigm of learning as connection are important in this study as they bring to the fore endogenous knowledges and heritage-based practices currently dislodged to relics of epistemological history due to the resilient continuity of coloniality (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). In the Zimbabwean education context, prior approaches that did not make use of the sociocultural paradigm encountered pitfalls that included the curriculum being regarded as too abstracted from the learner's life world (CIET, 1999). Hence, there is a need for reconnecting society and formal education practices.

Vygotsky (1978) and Rogoff (1990) describe sociocultural learning in ways that inform the paradigm of learning as connection as they reason that there is a relationship between children's learning processes and society. The pedagogy that facilitates this connection in this study is the community of inquiry embedded in philosophy for children. Viewed in ways that unite learning and society, the sociocultural approach to philosophy for children becomes a necessary condition in bridging the aperture between home and school which Rogoff (1990) explains as a barrier to learning. Furthermore, Rogoff (1990) stresses the point that eclipsing disconnections between society and formal learning entails rethinking culture and heritage knowledge as principles for framing contexts in which child development are considered. Importantly, disrupting the often-perceived binary between indigenous communities and formal schooling potentially offers a better foundation for educational decolonisation as this brings to the fore the inclusion of indigenous knowledges (Correa-Chavez, Mejia-Arauz & Rogoff, 2015; Masaka, 2016).

Central to a sociocultural approach to philosophy for children is the valuing of learner agency in learning within a social matrix, disruption of coercive pedagogies, and reorienting learning towards the cultivation of a paradigm of learning as connection (Vygotsky, 1978; Lipman, 2003; Lotz-Sisitka & Lupele, 2017). These factors appear to be essential in curriculum transformation, and the study gives acknowledgement to their implications for the roles, practices and competences of teachers. For example, in a sociocultural approach to philosophy for children, teachers are no longer expected to ‘deposit knowledge’ to passive learners but to facilitate learning processes with learners as active participants (Freire, 1970).

Implications for teachers

The expected 21st century learner exit profiles and the principles and values guiding curriculum reforms in Zimbabwe have noticeable implications for teachers’ roles, practices and competences. The current generation of teachers and parents who participated in the sociocultural philosophy for children formative intervention in this study, were brought up in learning formats of traditional imperial British hegemonic schooling and thus must acquire new pedagogical shifts (Masaka, 2016). Mr Mativenga (Interviewee, 2019) explained the pedagogical shift as follows:

the role of the teacher must be seen as that of facilitator rather than to be seen as a reservoir of knowledge, where the teacher has to be giving out the knowledge... teacher as facilitator potentially enhances development of critical thinking;... instead of telling children what is a root, a steam etc, children should now be given space to experiment and discover things on their own... let children get the best out of their environment... it is important that our teachers be staff-developed along these lines of thinking.

Thus, the transition from alienating teaching practices in an education system that locates itself within imperial British colonial hegemonic discourse of schooling CIET (1999) opens movement into a modern history of curriculum transformation. This emerging history of curriculum transformation exhibits a pendulum shift from teacher-controlled learning to learner-centred learning Moss (2003) and as such entails that teachers engage in continuous staff development in order to gain knowledge and experience on how not to centre epistemological authority on one person.

Absent in the discussion of traditional teachers' roles is creation of space that invites learners to think about what they find puzzling, interesting or disconcerting. According to Lipman (2003) the adverse effects of authoritarian teaching are that it turns the classroom into a systematised space in which everything is regular and explicit, thereby providing few natural incentives for development of higher order thinking. Hence, Lipman (2003) proposes enacting a pedagogical approach that appears to have potential for removing barriers created in a systematised classroom by enticing and engaging learners' imagination.

Ordinarily, community of inquiry engages learners together with the teacher in a process of cognition²² as they search for understanding or meaning of the most basic ideas and problems of life (Murriss, 1997; Sprod, 2001; Lipman, 2003). For instance, in the Sebakwe area some of the problems of life include issues of social and gender violence, wildlife conservation, food security, and effects climate change. The process of cognition is made possible because in community of inquiry participants are engaged in a dialogical process that values logic and tries to develop habits of intelligent behaviour (Lipman, 2003). According to Murriss (1997) habits of intelligent behaviour are branded as being curious, collaborative, critical, creative and caring. In practice these habits can be developed through engaging in thoughtful discussion underpinned by asking questions, giving reasons and evidence in support of ideas, and by developing an awareness of self and care for others (Mohr Lone & Israeloff, 2012).

Interestingly, the philosophical dialogue that distinguishes the distinctiveness of community of inquiry has potential for influencing participants to "become more articulate, aware of the power of language, and therefore more sensitive in their choice of words" (McCarty, 2013, p. 59). Thus, in multi-ethnic communities like Zimbabwe (Sebakwe schools included) where conflicts and contradictions often emanate as a result of ethnicity, children learn tolerance that seems to translate into an "ethic of compassion" (McCarty, 2013), leading to the avoidance of reinforcing stereotypes or inducing tribal conflicts. This is because the community of inquiry exposes learners to different perspectives about life and the world they live in, thus developing an ability to comprehend life from the viewpoint of the 'not-self' (Russell, 1969). Moreover Murriss (1997), Lipman (2003), Mohr Lone and Israeloff (2012)

22 By process of cognition is meant the act of analysing, examining, questioning, describing, judging, and illustrating; acts that make knowing a mental activity. In this regard it could further be acknowledged that knowledges are an end product of the process of cognition.

concur that it is the business of community of inquiry to help children not to prejudge situations and people or hasten to give answers without thinking. In other words, children learn to be contemplative citizens. Apart from this, children also learn to take responsibility for themselves through making good decisions based on logical thinking (Lipman, 2003).

UNESCO (1998) endorses the community of inquiry by stating that “the time to learn is now the whole lifetime”, not just during the period of childhood and youth. Therefore, children need to be taught to develop the habits of lifelong learning, and these are better nurtured within a community of fellow inquirers such as that offered during the sociocultural approach to Afrophilic P4c in this study of the Sebakwe area. In asserting the unique character of the community of inquiry, Murris (1997) cites Ann Margaret Sharp who says,

They (participants) learn by doing. They learn how to object to weak reasoning, build on strong reasoning, accept their responsibility for making their contributions within the context of other remarks, follow the enquiry where it leads, respect the perspective of others and co-operatively engage in self-correction. They come to care for each other as persons and for the procedures that they use to enquire. With time, they come to take pride in the accomplishments of the group as well as in themselves as persons. (Murris, 1997, p.107)

This unique character of community of inquiry emanates from the idea that, practically, a community of inquiry is also focused "towards a shared (communal) articulation of concepts which are important to children" (Splitter & Sharp, 1995, p. 11). The concepts are important to children as they arise from problems identified by the children themselves. Following the identification of the problem, an inquiry process begins involving all the children and the teacher as active participants.

Problem statement

There is available educational theory and pedagogical approaches that can be used to deepen epistemic engagement with the heritage-based reform in Zimbabwe, but there is as yet no adequate support for teachers on how to do this, and little is known about the implications for teachers' roles, competences and practices. As observed by Squires (1999) the presence of a deficiency in conducting a deepened analysis of the role of the teacher and teachers' competences is eminent in education. From my own experience of more than a decade working in the area of study, I have also observed that teachers have been slow to identify with and adopt the new roles characterised by competences and practices expected of them in

the Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education [MoPSE] (2015–2020) updated curriculum. This seems to have created a significant barrier to the effective implementation of the education reforms.

Methodology: Formative Intervention

A ‘formative intervention’ approach was used in the study (Engeström, 2011). The main goals of this formative intervention were to introduce participants to the philosophy of community of inquiry pedagogy for children and to find an alternative teaching experience that was relevant to the learner's life world. Furthermore, using the formative intervention approach enabled me to frame the research as a multi-voiced case study that culminated in an Afrophilic p4c curriculum model, which has a synergy with the Sebakwe community's heritage-based knowledges and practices (Author, 2021). In this way, the approach corresponded directly to the findings of Engeström and Sannino (2010) that learning, and development are culturally embedded and socially supported processes.

Table 1: Summary of formative intervention activities that highlight six dimensions of teacher roles characterised by competences and practices

Formative Intervention Researcher	Participants: Teacher (13), Parents (12) and Education Inspectors (3)
Identified learning barriers in the Sebakwe area via: • interviews • literature review • observations as I teach in the area • formative intervention workshops • Facilitated formative intervention workshops aimed at: • further identifying learning barriers with teachers, parents and education inspectors • selecting heritage-based learning artefacts (Afrophia learning lenses) • introducing the philosophy for children; community of inquiry approach • preparing a teacher training booklet for teachers to further engage with the approach • Conducted community of inquiry activities with 16 learners at Kaguvi (Sebakwe Annex school) Developed journal articles based on empirical	Participated in interviews and identified learning barriers during workshops Developed posters for teachers’ roles characterised by competences and practices Made comparisons between traditional teachers and 21st century teachers Selected heritage-based learning artefacts (Afrophia artefacts) in the form of music & dance, poems, proverbs, taboos, storytelling, etc. Teachers tried out the community of inquiry approach and their reflections were captured by the researcher through interviews and during workshops Some parents and teachers attended the community of inquiry sessions conducted by the researcher and the learners Some parents and teachers contributed to the community of inquiry sessions via performing songs, telling stories and/or reciting poems (totem-poems). Contributed to further development of the teacher

data. These were discussed with the participants for authenticity of the data.	training booklet.

As shown in Table 1 above, I (as formative intervention researcher) identified learning barriers in the Sebakwe schools' and these were further expanded on by the participants during the first formative intervention workshop. According to Engeström (2011), formative intervention researchers often represent contradictions which they could have identified through conducting observations and interviews with the aim of informing the design process. During the second and third formative intervention workshops I joined the participants in identifying and selecting teachable heritage-based learning artefacts (Afrophilia lens). These emerged in the form of music and dance, folklore stories, poems, proverbs, taboos and other context-based learning practices. The identified and selected heritage-based learning artefacts were used as start-up capital in community of inquiry sessions with learners. Parents and teachers were invited to attend the community of inquiry sessions which I conducted with 16 children at one of the Sebakwe resettlement schools (Kaguvi primary). This helped teachers to try out the community of inquiry approach, and their reflections from their initial try-outs, and from observing the sessions that I conducted, were captured both during interviews and in the workshop in which they developed posters and pictures. Allowing the participants first-hand experience of the community of inquiry was aimed at giving them room to reflect-in-action and reflect-on-action (Schön, 1983). According to Schön (1983) the notion of reflecting-in and reflecting-on entails the ability to reflect throughout the lesson, rather than waiting until after the lesson, and also rigorously evaluating the lesson which involves thinking about, commenting on and analysing the process after it has been carried out.

To further strengthen participants' knowledge of the community of inquiry approach, a teachers' training booklet with theory and practical was developed.

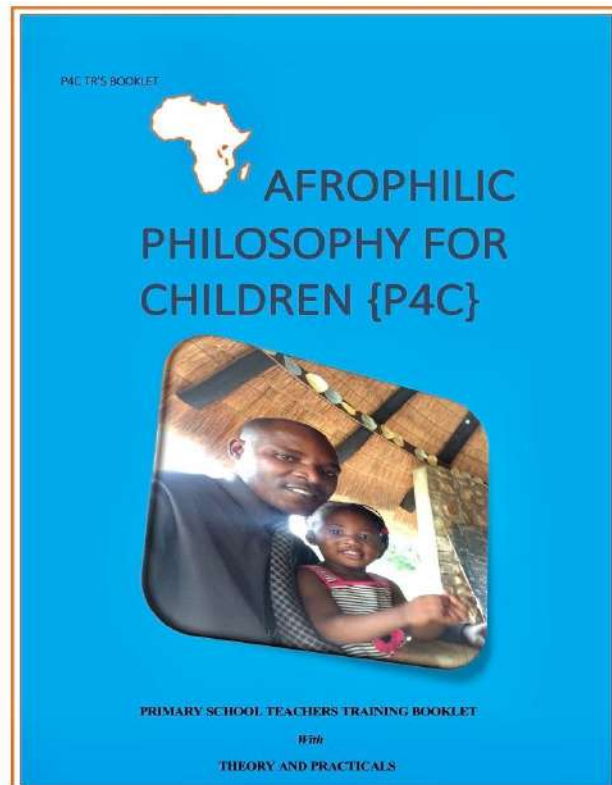


Figure A: Cover page of the Afrophilic philosophy for children (p4c) primary school teachers' training booklet with theory and practical sessions. The booklet was used for introducing the Afrophilic p4c approach to participants and can still be used for deepening engagement with the approach.

The teacher training booklet shows a glimpse of the classroom from which I conducted the community of inquiry sessions. PowerPoint presentations were used with the help of short video clips demonstrating the community of inquiry approach in action. The teacher training booklet was distributed to participants for free in hard-copy format in order to provide them with easy access to guideline notes on the formative intervention approach. The context of the Sebakwe schools where the formative intervention study was conducted is discussed in the following section. This aids in providing the rationale of the case study area selection.

The schools cluster and its context

Sebakwe primary school in Kwekwe district in the Midlands province of Zimbabwe is theoretically the mother school to three officially unregistered satellite primary schools: Tagwirei, Gutsaruzhinji and Kaguvi. These three schools, together with the other 1 425 satellite schools in Zimbabwe (The Herald, 2014), are in principle supposed to operate under the auspices of a well-established school (Nyoni & Nyoni, 2014). However, in the case of the Sebakwe primary schools cluster all the schools serve a sparsely populated community,

which results in them failing to match the enrolment figures required for single grade classes. As a result, the primary schools in the Sebakwe communal area are characterised by persistent problems of managing composite classes, lack of infrastructure, learner dropouts, shortage of teaching personnel, and poor national examination pass rates (Author, 2021b).

According to Nyoni and Nyoni (2014) composite classes in Zimbabwe are associated with poverty and grossly under-resourced schools, most of which are characterised by pole, dagga [mud] and grass-thatched structures. The observation makes sense considering that some classes in the study area learn under trees. Teacher (T1) explains the schools thus:

Here you find one teacher taking 2 or 3 grades in one class, this means one is trying to cover 3 syllabi at one go. Then we have the issue of resources, there are no proper structures some children learn outside under trees ... even the roads and teacher's accommodation ... the place is so backward, children walk long distances, there is no electricity we can't use modern ICT gadgets in classes.

The unpleasant conditions associated with the Sebakwe schools cluster, and the fact that there is no known evidence (to this author's knowledge) of a sociocultural approach to philosophy for children intervention that has been done in the area, provided the scope and impetus for this intervention. Another more macro-level perspective of this intervention study was to add to the bank of philosophy for children literature a resettlement schools' dimension. With the intention to breathe some newness into the body of philosophy for children literature through offering contributions from the resettlement school's perspective, I explored the nuances of both cultural historical and contemporary learning processes that are in existence in the area (Author, 2020).

This nuanced understanding of the existing practices and deficiencies in the education system, particularly focusing on the study area, has helped in eliciting new roles characterising practices and competences for teachers. These new roles, which are informed by a need to expand agency for learners, are expected to give shape and direction to the future practice of teaching and learning (MoPSE, 2014). Murriss (1997) explains that contemporary education differs from traditional approaches to learning as learners are no longer expected to be passive receptacles of knowledge, but rather active participants in

learning activities. Much of the scoping out of information that is theorised in this paper was done through conducting workshops and interviews with teachers and parents, discussed below.

Data generation process

A total of three formative intervention workshops with purposively selected thirteen teachers, three education inspectors, and twelve parents were conducted (for participants' demographics, see Author, submitted for publication). Participants signed consent forms, with some agreeing to have their names used in the study while others declined. As a result, I allocated code numbers (e.g., T8) to teachers who participated in the study. All workshops took place on Thursdays (the community sacred day, when people do not work), and the time scheduling was from 10:00 to 13:00, three hours per workshop. The time scheduling was to allow participants time for traveling to and from the workshop venue. This resulted in nine hours of workshop engagement with the participants. According to Lupele (2003) workshops have become a productive and engaged data collection tool in educational research as they allow for multi-perspectives to be generated via various interactions. In line with Engeström (2011) the formative intervention research work was aimed at stimulating change in practices.

The teachable Afrophilia tools for teaching and learning were either pre-recorded in audio format (e.g., a mbira song that was utilised in lesson 4 on ethics) or provided by some participants in text format (e.g., the folklore story that was written and narrated to learners by Mr Sibanda [parent]; see Author, 2021). While adult participants recommended the use of totems, taboos and proverbs as tools for advancing ethical reasoning, most of the data on totems and taboos come from the learners and was captured in the form of learners' pictures drawings and learners' written work. I valued participants' contributions to the formative intervention work because I am aware of Engeström's (2011) observation that "interventions in human beings' activities are met with actors with identities and agency, not with anonymous mechanical responses" (ibid, p. 603). Hence, the active involvement of participants was my idea of giving them agency, especially parents whom I felt were less likely to be included in government-led education reform interventions.

Reflections with the teachers that were captured

I personally conducted all the interviews with parents, teachers, education inspectors and learners. These were audio recorded and I also used a research journal for note writing. Reflective interviews with teachers were conducted in order to elicit information on teachers' experiences and views of the sociocultural approach to Afrophilic p4c. I also elicited their views and opinions on the applicability of the programme as a possible future frame for curriculum intervention and transformation (Schulze, 1999). The interviews made it possible for me to develop a deeper level of reflexivity on the initiative. An agenda for the interview was sent to the interviewees at least a week before the actual interview date and the interview venues were always selected by the interviewees.

Apart from the interview and workshop recorded data, some of the teachers' reflections were captured through posters both drawn and written. According to Osa and Musser (2004) posters are an attractive learning media which can be used for illustration of concepts, processes and similar things, and to stimulate the imagination and interest in a topic. During the workshop teachers generated posters that helped them reflect on their roles as characterised by competences and practices, and also on the differences between contemporary teaching and traditional teaching. The image below showcases some of the teachers working on their poster during the workshop.



Image 1: Teachers working on a poster that compares and contrasts traditional and 21st-century teaching roles characterised by competences and practices (source: primary, 15/02/2018).

Information on the poster the teachers in Image 1 are working on is narrated, together with the emergent dimensions of teachers' roles characterised by competences and practices that surfaced from the inductive analysis and the coding of data into themes.

Myself as a teacher and formative intervention researcher

In my more than 15 years of teaching in the Sebakwe area and pursuing academic studies as a part-time student, I have grown to be self-reflexive about my role as a teacher and researcher. My primary responsibilities as a teacher can be summarised as follows:

- Preparing daily and longer-term lesson plans that follow MoPSE curriculum standards.
- Preparing, administering and grading learners' daily exercises and examinations to assess their progress.
- Observing the performance and behavior of the learners.
- Supervising learners during classes and at other times during the school day.
- Participating in staff development meetings at school, cluster and district levels.
- Preparing for and attending parents' meeting to discuss learners' progress and other learning/school-related issues.

It is through carrying out these roles that I become aware that I belong to a community of teachers, learners and parents with diverse perspectives from which much can be learned – a principle that informed my engagement with the community as an intervention researcher. Because of my insider status as a teacher, I was able to take full advantage of learning about the study area through self-reflection. Self-reflection, according to Finlay (2008), is a skill that promotes learning through and from experience. During the study I jotted field notes (in a research journal) and at times I would record myself talking on the phone (self-recorded clips); these often reminded me of some important observations that I had made, thus helping me to capture the details when writing.

Of interest to me as a teacher and formative intervention researcher was the need to see the potential contribution of the selected 'artefacts' (the cultural tools) and the broader Afrophilia discourse acting as scaffolds to influence/affect advancement of critical reflexive thinking skills within the 'zone of proximal development'²³ (Wertsch, 1984). My assumption was that this would be seen in children and other intervention study participants, including myself. As

²³ According to Vygotsky (1978) the zone of proximal development is "the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peer" (p. 86).

a result, I developed a framework to see what I could accomplish (actual development level) with the participants and how our collective participation in the formative intervention activities could lead to the next level of potential development. See below an illustration of the transition with the ZPD.

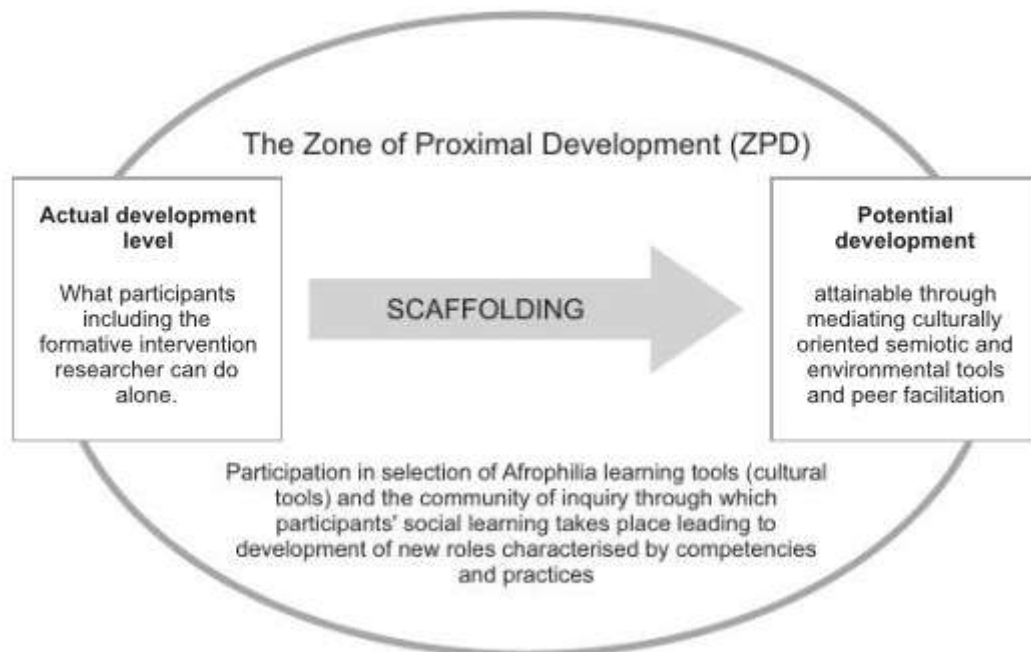


Figure B: The zone of proximal development within the sociocultural p4c intervention workshops in Sebakwe resettlement primary schools.

Data analysis:

Inductive analysis of data was done to identify implications for roles characterised by the competences and practices of teachers. This approach to data analysis is usually done qualitatively in order to “condense raw textual data into a brief, summary format” (Thomas, 2006, p. 237). The initial step in data analysis for the larger study, to which this paper contributes, was to transcribe all interview, formative intervention workshop, and community of inquiry sessions data, most of which were conducted in ChiShona with two interviews conducted in IsiNdebele. This meant that I had to translate all data from indigenous heritage languages to English for accessibility and readability by an international audience (the journal readership) with whom I shared the findings. I then coded all data according to the macro themes of the study, namely:

- Historical and contemporary learning barriers
- Afrophilia learning lenses
- Advancement of critical reflexive thinking skills
- Promotion of a culture of learning in schools

- The impact of the intervention approach on learners', instructors', parents' and education inspectors' attitudes
-

These macro themes were the focus of my previous publications (see Author 2018, 2020), but for this paper and the other five empirical papers that emerged from the larger study, I narrowed the data analysis to focus on the micro-themes that surfaced from the data set. To accomplish this, I focused on the emerging discourses from the data set (including the shift in practices and processes of dialogue in the classroom), with each set of emerging discourses predominantly led by a decolonial discourse analysis and categorised by the themes they address. This more concentrated data analysis yielded the six dimensions of teacher roles characterised by competences and practices, which are the subject of this paper. These are discussed in the next section.

The emerging six dimensions of teachers' roles.

Six dimensions of teacher roles characterised by competences and practices surfaced from the context-based Afrophilic p4c approach. The dimensions have implications for the practice of teaching and thus influence curriculum transformation.

• Teacher as a decoloniser

Earlier findings of the study to which this paper contributes highlight a need for curriculum decolonisation, citing the continuity of coloniality and the existence of cultural technologies of domination within the education sector (Author, 2020, 2021). As a result, it emerged that to achieve the decolonial intentions of the updated curriculum the teacher as a curriculum implementer has to take the role of a decoloniser, which would be characterised by competences and practices. Gwekwerere (T8) explains that:

The education system keeps on borrowing things from other peoples' cultures. Children are not learning things that help them in the present life situation unless they travel to big towns or to the diaspora. Currently the system is not making our cultural traditions visible... if teachers can involve elders who know our traditions, then they can work together and help children gain a diverse perspective of learning through including their own culture. More value could be added by letting children participate; for

example, in storytelling activities, traditional dances, music and other culturally oriented games such as nhodo, pada... (22/02/2018)

During the formative intervention workshops participants also showed concern around the use of a foreign language [English] in schools. One of the participants (T12) had this to say:

We are forcing children to speak a language which is foreign to them and it creates a barrier in the classroom. Yes, we are not saying foreign languages are wrong, but we are saying the system should not discourage us from speaking our own language or take our language as an inferior language to other languages or take 'English' as a measure of intelligence.

Following deliberations with the participants, both teachers and parents, it surfaced that the postcolonial Zimbabwean classroom emerged as a political space marked with power contestations and a space in which access to knowledge and other teaching and learning resources has to be negotiated (Guofang Li, 2006). The teacher as decoloniser has to:

Create a balance between formal and informal learning processes in a way that make learning relevant to the learners. The teacher cannot continue inflicting corporal punishment on children... teachers now need to create an atmosphere where learners feel free to learn. (T8, 22/02/2018)

The following table illustrates the teacher's role as decoloniser, as uncovered via interviews and community of inquiry practice.

Table 2: Summary of a teacher's role as decoloniser characterised by competences and practices.

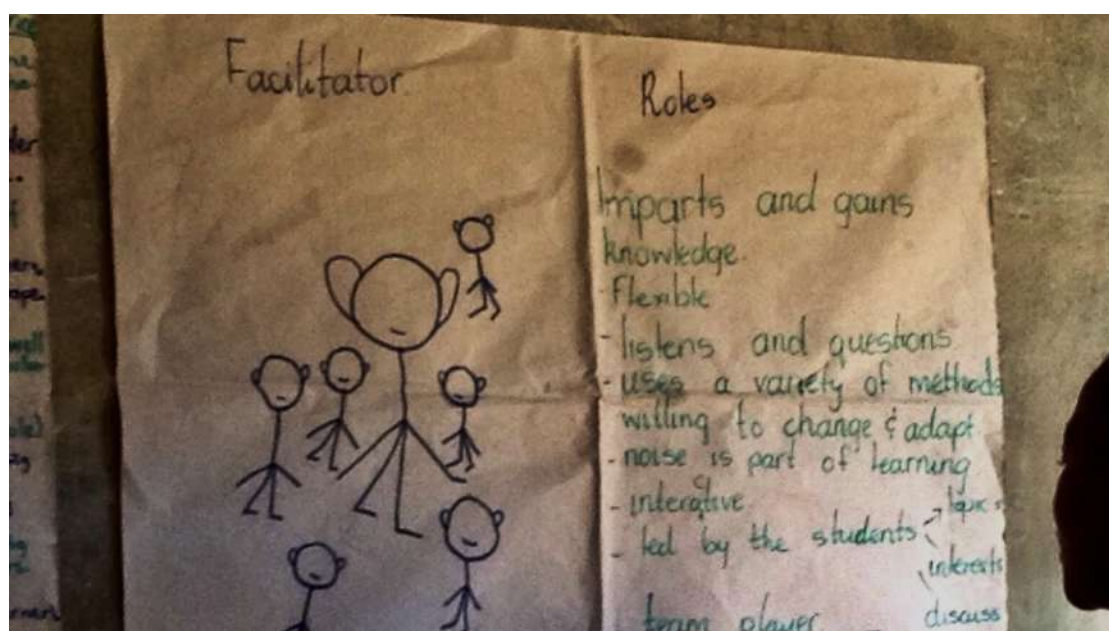
Teacher as decoloniser	Community of Inquiry	Interviews and Workshops
Evidence of required competences	Engages in active learning processes. Makes use of learner-centred approaches. Includes the learner's culture and heritage practices.	Identifying context-relevant teaching and learning activities. Making use of locally available learning resources. Being sensitive to the learners' life world including their heritage languages.
Evidence of practice	Keeps control without forcing power over learners. Uses process-based assessment tools that foster development of	Involves other people as knowledge sources in order to advance heritage-based learning. Learning resources are shared equally

	diversity in reasoning rather than mere success in examinations. Shows knowledge and appreciation of diverse learners' languages and heritage practices. Uses questioning techniques that promote further exploration or inquiry.	among learners. Does not use excessive power that is not beneficial to the learning process. Sensitive to the social construction of power relations in the classroom.

The citations and the table above show teachers explaining how the use of different approaches to teaching and learning would help in decolonising the oppressive climate of the classroom and help learners develop more agency. Another issue that stands out is how teachers need to vary their assessment models and create space for learners to demonstrate 'diversity in reason' (Eze, 2008). Emerging during workshops and interviews was the need to embrace diverse language use and also diversify teaching and learning material and the subject content.

- **The teacher as a facilitator**

Both teachers and education inspectors involved in the study agreed that teaching now requires the teacher to take up the role of a facilitator. The posters in this section were generated by the teachers and they demonstrate aspects of the role characterised by competences and practices of the teacher as facilitator of learning.



Poster 1.1: generated by a teacher (T5) during formative intervention work demonstrating some of the teachers' roles, competences and practices (source: primary, 15/02/2018).

The following is an excerpt from a community of inquiry session in week one:

Teacher: What is a friend? Is a best friend different from a good person?

Tadiwanashe: A friend is someone who gives you food...

Class: laughs and giggles.

Teacher: Can someone tell us what the rules of the community of inquiry sessions are that we agreed on?

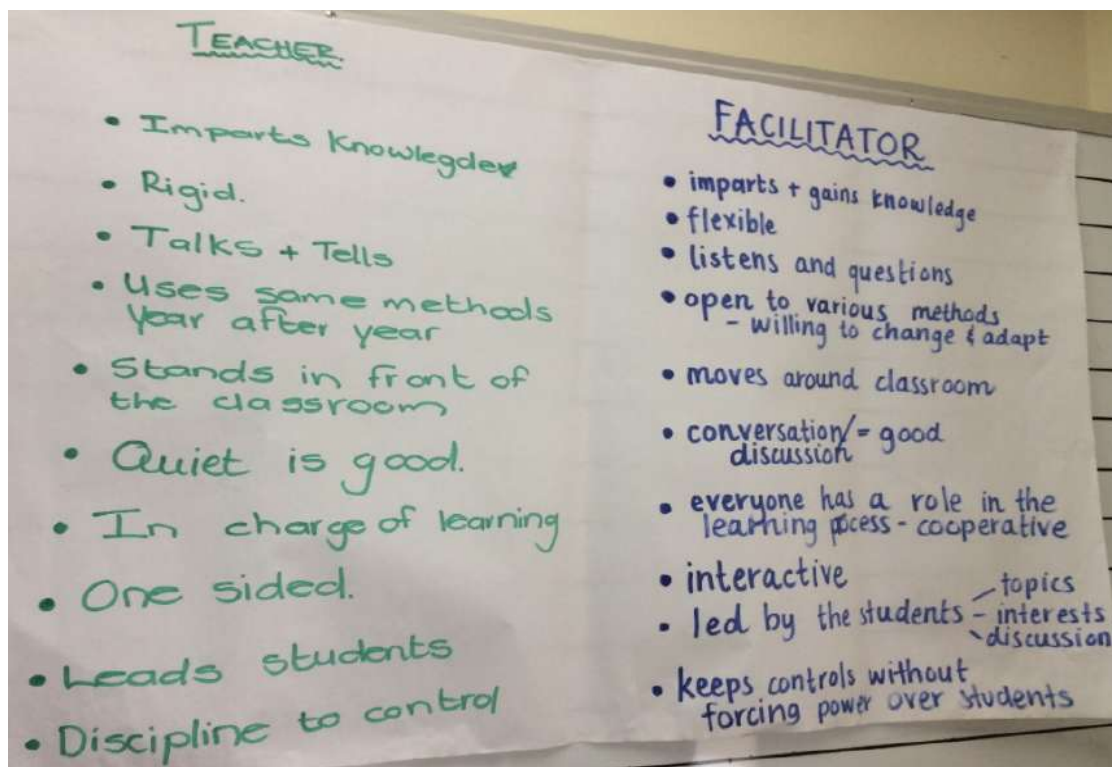
Farai: We agreed that we should not laugh at others even when we think they are wrong.

Teacher: So, without laughing at Tadiwanashe, can we allow him to finish his response?

Tadiwanashe: I wanted to say that a friend is someone with whom I share things like food, books, and ballpoint pens, as well as play games.

Teacher: Is there anyone who wants to say something different or tell us whether a best friend is different from a good person?

In the next poster teachers make a comparison between the traditional teacher whom they labelled as 'teacher' and the 21st-century teacher whom they labelled 'facilitator'.



Poster 1.2: generated by teachers (T1 and T3) reflecting on the difference between a traditional teacher and the teacher as a facilitator of learning (source, primary: 22/02/2018).

The following table illustrates the teacher's role as facilitator as uncovered via poster activities, interviews, workshops and community of inquiry practice.

Table 3: Summary of teacher's role as facilitator characterised by competences and practices

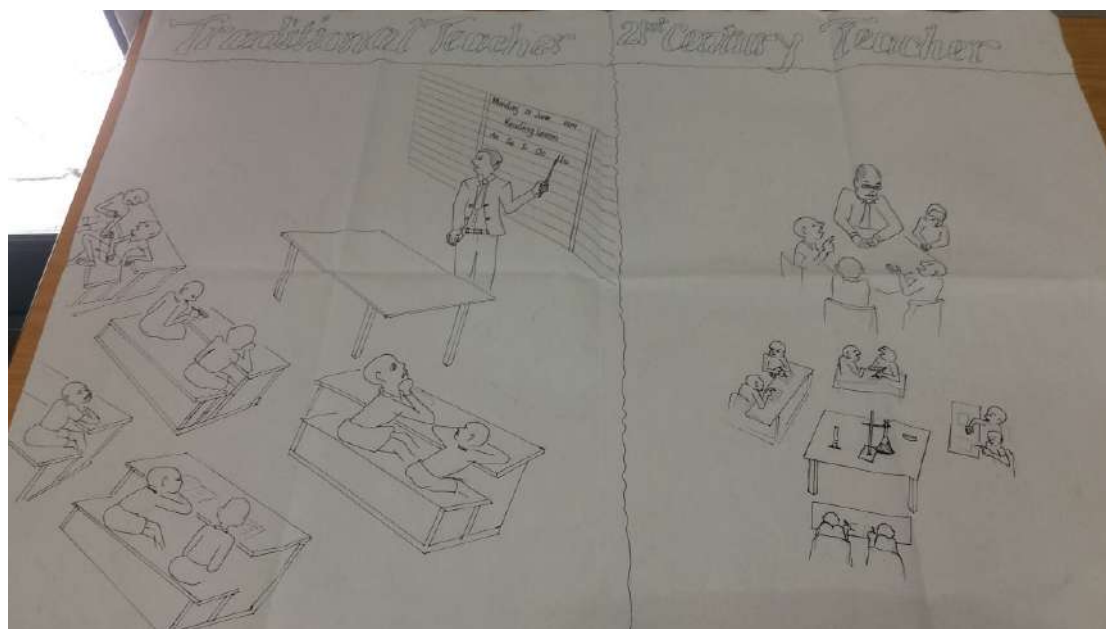
Teacher as facilitator	Poster Activity	Community of Inquiry	Interviews and Workshops
Evidence of required competences	Listens and questions Willingness to change and adapt Guides, prepares, teaches and help learners navigate through academic and social environments	Team player Make learners comfortable within themselves and with others	The inquiry is led by learners in terms of topic, interests and the direction the discussion takes Engages in active learning processes
Evidence of practice	Imparts and gains knowledge Is supportive to the learners Interactive Cooperative	Provides resources that motivate learners to problem solving Monitors progress and encourages learners to develop problem-solving skills Encourages learners to apply their knowledge across subject areas	Values all knowledges as having equal impact on the learner Builds on their skills and learns new ones Helps learners to understand their common objectives and assists them to achieve these without taking a particular position in the discussion

As shown in the posters and the teacher excerpt above the teacher-facilitator is someone who creates a learning atmosphere in which learners can fulfil their learning needs. In the excerpt, the teacher, as facilitator, established an environment in which students felt free to express themselves without feeling embarrassed. The facilitator, as demonstrated above, is actively involved in the learning process and allows for learner agency. Teachers emphasised that a facilitator is someone who values all knowledge and acknowledges, and is sensitive to, the collective experiences of diverse learners. In transformative learning contexts this potentially motivates children to value diversity, resulting in them developing habits of reasoning in diversity (see Eze, 2008). This dimension connects well with the next role.

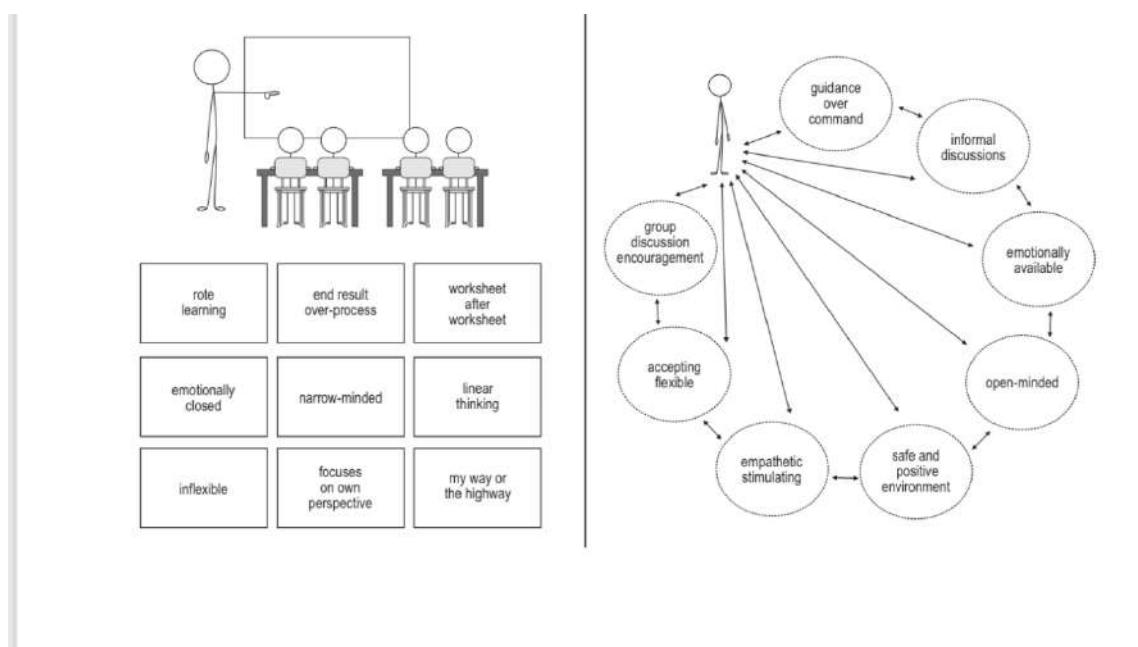
- **Teacher as co-inquirer**

The main difference between a traditional teacher and a 21st-century teacher, as illustrated in Poster 1.3 created by two of the participating teachers (T6 and T7 shown in Image 1), is that the traditional teacher takes on the role of an instructor, telling children what to do, whereas the 21st-century teacher collaborates with children in learning activities. According to T7 “co-

engaging with the learners is important because this is how you will learn about the areas/concepts that are causing them problems and see how best you can intervene than having to discover it well after the lesson” (15/02/2018).



Poster 1.3: drawn by teachers (T6 & T7), demonstrating the difference between the traditional teacher and the 21st-century teacher.



Poster 1.4: generated by teacher (T4) and intervention researcher, demonstrating some of the competences and practices of the teacher as co-inquirer (source: primary 15/02/2018).

The following table illustrates the teacher's role as co-inquirer as uncovered via poster activities, interviews, workshops and community of inquiry practice.

Table 4: Summary of teacher's role as co-inquirer characterised by competences and practices

Teacher as co-inquirer	Poster Activity	Community of Inquiry	Interviews and Workshops
Evidence of required competences	Open minded Uses guidance over command Emotionally available	Team player Creates a safe and positive environment	Engages in active learning processes Accepting and flexible Searches for problems in learners' learning
Evidence of practice	Empathetic and stimulating Organises learning material Interactive and cooperative Establishes working groups	Follows the inquiry where it leads Takes no authoritative role during the inquiry Probes learners for prior knowledge of the topic under discussion Joins in community of inquiry dialogue with learners	Group discussions are encouraged Asks open-ended questions Does not privilege any one position over another

This dimension of co-inquirer is made evident predominantly during the community of inquiry session, where the facilitator has to follow the inquiry where it leads (Mohr Lone & Israeloff, 2012). Teachers, in practicing their role as co-inquirers, must then ensure that no point of view occupies a privileged position by making impartial evaluations of contributions made during an inquiry (Mohr Lone & Israeloff, 2012). From deliberations with teachers, it emerged that critical competences needed for this role include the ability to ask open-ended philosophical questions without taking an exclusively authoritative role during the inquiry process.

- **Teacher as pedagogical innovator**

Teachers explained the need to be innovative in their approach to pedagogy. According to Teacher (T5, 04/06/2019):

Looking at the nature of resettlement schools like ours, where children from all around the country are now learning together, we must be creative in selecting our content from different fountains of knowledge, culture, and practices... Even when using the home language, which is mostly used in lower grades, we must pay attention to the dialect that the child uses and try to be inclusive...

The teacher went on to explain that, in addition to being innovative in curriculum content selection, there is also a need to be innovative in classroom teaching and lesson preparation.

We still have composite classes here [in the Sebakwe resettlement schools]. This involves working with children of different ages in the same class, so when planning, I usually follow the rule – from simple to complex. In this case, I am hopeful that I would cater to the different age groups as well as their abilities. As a result, I have realised that I don't have to be too slow or too fast when teaching, as this may bore some students or cause them to miss important aspects of the lesson... (Teacher, T5, 04/06/2019)

The above quotation may offer a way forward, or at the least, a solid starting point for understanding pedagogical innovation in terms of curriculum content sequencing and pacing that can make learning more meaningful to the learners. Teacher (T1, 04/06/2019), interviewed separately, adds that:

The new curriculum framework requirements (MoPSE, 2014) are too demanding for us... for example new subjects areas were added. This means that if you have a composite class, as I do this time, each class has the same number of subjects and the same timetable, but I work the same hours as someone with a single grade class. As a result, I think beyond subject disciplines to find a way to integrate some subjects, as well as how to merge concepts across grades for the benefit of the learner and to fit the timetable. ... an example is how I normally combine some agriculture concepts with science or even mathematics, you can use agriculture economics to teach mathematics concepts...

The following table illustrates the teacher's role as pedagogical innovator as uncovered via poster activities, interviews, workshops, and community of inquiry practice.

Table 5: Summary of a teacher's role as pedagogical innovator characterised by competences and practices

Teacher as pedagogical innovator	Poster Activity	Community of Inquiry	Interviews and Workshops
Evidence of required competences	Willingness to change and adapt Enables flexibility in learning and makes room for interaction	Team player Opening oneself to learning new concepts Is sensitive to the learner's cognitive, emotional, and physical well being	Engages in active learning processes Selects curriculum content from diverse sources of knowledge, culture, and practices
Evidence of practice	Open minded Extends the potential for group and individual learning Makes use of adaptive teaching strategies	Uses the environment as the specific context for experiential and problem-based learning Allows diverse voices in the classroom to be represented Encourages learners to ask open-ended questions	Re-associates learning with local contexts Thinks beyond subject disciplines to find a way to integrate subject content Often draws on incidental learning

Findings indicate that teachers may use learner data and classroom context to make more informed decisions about what and how to teach in their classrooms. Furthermore, the teachers observe that the inquiry-based approach used in philosophy for children allows them to ask and discuss questions that have the potential to improve learners' reflexive thinking skills (Author, 2021). While the Afrophilic philosophy for children approach was an innovation in and of itself in the Sebakwe resettlement schools, it also assisted teachers in becoming pedagogical innovators because they now have a different approach to carrying out their practice. Kobalia and Garakanidze (2010) reasons that pedagogical innovation involves diverse and alternative ways of classroom interaction and this demands on the teacher competences that include an openness to the future and commitment to show cooperation in learning.

- **Teacher as transformative change agent**

This theme is an outgrowth of the comparison conducted by the teachers on the differences between the teacher as facilitator and teachers as source of knowledge. The posters that were generated emphasise the shifted role of the teacher from one who uses the same method year after year to one who is open to various methods and is willing to change and adapt. While the posters demonstrate the shifted roles as characterised by practices and competences of the teacher, (T3, 22/02/2018) pointed out that:

We now have technology everywhere, and our learners must be exposed to it. While we may lack the necessary resources and internet connectivity, it is your responsibility as a teacher to demonstrate to your learners that the world is changing.

The teacher gave an example of how he uses his mobile phone to voice-record lessons that he then uses with the children in his class:

We used to do radio lessons when I was younger, but they were not as focused as they can be now that we have technology that allows us to record a specific area of interest and use it for lesson delivery. But remember that technology is not the only change in the country; some of the children we have here grew up in rural areas but are now learning in resettlement schools, and the money currency we used to have is no longer the same, so when teaching, you must promote an understanding of such changes.

The following table illustrates the teacher's role as change agent as uncovered via poster activities, interviews, workshops, and community of inquiry practice.

Table 5: Summary of teacher's role as transformative change agent characterised by competences and practices

Teacher as change agent	Poster Activity	Community of Inquiry	Interviews and workshops
Evidence of required competences	Is a lifelong learner. Flexible and adaptive to change.	Team player Is an independent thinker. Demonstrates pedagogical competence. Foster learner collaboration	Is aware of the on-going changes in education and society at large. Demonstrate knowledge of the sociocultural context they operate in. Focuses on constantly improving their teaching strategies.
Evidence of practice	Make use their experience, knowledge, and networks to find doable solutions to problems. Demonstrates professionalism	Offers support and encouragement to the learners and to other teachers. Creates space for distributed leadership in the classroom. Actively shares information. Participates in decision-making. Establishes trusting and constructive relationship in the classroom.	Makes use of modern technology. Collaborates with learners and has collegial qualities towards fellow teachers. Capable of communicating through formal and information structures.

Findings demonstrate that since change agents foster learner collaboration and have collegial qualities towards fellow teachers, this appears to nurture in learners the sense that aspects of problem solving come from different activities and different people. In the study different people were involved and a variety of Afrophilia learning lenses was utilised to demonstrate

the unique effect of drawing on different agencies, and an awareness that though they may not always act in concert they are a collective voice of influence to the learner (Rogoff, 1990).

- **Mentoring to inspire: Teacher as mentor or role model**

According to participants the introduction of Early Childhood Development (ECD) in Zimbabwe meant that learners nowadays start school from as early as 3 years old. This makes modern schooling so all-encompassing that children spend large amounts of time there, which requires teachers to be mentors or role models in addition to their teaching duties. One of the education inspectors (ES 2) stated that:

The teaching profession is a respectable profession in most communities... meaning that community members look up to teachers in shaping learners' behaviour and instilling good values. A significant percentage of learners' learning is also through hidden curriculum... learners learn by observing and emulating the behaviour of their leaders who in this case are the teachers. So even when not teaching in the classroom, what a teacher does, their conduct, behaviour, attitude, or character has a lot of bearing in modelling their learners' behaviours... (Mativenga; ES 2/ 2019)

This was reiterated by Mbuya MaDube [a parent] who said “... *even you teachers you should show each other respect, children see how you treat each other, when you show wayward behaviour children also copy your behaviour*”. As a role model the teacher has to be aware that children imitate teacher behaviour and personality. Harden and Crosby (2000) explain that the first example learners' access and imitate is that provided by the teacher who has significant potential to influence learners in many aspects of life. In an interview with a parent, it surfaced that when teachers act as good mentors or role models,

children will open up and feel free to discuss with the teacher things they could not even at times discuss with their biological parents, much of which could be things that worry children as they grow up... therefore teachers are as good as parents to the kids.

The following table illustrates the teacher's role as mentor or role model as uncovered via poster activities, interviews, workshops, and community of inquiry practice.

Table 6: Summary of a teacher's role as mentor characterised by competences and practices

Teacher as mentor or role model	Poster Activity	Community of Inquiry	Interviews and Workshops
Evidence of required competences	Show empathy to their learners Assertive but respectful	View themselves as co-learners Reflective thinkers	Shape learners' behaviours Aspire to influence attitudes, values, and behaviours of their learners
Evidence of practice	Patient, kind and considerate Stand up for their beliefs.	Demonstrate confidence in their learners Mentors show respect Show diligent care of themselves Have the ability to listen to learners and communicate with them	Act as a role model for learners to emulate good behaviour outside and inside the classroom Diligent and persistent Have the ability to quickly respond to diverse classroom situations

London (2002) reasons that the teacher was seen in loco parentis because s/he functioned as an ideal custodian, cultivating in students the 'best' of social and democratic values. This is in line with Pestalozzi who states that, "teacher-pupil relationship should be that of love, sympathy, confidence and understanding"; this is possible when the classroom atmosphere is one of social cohesion.

Discussion

Heritage curriculum requires re-thinking the role of teachers and deepening their own engagement with epistemic aspects of curriculum. This includes deepening engagement with the unhu/ubuntu philosophy which is the philosophical anchor to the curriculum. Such an endeavour potentially leads to the development of diverse and relevant ways of knowing that are essential for the implementation of the programme and the day-to-day teaching practice. The formative intervention, through giving attention to the social processes of learning such as collaboration and scaffolded learning (Sawyer, 2006) and training in philosophy for children, enhanced development of agency for teachers, learners, parents, and the researcher.

The stories, artefacts, songs, and proverbs that were selected as the Afrophilic foundation of philosophy for children emerged from a critical evaluation of their worth in facilitating diversity in reasoning for children. Enhancing diversity in reasoning was seen as the missing critical element in the curriculum, as noted by African philosopher Eze (2008, p. 22) as he

states that it is “the primary, generative condition of autonomy: the autonomy of the ethical and moral will”.

From the findings, it emerged that collaboration during the formative intervention workshops helped in binding the relationship between educators and parents, thus helping to bridge the gap between formal schooling and the learner’s life world. Apart from formal training in philosophy for children, which Murris (1997) recommends as a prerequisite for teachers and facilitators in philosophy for children, it was noted that approaches and processes to support teachers to take up their changed role need to focus on giving attention to epistemic depth in an African sociocultural context and educational environment. Other implications for teaching and learning practice that emerged in this study include giving attention to curriculum systems such as assessment tools, teacher guides, textbooks and other teaching and learning resources. The Zimbabwe education medium-term plan (2011–2015) states that curriculum systems must reflect diverse views of learning, and how this can be fostered.

Conclusion, limitations, and future research

Though this paper has focused on teachers’ roles, practices and competences in separate shifts, for methodical rationales, they seem to work concurrently in teaching-learning contexts. The findings also offer insights into the importance of broadening new ways of thinking about teaching and putting into context the relationship between learners, teachers and the curriculum. Furthermore, the study focus was aimed at revealing the changing constellations in educational praxis and theory with regards to curriculum implementation in schools. Teachers can therefore look to this paper for theoretical and practical pedagogical alternatives to the authoritarian teacher-centred pedagogy. However, the findings require cautious interpretation as they are subject to specific limitations. By way of example, the data’s internal validity may be affected by the possibility of socially acceptable responses. Thus, much still needs to be done, especially in analysing the implications for teaching and learning practice for those who are still in colleges and universities, and this includes assessment strategies and models, and use of cultural tools in learning contexts. Future research should also consider focusing on learners’ participation in community of inquiry as this contributes to the evaluation of the formative intervention programme.

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A4: An Afrophilic P4C intervention: The case of Sebakwe primary schools in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

Decades of research and practical engagement with an educational approach known as philosophy for children (p4c) has documented and exemplified how the approach provides an optimum environment for the advancement of children's rationality in diversity, critical reflexive thinking, and problem-solving skills. While this is certainly important, there is still a need to expand insights into how curriculum reform and transformation in Zimbabwe emerge from Afrophilic Philosophy for Children learning processes. Drawing on insights from my involvement in a formative intervention study in a Sebakwe schools cluster, the paper provides descriptions and practical insights on how children's participation in a sociocultural approach to Afrophilic P4C sessions contributed to educational theory and practice. The results showed that this formative intervention strengthens connections to children's life-worlds and their engagement with the world. Moreover, in an education system with a pedagogy that is transfixed on technical disciplines of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) and success in examination, the experiences and practices of children need to become alternative lenses for mediating epistemic engagement and developing a critical generative approach that considers heritage-based curriculum foundations in the Zimbabwe national schools' curriculum.

Keywords: Afrophilic learning process, children's life-worlds, Community of Inquiry, curriculum transformation, rationality in diversity

Introduction

The purpose of this article is quite modest. I would like to provide descriptions and insights on how children's participation in a sociocultural philosophy for children formative intervention in Sebakwe schools cluster can strengthen and deepen the understanding of educational theory and practice in Zimbabwe and other related contexts. Philosophy for children (p4c)²⁴ is an approach which hones the idea of developing philosophical inquiry with children, and the pedagogical method inherent within the p4c approach is the Community of Inquiry (Sharp 1991). Sharp links the approach to the American philosophical movement of pragmatism and suggests that its applicability in education results in the learning experience becoming, 'a process of growth in the ability to reconstruct one's own experience, so that one can live a fuller, happier, qualitatively richer life' (Sharp 1987, p. 45). Thus, philosophy for children, through the medium of Community of Inquiry, represents an undeniable transformation in the objectives of teaching and learning, stimulating the curiosity and enthusiasm of countless educators across the world (Weller 2016). This is mainly due to its diverse and timely benefits that include advancement of children's rationality in diversity, critical reflexive thinking and problem-solving skills, through stimulating reflection and questioning at an early age (Lipman 2003; Murriss 2008; UNESCO 2009). Moreover,

²⁴ The term 'Afrophilic P4C' used in this paper represents a version of P4C that draws insights from Vygotsky and Lipman and which emphasizes language socialization and is framed socioculturally within African (unhu/ubuntu) learning foundations.

empirical evidence has shown that the approach has potential in enhancing higher academic attainment through development of literacy and mathematical skills, with the addition of non-cognitive benefits such as improved self-esteem and empathy for others (D'Olimpio 2014, Weller 2016). According to Lipman (2003), philosophical thinking which is rich and diverse in terms of subject matter has a generic character that makes it capable of promoting thinking in education unlike other approaches that are purely process driven. By means of this paper, I want to expand insight into how curriculum reform and transformation in the postcolonial Zimbabwean education context emerge from sociocultural Afrophilic p4c learning processes.

Background of the study

The sociocultural p4c approach draws on insights from Vygotsky and Lipman and builds on work that recognises that language socialisation is an interactional two-way process (Lipman 2003; Rogoff 1990; Vygotsky 1978). Vygotskian theory emphasises the role of communication, language, social interaction, and instruction on child development (Vygotsky 1978). According to Sutcliffe (2003), Vygotsky's sociocultural theory has logical connections with the P4C programme promoted by Lipman as they both focus on 'internalisation of social speech' (Vygotsky 1978, p 27). During my research, the sociocultural p4c approach has inspired schools involved in the study to adapt to local contexts and create new roles, competences, and practices for teachers. This has increased the agency of the learners. Shapiro (2012) observes that what is then witnessed in education is the development of an inquisitive interactive community in which a new learning environment emerges with pedagogical implications.

The insights of this paper are based on works located in unhu/ubuntu philosophical framework, specifically using Afrophilic lenses with indigenous languages as tools to promote cultural agency or local memory (Ngũgĩ wa Thiong'o 2009; Ramose 1999). The Afrophilic learning lens is a reflection of discourses that are the medium of philosophical thinking in Zimbabwe (including the Sebakwe area), and these discourses include African proverbs, poems, songs, stories, and folk tales (Rettova 2004). The Afrophilic learning framework considers people as '*homo sociologicus*' (social) and identifies the extent to which cognitive development is possible through interaction and participation in social activities (Coetzee & Roux 1998). The content of the learning process embedded in an Afrophilic framework is based on physical, social, and psychological contexts (Ocitti 1973) and promotes a curriculum within context rather than an abstract curriculum. In doing so, the Afrophilic learning lens becomes a platform for tracking common cleavages in the sociodemographic and epistemological structures of the learners' ontological beingness (Eze 2008) in postcolonial Zimbabwe.

This paper, and the research to which it contributes, is accompanied by various studies conducted in the field of philosophy for children (see Cassidy & Christie 2013; D'Olimpio & Peterson 2018; Haynes & Murris 2009; Murris 2008). As an example, Donnelly (2005) examined children's ability to think according to some set standards by integrating children's ideas with those of Western philosophers Thales, Anaximander, Anaximenes, and

Xenophanes. While Donnelly's (2005) research showed that children can be natural philosophers or proto-philosophers, this finding is limited by narrowing children's thoughts and ideas to Western standards and values rather than creating a space for children to work with a broader conception of knowledge that exposes them to diverse systems of rationality (Eze 2008).

Ndofirepi (2011) conducted a study in which he argues that philosophy for children in Africa should 'draw its content and methodology from African beliefs and philosophies of life' (p. 249) and goes on to demonstrate congruence between Community of Inquiry and the notion of community in African tradition. In doing so, Ndofirepi (2011) supports the hybridisation of philosophy for children, with the goal of creating a 'third space' (Bhabha 1985) curriculum that spearheads the formation of neutral identities. Ndofirepi's (2011) proposal has merit, but I do not think it factors in how a superficial understanding of the philosophy that is to be the base of educational thinking may compromise the reconceptualization of the curriculum.

Bhurekeni (2020) observes that a superficial interpretation of unhu/ubuntu philosophy potentially results in the masking of ethnocentric norms and values in the curriculum. This problem also entrenches the idea that the philosophy could be applied as a blanket that covers all in solving educational problems in the country, offering minimum possibilities of exploring other critical alternatives. After noting this, I suggest the need to work with a sociocultural p4c that influences the change in the roles of teachers and influences curriculum transformation (Murris 2016). Curricular changes and the shift in teachers' roles are influenced by the fact that p4c takes as its starting point the interest of young people in matters of life and the human condition (D'Olimpio 2014; Shapiro 2012).

This paper reaffirms the ongoing debate on philosophy for children, especially in Africa, and advocates a sociocultural approach to Afrophilic P4C that links the existential conditions of Africa to epistemic depth in pedagogy instead of doxa (Hountondji 2002). Epistemic depth in pedagogy creates a platform on which learners can assert claims of universality and diversity, based on the ability to form valid beliefs across geo-political spaces and time spaces (Eze 2008). In light of this, an alternative curriculum model for mediating a critical and generative approach to the Zimbabwe national school curriculum, based on the heritage-knowledge foundations of the curriculum, has been created to be implemented in the Sebakwe schools' cluster. I show how children's participation in a sociocultural Afrophilic P4C formative intervention influences theory and practice in the postcolonial Zimbabwean education system.

Ethics considerations

Careful thought has been given to the multiple ethical implications of this study and the resettlement²⁵ schools in which I work. As of now, I have made room for better professional research relationships (Smith 2012). An application for ethical approval has been submitted to Rhodes University (ethics committee) and the ethical approval tracking number for my research is 2017.12.08.04. Two more approval letters were sort from the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) head office, letter dated 09 May 2017 and from MoPSE Midlands provincial office, letter dated 22 May 2017. In addition, ~~the~~ consent of the participants was considered and the cultural norms inherent in the study area were carefully considered. Based on my experience with the elders and children in the study area, and on the basic belief that the consent of participants was a vote of confidence and that the trust would be reciprocated, I Zimbabwe's resettlement/ satellite schools were established shortly after the country's compulsory land reform between 2000 and 2005, most of which are still not officially registered as schools by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education [MoPSE]confirmed this at all stages of the research. In addition, for the purposes of this research, the right of participants to remain anonymous or to reveal their identity was respected (Mack, Woodsong , MacQueen, Guest & Namey 2005). Since I worked with children, the consent of the participating child was obtained along with parental consent. Given Smith's (2012) insights of working as an insider researcher, I also prioritised identifying clear research goals and lines of communication that characterized the formative intervention research and that were distinct from the everyday networks.

Problem statement

Approaches that can be used to deepen cognitive engagement and develop children's rationality in diversity and critical thinking skills have not yet been fully exploited within the Zimbabwean curriculum. There is a need to explore in depth a sociocultural P4C couched within an Afrophilic lens, and Community of inquiry that influences teaching and learning and offers new perspectives on interactions between teachers and learner. Although I observed changes in teachers' roles, competences, and practices in my work on Afrophilic P4C, little is known about the learning experiences of children involved in this program, and this is the focus of this paper.

Methodology: Formative intervention

The study uses the formative intervention process-oriented approach developed within Vygotsky's activist and interventionist heritage (Morselli 2019). Through formative intervention workshops, I set out to collaborate with participants in restructuring the curriculum and taking children's learning beyond the traditional norm. The goal of this approach was to develop agency among participants (Morselli 2019), as will be shown below.

²⁵ Zimbabwe's resettlement/ satellite schools were established shortly after the country's compulsory land reform between 2000 and 2005, most of which are still not officially registered as schools by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education [MoPSE]

Through collaborative action with participants from the Sebakwe community, the aim was to develop an educational model that is consistent with Afrocentric learning processes. Additionally, drawing on the collective agency (Morselli 2019) of teachers, parents, education inspectors and children, I sought to harness African indigenous heritage knowledges for learning and curriculum innovation. Here, my role was primarily to provoke and sustain an expansive, participant-led transformation process (Engeström & Sannino 2010).

The positioning of the researcher within the human environment supports Stokols' (1992) claim that intervention research is based on a social-ecological perspective. Essentially, the Afrophilic P4C intervention provides a precedent for the use of culture-based artefacts including African proverbs, music, picture books, images, and folklore. These resources are recognised as start-up capital in promoting dialogue in a Community of Inquiry. This approach has a strong synergistic effect aimed at improving Zimbabwean heritage-based educational curriculum (Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education 2014). This model is slightly different from Matthew Lipman's generalised model, which relies heavily on the use of explicitly written philosophical novels (Lipman 2003; Ndofirepi 2011).

Across a total of five months, ten Community of Inquiry sessions were conducted with 15 purposively selected children. The sessions were video recorded as agreed during the consent process. During the Community of Inquiry sessions, other participants, such as parents and teachers, were allowed to observe the class or, in some cases, participate in storytelling or singing cultural songs (see Appendix B, a story narrated by Mr Sibanda). Thus, collective agency in the study emerged from a polyphonic or multi-voiced process (Engeström & Sannino 2010, Smith 2012) which allowed the full participation of all stakeholders.

The ten Community of Inquiry sessions that provide the basis of this study were conducted in my classroom. As a teacher, and since my master's degree in 2013, I have studied in depth the theoretical and practical aspects of philosophy for children and the philosophy for children facilitation curriculum. Consequently, participants asked that I lead the demonstration sessions. The participating children were from 8 to 11 years old, and their enrolment records show that they were at the resettlement school from the time of their Early childhood Development (ECD) A and B until the time of the intervention when some were now in Grade 5. The participating children were locals, whose home language was either Shona or Ndebele and they could communicate in both languages. From the assessment records, their classroom performance was below their grade levels, and none of them had a 100 per cent class attendance record by the time the Afrophilic P4C sessions began.

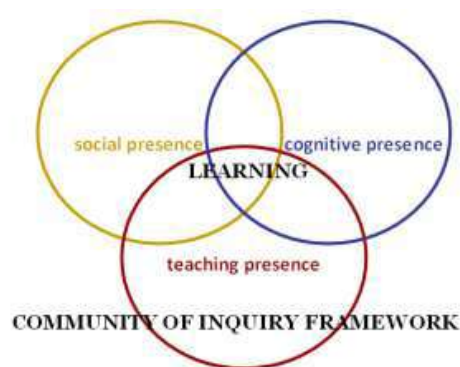
Data collection was conducted through observation. Participation in the ten p4c sessions allowed me to reflexively observe the unfolding of the sessions and created space for me to capture detailed notations of behavior and events, and the contexts surrounding the events and behavior (Cohen, Manion & Morrison 2011). The observation guide for the sessions was guided by the Community of Inquiry analytic tool (WRAITEC) explained in the next section, and this made it easier to record the findings of the study. Session observations helped to

move beyond perception-based data to empirical data inquiry Schulze (1999) and to discover things that participants may not freely talk about in interview situations. Thus, observing the sessions allowed me to gain a finer understanding of the complexities of the formative intervention plan. The session observations were video-recorded (with the consent of participants and their parents) for data analysis purposes. Video-recorded sessions also allowed me to reflexively observe myself in action, and to capture the dialogical interactions and processes of the ten lessons as they unfolded.

The last phase of data collection for this study involved reflective interviews with children as well as other participants involved in session observation to elicit information on their experiences and views of the intervention (Schulze 1999). Reflective interviews made it possible for me to develop a deeper level of reflexivity in relation to the intervention approach. To ensure trustworthiness with the use of interviews, I made sure that the techniques used aimed to be reproducible, systematic, credible, and transparent (Schulze 1999). An agenda for the interview was sent to the interviewees at least a week before the actual interview date.

Data analysis

The first step for data analysis was to develop tools that allowed for rigour and ‘distanciation’ from the data and process. This was essential to ensure that, as a researcher, I become reflexive of the process and also that I manage my own subjectivity. My first analytical tool was the Community of Inquiry framework (Swan, Garrison & Richardson 2009). In practice, the Community of Inquiry is anchored on the assumption that learning experiences arise from the intercommunication of the social presence, the cognitive presence, and the teaching presence (Swan et al. 2009). The three presences potentially help the learners to be involved, informed, and empowered. These three presences also encourage teachers/educators to shift from the role transmitters of information to the role of co-enquirers and resources for deliberation (Lipman 2003). Figure 1 offers an illustration of the Community of Inquiry framework which I used as my analytical tool in the study.



Social presence: classroom mediated interactions where learners and the teacher as co-learner feel connected to one to another socially and emotionally.

Cognitive presence: transition within learners' zone of proximal development (ZPD) to the next higher level of thinking.

Teaching presence: the intertwining of the social and cognitive processes to facilitate transformative learning.

Figure 1: Community of Inquiry framework (Swan & Ice 2010).

Transcription of activities

Data collected from the ten Afrophilic p4c sessions and reflective interviews was transcribed by the researcher. Personal transcription of generated data allowed for further engagement with the data and the process as a whole; it also ensured participant confidentiality as it minimised multiple interactions with the data by different individuals. Furthermore, the transcription of activities created space for me to identify all the issues that recur in coding of the data, and group them according to themes and categories that summarise the collected data. However, one of the notable limitations that I encountered is that the original discussions from data sources were in either Shona or Ndebele. Hence, upon transcription and translation into English, some words were bound to lose their original meaning, although the researcher tried to retain the original context of the discussions.

WRAITEC analytical tool applied to each lesson

The second analytical tool that I applied for classroom lesson observations and reflections is a tool provided by Creighton University for teachers using P4C (see Appendix A). This tool, which is largely informed by Jackson's (2001) 'Good Thinker's Tool Kit', gives great traction for developing analytical descriptions of the p4c lessons and their subsequent contribution to the development of critical reflexive thinking. Jackson's Good Thinker's Tool Kit is a lesson observation guidance framework for Philosophy for Children lessons which could also be used actively within inquiry (Jackson, 2013). Jackson's Good Thinker's Tool Kit obliges Philosophy for Children teachers to consider the following dimensions of the Philosophy for Children lesson process which assist in generating and supporting the development of critical reflexive thinking skills: (1) Meaning(s), (2) Reasons, (3) Assumptions, (4) Inferences, (5) Truth, (6) Evidence/examples, and (7) Counter-evidence/counter-examples (see Appendix A).

Findings

The intent of the study was to engage learners in philosophical discussion as an approach that empowers them to become better thinkers (Shapiro 2012). My data analysis shows that this indicator was attained. From the ten sessions based on heritage knowledges drawn from the learners' life-world, participant learners proved that they are capable of, and are interested in, epistemic depth inquiry. The time allocation for the sessions was between 15 to 20 minutes. This was done to allow for easier recording and to ensure that learners won't get bored from the prolongation of the session. However, as the learners got used to philosophical engagement, it became practical for some sessions to exceed the scheduled time by at least five minutes. Here, emphasis was on prioritising energy and engagement as part of process building toward educational empowerment and deeper inquiry.

During the Community of Inquiry engagement learners discussed issues framing their arguments from both broader contexts and local contexts as shown, for example, in a written narrative titled: World environment day (see Appendix C). The short essay, written on the 4th of June 2018, draws its arguments from a global context and applies them to the local context. The implications of plastic pollution to the environment as written by the learner are revealing how connected the writer is to the environment. Evidently, the learner balances his perceptions with insights from other subject area content such as agriculture, science and heritage and social studies. Another noticeable finding from the study is that learners who were involved could frame their own philosophical questions after a stimulus had been presented to them or during deliberations in the Community of Inquiry sessions. In the next section of the paper, I want to examine three findings.

Children can follow the logic of an argument

During the sessions, learners and the teacher played different games to encourage learner engagement and develop the habit of listening to each other (Shapiro 2012). One of the games which—as I reflected on the lessons—seemed to have helped learners develop the ability to follow the logic of an argument is the 'Keep the Question Going' energiser. Here, learners collaborate in formulating a question (one word after another) and indicate that they have come to the end of the question by clapping. For example, in one of the lessons the following question unfolded:

Tarisai: *Are*

Abel: *your*

Farai: *friends*

Miriam: *the*

Tinevimbo: *only*

Abgirl: *people*

Arnold: *you*

Tadiwanashe: *should*

Susan: *care*

Fungisai *for?* (Claps to signal the end of the question)

The following excerpt is based on a lesson on ‘Rules and Laws’ exploring the topic/questions: ‘The law-making process (justice and the law) / Whose responsibility is it to make laws and pass judgement?’ The participant learners were able to give examples and counter-arguments, proving that they had capability to follow the logic of an argument during discussion. In this case, learners demonstrated the ability to offer examples not simply as illustrations but as speculation or a general hypothesis of what might be the case. In the next examples, I illustrate learners dialogue and give brief insights on how to apply the analytic tool that was utilised:

Abel: *When someone commits a crime [murder], death should not be their punishment they should just be imprisoned for life.*

Tadiwanashe: *I think that person should also be killed because if you forgive such a person there is possibility that s/he will repeat the crime.*

Tinevimbo: *I agree with Tadiwanashe, someone who commits such a crime must face the same punishment.*

When using the analytical tool kit (see Appendix A), teachers or philosophy for children lesson observers are obliged to see whether the lesson process involves justification of claims made by participants. In the dialogue above, we see Tadiwanashe trying to give reasons to justify his claim, and this also influences other children to reinforce their suppositions and consider whether to agree or disagree. This is common as the main activity in philosophy for children is to help children thinking about their thinking (Lipman 2003). In the following dialogue, we see that Tadiwanashe is engaged in thinking about his earlier claim.

Tadiwanashe: [reconsiders his previous statement and now asks] *But why should death be the final punishment for someone who has committed such a crime ... {interjection}*

Tinenyasha: *Because the person deserves to be treated the same.*

Teacher: *Who should be responsible for making such laws and, when making such judgements, is that person(s) not committing the same crime [murder]?*

Tadiwanashe: *If the person who passes the judgement is the Chief [Mambo] of the area then he won't be committing a crime because, as the leader, he has the final say in passing such a judgement.*

Abel: *So, are you claiming that the Chief [Mambo] is the one who is allowed to commit murder?"*

Tadiwanashe: *Yes, since he is the leader of that community ... [interjection]*

Arnold: *But murder is murder, the crime is in killing someone.*

Farai: *So, this law needs to be looked into because what we are against is the act not one who does/performs the act.*

Tadiwanashe: *But the Chief [Mambo] will just instruct his army to do it for him.*

Farai: *That makes no difference because the outcome is the same whether one is doing it intentionally or under command.*

In the second example we see the teacher trying to get the discussion more focused especially by considering the law-making process and the passing of judgement. In philosophy for children sessions, it is important that the teacher/ facilitator tries to get the discussion focused without imposing their own thoughts. By asking questions as the learners discuss, the teacher is also showing that they are part of the discussion and also that what the learners are saying makes him think.

Children can use questions and inquiry to drive their own learning

Engagement in Community of Inquiry created space for learners' 'collaborative participation' (Rogoff 2014). In doing so, learners activated in themselves aspects of critical reflexive thinking and also demonstrated an ability for philosophical thinking. Being critical of one's own thinking involves many facets of the analytic tool (Appendix A) that I utilised as learners give reasons, search for the truth, and give counter-examples and evidence during the sessions. An extract from an interview with Mirriam, a nine-year-old girl who has participated in all of the p4c sessions, illustrates how learners become critical of their thinking:

Merriam: *At first, I feel we would just talk because we were so enthusiastic about being recorded and because we wanted to crash each other's point, but as we got used to the sessions, we learnt that one should think first before jumping to make a comment or contribution.*

Interviewer: *Have the sessions changed your perception on how you think about different subject matter?*

Merriam: *Yes. Now I feel comfortable asking questions during lessons and even when I am alone sometimes, I wonder about the things I think about and then I ask my friends and we discuss on it.*

This shows that Community of Inquiry approach to learning has capacity to openly facilitate critical interactions among participants and, more importantly, the approach can even necessitate such interactions among learners as young as 8 to 11 years old (Cassidy & Christie 2013). Here, educators and more knowledgeable others—who could also be other children—play the role of scaffolding and transforming learning in response to the child's prior understanding. In this way, it is possible that development and learning will occur in the context of the child's communities (Rogoff 2014).

Children's use of questions and inquiry help them to develop interest in exploring the world

As Goering, Shudak and Wartenburg (2013) explain, '[a]nyone who has spent time with young children knows that they are constantly asking "why?" and trying to figure out the world. Like philosophers, they are puzzled by why things are the way they are' (p. 3). In the study, learners demonstrated that their thinking evolves as they deepen their understanding of the human environment and the reflective artefacts from their life-worlds through active participation. Here, children mediate culturally-oriented tools—asking questions, proffering reasons and counter-examples to clarify their points during dialogue, experimenting and discovering on their own Lipman, (2003), thus developing in themselves life-long learning skills. All that the teacher needs to do is to build on the learners' curiosity by allowing them to enquire, explore, and discover more about the world around them. The following dialogue shows how learners engage in deep enquiry about issues that concern them in their daily lives:

Abel: *Say I find a strong fence and trap those elephants that are destroying people's fields, what will happen?*

Tadiwanashe: *After a while the elephants will die because they will eat everything within the fence.*

Abel: *What if we let them destroy all our crops [maize], where will we get food?*

Farai: *Abel, remember we are the ones who came to live in the animals' territory, we should grow plants they don't eat, then we sell and buy our food from other people who are in areas where there are no elephants that destroy crops.*

Tadiwanashe: *I think Farai is right, Abel. Imagine if those animals can find a way of putting us in a cage, will you be happy?*

Teacher: *So how can we live together with the non-human animals?*

Tinevimbo: *I think we must leave enough space for the animals to graze and live in. If we occupy all the space, where will the animals live; in the past how were people living because all these animals were there?*

Discussion

From the findings it could be noted that the formative interventionist and the participants were successful in selecting Afrophilic content. the content was aimed at fostering development of critical reflexive thinking skills in children. Aim on selecting the content was on teaching children aspects of [*kurodza njere/pfungwa* – Shona; *ukulola ingqondo* - Ndebele] to sharpen the mind. As a way of example, participants chose the teaching of (*Ngano* - Shona; *Inganekwane* - Ndebele) folklore (Appedix B) among other Afrophilia concepts as something that would sharpen the learner's minds. During the first Community of Inquiry sessions, when learners were still ~~on a path to~~ gaining familiarity with the dialogical approach, my main role as the facilitator was to find ways of constantly prompting them to

share their ideas and ask questions. Typically, I would ask follow-up questions or would just ask ‘what else?’ However, as the learners got used the sessions and became more engaged, at times the discussions became more prolonged.

Teacher: *Why do we need friends?*

Arnold: *God wants us to have friends.*

Tadiwanashe: *They share with us their food.*

Teacher: *Can a friend only be someone who gives you food?*

Tadiwanashe: *Sometimes we play after lessons or during lunch-hour.*

Teacher: *What else?*

By this time, my role had shifted from prompting learners to speak to simply sustaining the discussion by encouraging participants to give reflective responses. The most interesting lesson for me during the sessions was that the teacher has to stay true to the process of inquiry itself (Haynes & Murriss 2009) and create space for communicative diversity and clarity so as to let learners gain new meanings and enhance their participative agency. One of the limitations encountered is that the original discussions from data sources were in either Shona or Ndebele (see Appedix B for the translation of a story from Shona folklore). Hence, upon transcription and translation into English, some words were bound to lose their original meaning although the researcher tried to retain the original context of the discussions.

Implications for theory

Culturally appropriate philosophical learning can strengthen connections to children’s life-worlds and their engagement in the world. Moreover, this approach to education can strengthen and contribute to the decolonial intention of the Zimbabwean curriculum framework with necessary depth that avoids paradox and doxa (Bhurekeni 2020). The approach also helps to side-step the reproduction of coloniality (Mgqwashu 2016). Decoloniality is possible given Afrophilic P4C through the Community of Inquiry methodology fosters an inquiry-based teaching and learning process in schools which is contrary to learning by rote or what Rogoff (2003) has referred to as assembly-line teaching. According to Murriss (2007) and the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC) (2006) in (UNESCO, 2007), learner participation in Community of Inquiry has the capacity to foster improvements in the characteristics of critical reflexive thinking, such as reminiscing, cataloguing, reflecting, deliberating, hypothesising and responsive listening. This co-participative process that involves children as active contributors to knowledge production and meaning making acts as a de-linking process from what Lyle (2018) refers to as a linear and hierarchical understanding of learning. Under the linear and hierarchical understanding of learning, motivation for teaching is derived from teacher’s capability to respond to government-determined curricula by transmitting knowledge to learners who are expected to regurgitate such knowledge and succeed in tests and examinations (Lyle 2018; Murriss 2016). In contrast, philosophy for children views the child as a complex and socially-

constructed being and foregrounds the idea of the child as learner of agency and an active participant in co-constructing knowledge and reorienting culture (Haynes & Murriss 2009). Thus, through engaging with this kind of learning, teachers develop lenses for developing conceptual frameworks that will help learners to become critical reflexive thinkers.

Implications of P4C

Reflections on the reflective artefacts that were selected reveal that Afrophilic learning lenses resonate well with the life experiences of the learners and the quality of their being-ness. Thus, an Afrophilic Philosophy for Children has potent implications for how the school curriculum is to be organised, and this translates into a new understanding of the teachers' roles and learner's engagement. By way of example, an Afrophilic Philosophy for Children supports Zimbabwean identity, norms, and values. For curriculum transformation to be reflective of this Afrocentric approach, it must encompass heritage knowledges that are considered an important part of the Zimbabwean identity (Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education 2014). Furthermore, as noted in Bhurekeni and Lotz-Sisitka (submitted for publication) teachers utilising this approach become aware of the collective experiences of learners, hence they become alive to appreciating the pendulum shift from teacher-controlled learning to dialogue-driven learning. This increases learner agency and their participative role in stirring the dialogue.

The communicative diversity that was allowed for during the Community of Inquiry sessions in turn allowed for learners' growth in exhibiting diversity in reason (Eze, 2008). Moreover, the Afrocentric lens and artefacts enables the learning process to become more situated. The formative intervention emerges as a stronger and more inclusive concept of universality that helps to mitigate the dualism between school and the learners' life-worlds. This opens a space for re-imagining education as a public good in Africa and entails 'redefining the concepts of "educatedness", "progress", "success" and "relevance"' (Mgqwashu 2016) as guided by the African philosophy of unhu/ubuntu to bring into context the learners' life-worlds that have been silenced due to coloniality (Mgqwashu 2016). Philosophy for Children in Africa should appreciate the significance and role of the African *dare* (ChiShona)/ *idale* (IsNdebele) a key Afrophilic concept and a representation of a discursive public sphere and utilise it as part of the learner's lived experience in learning spaces. Situating P4C within an Afrophilic learning lens brings into focus the prospect that the African philosophy of unhu/ubuntu and its epistemologies could keep pace with the conceptual erudition of Western thought (Rainville 2000). Again, an Afrophilic philosophical lens has the potential to help avoid making educational research ineffective if it neglects philosophy's purpose of clarifying how diverse forms of enquiry are relevant and linked together in relation to certain educational issues and contexts (Peters & White 1969).

Implications for practice

I argue that we should place children's heritage in relation to curriculum and pedagogical praxis and consider situating these within a sociocultural approach. This approach as I have stated before has capacity to promote rationality in diversity. Instead of considering learning

as a task that the teacher designs following ministry-modelled curriculum frameworks, the sociocultural philosophy for children approach offers an opportunity to pivot towards a re-defined understanding of learning as a task that is constantly interpreted and reconstructed by the learner's agency and cannot be fully controlled by the teacher (Lipman 2003; Vygotsky 1978). For example, facilitating sociocultural philosophy for children sessions goes beyond simply giving learners activities and assessing and evaluating their competences later, but providing the learners with what Vygotsky (1978) has referred to as mediating tools or signs with which to scaffold their participation in the activity.

Considering this, the teacher needs to develop sensitivity towards the learner's precise sensibilities and imaginations (Mohr Lone & Israeloff 2012). the teacher will be more prepared to monitor the direction of the discussion and is more likely to take and, if necessary, reword or help interpret some statements that learners may struggle to clarify (Lyle, 2018). Again, the sociocultural philosophy for children approach exposes how interaction (dialogue) plays an essential role in the way children learn and how 'teaching from expert to novice' takes place in co-participatory interactions (Rogoff 2003). Moreover, learning that foregrounds learner agency results in a change of roles, not only for teachers but also for learners, as they provide supporting evidence to each other's claims, hence building on the transformation of their competences.

Conclusion and prospects for future research

The paper has brought into focus that teaching children using an interactive approach and through culturally-oriented artefacts that speak to the learner's life-world promotes rationality in diversity and empathy as well as critically engaged responses. This model differs from Lipman's model of using explicitly written philosophical novels and was utilised to avoid importing a Western-centric understanding of rationality (Eze 2008; Rainville 2000) to the Sebakwe community, given that most available philosophical children's novels were written by Western philosophers. Much of the literature and methodology propounded in these novels is synonymous with Western knowledge paradigms (Rainville 2000), thereby attracting criticism from postcolonial as well as decolonial critics who question the Western claim to knowledge and modernity (Dey 2018). Thus, the inclusion of an Afrophilic learning lens in the programme suggests a need for improving the philosophy for children curriculum both theoretically and in praxis, and a need to be cogniscent of the cultural and historical influences that shape diverse educational contours across the world. Empirical evidence has shown that primary school children are capable of, and interested in, epistemic depth enquiry around heritage issues. Moreover, the children were able to effectively listen and respond to one another as well as being able to ask questions and shape one's thinking through inquiry. Future research should consider focusing on the implications of philosophy for children for policy and assessment, especially in postcolonial nations like Zimbabwe where curriculum reform has a focus on the inclusion of heritage knowledges inherent in endogenous communities as a decolonial approach to education. Moreover, there is need to develop teacher education guidelines for implementation of the programme through capturing

reflections on successes and challenges on facilitating philosophy for children lessons in schools, drawing from the experiences of those who have done it.

Competing interests

The author has no competing interests to declare.

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Appendix A

More detailed analytical tool for mediating and critically observing Philosophy for Children lessons. Note: These also expand learning in the Zone of Proximal development and should be socio-culturally interpreted.

W	What do you mean? • What do you/they mean by ____? • What is missing here? • What have I forgotten to ask? • What is going on here? What is the problem? • What does this have to do with me?
R	Reasons • What reasons are there that support what he/she said? • Why do you say that? • Can you give a reason? Is it a good reason? • What makes a reason a good reason?
A	Assumptions • What are we assuming (taking for granted as true)? • What other assumptions might we make? • How are our assumptions influencing what we are seeing /judging/thinking/saying?
I	Inferences; If...Then; Implications • What inferences have we made from what was said? • If what was said is true, then what? • What are the implications of what is proposed?
T	Truth • Is what is being said true? • How do we know? • How could we find out?
E	Examples; Evidence • Can you think of an example to illustrate what you mean? • What evidence can we find to support the claim being made?
C	Counter-examples • Can you think of a counter-example to the claim being made?

Appendix B (A folklore story narrated by Mr. Sibanda)

Once upon a time

There was a boy and a girl who lost their parents whilst they were still young. The children had to grow up living with a grandmother who was very cruel to them. The boy was a dreamer and was possessed by a spirit of hunting. He would go for hunting excursions with

the other boys of his age. The boys would kill a lot of game, but the boy's grandmother would not give them any meat, they would eat Sadza²⁶ with okra but most of the time it was Sadza with whey.

One day, the boy said to his sister, 'Let us run away'. The two went away and built their shack shelter near a very big cave. During the afternoons they would sit under the shade of a big tree and then during the night they would sleep in the cave. The boy dreamt of a word telling them not to braai²⁷ any meat, and he told his sister about the dream. His sister was very obedient, so each time when the boy went for his hunting expeditions, she would cook meat and then go to sleep in the cave by night. The cave could only be opened by someone from within. On his return the boy would sing:

Hwerure hwerure shamwari we-e

Ndinde ndinde mukaranga, wandoswerepiko shamwari we-e?

Ndinde ndinde mukaranga,

ndandoswera seri kwemakomo shamwari we-e!

Ndinde ndinde mukaranga

The girl would open the door. All these days the boy would remind his sister of the dream, and his sister would promise him that she would never braai any meat. One day the girl remembered when she was still a young girl celebrating her brother's birthday. It was a joyful celebration; people wining and dining, dancing, and braai. The aroma of barbecued meat filled the shack shelter even when there was no meat to braai. The girl brushed away these memories, and when her brother came back, she opened the door for him.

Days and seasons passed and one day the childhood memories ~~came~~ became so powerful and overcame her. She grilled a large piece of game meat. Then she went to sleep in the cave. The aroma of grilled meat spread throughout the forest and a large beast Zidyavanhu, who lived in the forest, searched for the source of the aroma. He got to the cave and tried to open the cave but failed. Later, he saw the boy coming towards the cave armed with his hunting weapons, and the beast dodged into the forest for fear of been attacked by the boy. The boy started singing:

Hwerure hwerure shamwari we-e!

Ndinde ndinde mukaranga, wandoswerepiko shamwari we-e?

Ndinde ndinde mukaranga,

²⁶ Sadza refers to thick porridge made from mealie meal

²⁷ braai' = to grill or barbecue

ndandoswera seri kwemakomo shamwari we-e!

Ndinde ndinde mukaranga

The cave opened and the beast went away. On the following day, the boy saw large footprints. He asked his sister if she had braaied some meat, but the girl said she would never do such a thing. During the evening Zidyavanhu returned and imitated the boy's singing, but the singing was not perfect:

Bhethuthe ... bhethuthe ...

Bhethuthe ... bhethuthe ...

The girl realised the voice was not her brother's voice and she did not open the door. Later the boy arrived and sung the song and the girl opened the cave. On the third day Zidyavanhu returned, this time his voice was fine tuned to imitate the boy's, so he started singing and dancing. The girl realised that the person outside was not her brother since he has never danced while singing. Her brother returned and sung their usual song; the girl opened the door. On the morning of the next day the boy saw the large footprints again and he asked his sister if she once braaied meat, but she ~~refused~~ said 'No', swearing that she would never do such a thing.

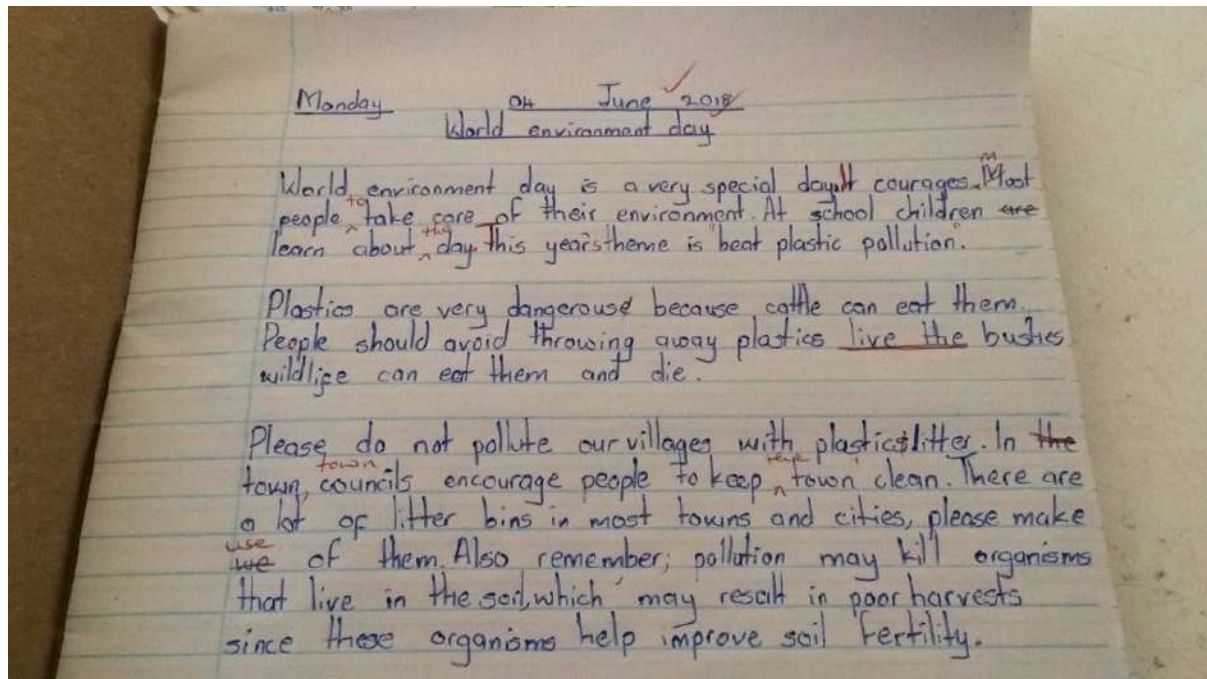
The two went to sleep and the boy dreamt of a voice telling him to leave behind his Chuma (a neck chain made of beads) when he goes out for his usual hunting trips. His sister saw the bead chain laying on the floor as she was sweeping, and she wore the chain but forgot to remove it. Dusk came and Zidyavanhu returned to try his luck. He sung with a refined voice and this time he did not dance. The girl heard the singing and thought it was her brother. She opened the door and Zidyavanhu took her away. She cried and screamed, screamed, and shouted for help but no one was there to help her. She got tired of her crying. She grew weak from her shouting. Then she thought of a plan, she removed the bead chain and started dropping down a single bead at a time as the beast was going with her deep into the forest.

When the boy returned, he found the cave closed as normal. He sung and sung, he sung until the birds and wild animals that were listening to him got tired of listening. He sang so much that no one in this land could explain the tiredness that choked his voice. On the following morning he saw the large footprints and followed them. Then he noticed the beads from his necklace. He followed, picking up each bead until he got to a beautiful homestead in the middle of the forest. That was where Zidyavanhu and his family lived. The boy's sister was tied on a tree waiting to be eaten. In anger the boy bravely fought with the beast and his family. He killed all the beasts and untied his sister. From that day until today the boy and the girl are still living at the beautiful homestead they inherited after defeating Zidyavanhu.

The End

Appendix C

Example of children's written work as it emerged from the p4c discussions.



A5: Philosophy for Children: A potential pedagogy for transformative education in Zimbabwean resettlement primary schools.

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Abstract

Zimbabwe is currently experiencing high activity and spending on education as the country updates its primary and secondary school curricula. However, only a few rigorous studies have evaluated innovative approaches that can help transform the curriculum by integrating indigenous languages as intangible cultural heritage and promote educational transformation. This article provides reflections on findings of the larger study to which it contributes, as well as making recommendations for curriculum developers and teachers who may be developing pedagogical approaches without the benefit of an evidence-based implementation of a context-based P4C. The article proposes, based on data from the formative intervention study, that implementing a context-based P4C is effective in strengthening strong community relationships, instilling pride in local heritage, and in advancing curriculum transformation.

Key words

Transformative education, Philosophy for Children, Heritage language, Critical reflexivity

Introduction

Postcolonial governments have been castigated for their failure to decolonize the curriculum, which has been interpreted as a re-inscription of Eurocentric values and knowledges (wa Thiong'o, 1986; Siyakhwazi & Siyakhwazi, 2013; Shizha & Makuvaza, 2017). Following this, there have been calls to decolonize education, one alternative being to include heritage knowledges, worldviews, and languages. Similarly, arguments for and examples of how to implement context-based philosophy for children (P4C) have reinforced calls for educational decolonization (Reed-Sandoval, 2018; Bhurekeni, 2021). Again, various measures, such as the International Decade of Indigenous Languages (IDIL 2022-2032), announced in February 2019 on the occasion of the end of the 2019 International Year of Indigenous Languages (IYIL 2019) in Mexico City, have been established in response to the growing need to preserve, revitalise, and promote heritage languages and knowledges (UNESCO, 2020).

Globally, significant progress has recently been made in some postcolonial nations in terms of incorporating heritage languages and language-related knowledges into educational policy and practice. In Australia, the Commonwealth Government launched a National Indigenous Languages Policy in 2009 to address the conundrum of language loss in indigenous communities. According to McCarthy and May (2017), the policy's implication has been a growing awareness that languages are a valuable national resource, which has led to an increase in the study of languages other than English. In Canada the government made an effort to atone for its historical legacies by pledging to assist in the revitalization of the learners' heritage languages, and this has influenced development of coherent links between English, heritage language teaching, and other global language policies (McIvor & Ball, 2019). Comparable reforms were carried out in Africa, for example, apart from Tanzania, which imposed Swahili as a national language and language of education immediately after independence (Ezeanya-Esiobu, 2019). In Kenya, 'the Commission of Inquiry into the Education System of Kenya' (Koech Commission, 1999) recommended that the medium of instruction, particularly in lower primary, be the learners' mother tongue (Republic of Kenya (GOK), 1999).

Zimbabwe is no exception as the country has also embarked on similar initiatives through implementing the Curriculum Framework for Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE, 2014). This policy document noted the need for heritage languages and language-related knowledges inclusion into the curriculum with an emphasis that the learners' heritage language be the medium of instruction, especially at the lower primary school level (MoPSE, 2014). MoPSE (2014), like the Koech Commission (1999), remarked that the use of the learners' heritage language would enhance concept formation and articulation in linguistic communication. However, it should be noted that the inclusion of heritage languages and knowledges has remained a topical issue in postcolonial nations' post-development discourse. This is because, despite numerous recommendations for their inclusion, particularly in education, heritage languages continue to be relegated to an inferior position (see, Shizha, 2010; Ezeanya-Esiobu, 2019). McIvor and Ball (2019), for instance,

observe that in Canada “Schools and early childhood programs with indigenous languages as media of instruction are independent and remain marginalized within the larger education system” (McIvor & Ball, p. 15). The same could be said about Africa where research (Shizha & Makuvaza, 2017; Ezeanya-Esiobu, 2019) concurs that there is an ostensible disconnection between the education curriculum and the continent’s heritage languages and other locally situated knowledges and practices.

It has been noted that while indigenous people are perceived as custodians of these heritage languages and knowledges and have since been invited to play a proactive role in initiating and developing appropriate measures for their promotion in development discourse, education systems often do not include curricula and teaching methods that recognize their communities’ histories, cultures, and pedagogies (Wodon & Consentino, 2019). Thus, there is a need for a more participatory-oriented and context-sensitive approach to curricula reform to avoid romanticism in developing transformative educational policies. This article provides insights into how I used the philosophy for children approach as a pedagogy for transformative education that values heritage languages and knowledges extant in resettlement primary schools in Zimbabwe.

Brief context of resettlement schools.

The majority of Zimbabwe’s resettlement/satellite schools were founded between 2000 and 2005, shortly after the country’s compulsory land reform, and are still not formally registered as schools with the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education [MoPSE] (Bhurekeni, 2021). According to government figures, there were 1093 resettlement primary schools last year (Mujuru, 2020). Jenjekwa (2013) and Mujuru (2020) both agree that the schools were established in order to serve resettled farmers in need of basic services such as education and health care. According to Moyo (2017), when the resettled farmers moved on to the farms, there were no schools for their children, so the government set up makeshift schools. The literature is replete with evidence that the learning environment in these schools is depressing (Jenjekwa, 2013; Moyo, 2017; Mujuru, 2020; Bhurekeni, 2021). This is due to the fact that some children in resettlement schools attend classes in abandoned farmhouses, old tobacco barns, and thatched mud huts (Jenjekwa, 2013; Mwinde & Muzingili, 2020). One of the resettlement schools involved in the broader study, to which this article contributes, for example, uses rooms from an old dilapidated farm house as classrooms, whereas the other two are struggling to finish construction of classroom blocks left unfinished by a foreign donor organization, with some of the children learning under a tree.

Context and the problem statement

Engaging learners in philosophical dialogue and critical reflexive thinking is a challenge in today’s educational systems because of enduring coloniality that continues to shape the world (see Ndofirepi, 2011; Letseka, 2013; Gregory, Haynes, & Murris, 2017). However, as I have noted elsewhere in a study (Bhurekeni, 2021), this is only one of the quality educational

provision challenges that are endemic in ‘resettlement primary schools’ in the country (Jenjekwa, 2013; MoPSE, 2014). To be engaged, it turned out that there had to be a strong interlinking between the school curriculum and the learner’s life-world (Bhurekeni, 2020). Moreover, classroom pedagogy should strengthen learner agency by enabling them to establish resilient connections with the sociocultural tools and signs that support their cultural heritage (Shizha, 2010). However, in Southern Africa contexts, the tools and signs that support many cultures are not always available in formal educational settings (Siyakwazi & Siyakwazi, 2013). This problem has largely been attributed to the persistence of coloniality in the region, using cultural technologies of domination (Terreblanche, 2014), as is the case in most postcolonial countries. For example, due to coloniality, “teaching and learning reinforce hegemonic and oppressive paradigms which allocate differential social locations to Western and indigenous knowledges and languages” (Shizha, 2010, p. 116). Zimbabwe is currently spending more money on education, as the country continues to upgrade its primary and secondary schools’ curricula (MoPSE, 2014).

Considering these continuities of coloniality, I implemented a P4C formative intervention in Sebakwe resettlement schools in Zimbabwe. The formative intervention to which this article contributes builds on the work of Lipman (1991) and Vygotsky (1962), both of whom were interested in the relationship between thinking and its social context. According to Daniel and Auriac (2008), though their approaches were different, they both advocate for the development of critical/higher order thinking skills through peer verbal exchange. Vygotsky (1978) notes that children gain tools for thinking as they acquire a language, as it is that which they use to solve practical problems. This chimes in well with Lipman (2003) whose work tracks and theorizes as to how learners can learn together via the medium of community of inquiry as a pedagogy. The formative intervention had antecedents towards an Afrophilic²⁸ and sociocultural underpinning and is aimed at enabling learners to construct different models of reasonable experiences or truth.

The vantage point of an Afrophilic deliberative heritage-based learning is in the development of socially situated critical thinking skills which translate into improved learner agency via utilization of heritage language and language-related knowledges. Learner agency refers to learners’ developing ability to use their heritage languages to express themselves and depict the world around them. Thus, it was hoped as I implemented the intervention that it would cleanse the education system of the colonial antecedents that continue to determine curriculum (Siyakwazi & Siyakwazi, 2013; Shizha & Makuvaza, 2017), and inform the development of a curriculum that is sensitive to indigenous cultural heritage and languages.

The Afrophilic philosophy for children’s formative intervention was implemented in line with Shizha (2010) and Siyakwazi and Siyakwazi (2013), who observe that recent

²⁸ The Afrophilia lens utilized as start-up capital in this study includes storytelling, proverbs, traditional music, pictures, and metaphors

developments in education (Zimbabwe included) have heightened the need to enact a culturally sensitive and contextual pedagogy. However, when it comes to basic education, the Zimbabwean government is giving textbooks and other financial grants such as the Schools Improvement Grants (SIG) to speed up educational transformation. A paradox has emerged in which teachers and parents from other parts of the country criticize the textbooks distributed by the government in schools, claiming that the textbooks (particularly the Heritage and LOP- Social Studies), contain inaccurate information about their culture and heritage. According to Gory, Bhatia, and Reddy (2021), “not all teachers and parents were satisfied with the reform” (p. 153), necessitating a need for a shift from content knowledge mastery to higher-order thinking skills and competences (Reimers, 2021). I then implemented a P4C formative intervention in Sebakwe resettlement primary schools to strengthen the curriculum by cultivating critical reflexive thinking skills and a culture of learning (Bhurekeni, 2021). It has been noted elsewhere that the ‘context-based P4C’ that I used has the capacity to use the learner’s cultural history of practice and thus enhance learner agency (Ndondo & Mhlanga, 2014; Reed-Sandoval, 2018).

Despite the remarkable awareness in Zimbabwe of the importance of P4C and implementation of a heritage (both language and practice) sensitive curriculum (Ndofirepi, 2011; Dube, 2020), there have been few rigorous studies that evaluate how P4C as a pedagogical approach in Zimbabwe can help strengthen curriculum transformation by incorporating heritage languages and other intangible cultural heritage. As a result, lack of practical implementation examples of context-based P4C in Zimbabwe has resulted in the MoPSE’s slow-pace towards curriculum decolonization, trapping the schools’ curriculum in a muddle and always in a state of opacity (Chung, 1996). As a result of the lack of practical implementation examples of context-based P4C in Zimbabwe, the approach has become less known and excluded from policy planning and implementation, despite its remarked capacity to sustain locally oriented curriculum reforms (Ndofirepi, 2011; Letseka, 2013; Ndondo & Mhlanga, 2014).

Aware of this, I conducted a micro-literary review of how philosophy for children has evolved in Africa, with a particular focus on how it relates to the use of heritage language and indigenous knowledges and practices and discovered that the approach has gone through notions of hybridization, with an emphasis on sensitizing the practice to the learner's life-world (Ndofirepi, 2011). Then I examined the findings from the broader P4C formative intervention in order to unpack the potential of P4C in transforming learning at the primary school level in Zimbabwe.

Methodology

Here I offer a critical reflection or reflexivity of the P4C Afrophilia formative curriculum intervention through utilizing data gathering approaches of analyzing documents, observing, questioning, and seeking a diversity of opinion through reflective interviews that allow for an openness to change. Jan Fook (2011) defines critical reflection “as a way of learning from

and reworking experience” (p. 56). Thus, the methodology is anchored on day-to day existence and has antecedents toward critical pedagogy (Mortari, 2015). Critical reflection helped me gain a better understanding of the P4C formative intervention as it enabled me to pay attention to the appropriateness of its intentions and take a closer look at the effects it yields when implemented under conditions extant in the Sebakwe resettlement area. Henceforth, critical reflection in this study signifies the act of giving myself time to think about the meaning and purpose of the formative intervention research that I occupied myself with in the past three years. Mortari (2015) reasons that deep understanding of these issues provides the basis for recommendations concerning continuous adjustments or refinement of the intervention. In light of this one may surmise that critical reflexivity leads to new conclusions, possible changes, and new ideas to inform future planning and actions.

The methodology employed in this study takes one beyond their own understandings and knowledge (Mortari, 2015). In the context of my research, it enabled me and the participants, who included purposively selected 15 parents, 12 teachers, 3 education inspectors, and 15 learners, to integrate our fragmented experiences into a coherent whole (Bhurekeni, 2021). Adult participants were chosen on the basis of their ability to provide rich data sets on the use of the Afrophilia lens in learning spaces. The children were chosen based on the fact that they were in the same grade at one of the schools involved and had signed consent (along with their parents) to participate in the study. Formative intervention workshop notes and audio recordings were collected from participants, as were video recorded P4C lessons with children and lesson observation notes, and audio or video recorded face-to-face reflexive interviews (see Bhurekeni, 2021 for a discussion on this).

All workshops, P4C lessons, and reflexive interviews were conducted in Shona, the heritage language of both participants and the researcher. During translation, the meaning of the word was determined by how language users use them at any given time. Furthermore, the target audience influenced the decision on which English words to use to represent the original words in the data sets. The goal was to translate the transcripts into English so that they could be communicated effectively to the widest possible audience of English readers.

Most generally critical reflexivity in this research allowed me to expose the power dynamics operational within the classroom in particular and within the Zimbabwean education system in general. As seen from practice, this methodology within an educational context allows insider formative intervention researchers to place themselves and their practices under scrutiny, acknowledging the ethical dilemmas that permeate the research process and their practice in general. To improve validity, I used both the informant triangulation and the time triangulation (Denscombe, 2010) because I utilized a multi-voiced approach in data collection and collected data from multiple sources at different times. Figure 1.0 shows a mind map of the critical reflective cycle within the P4C formative intervention.

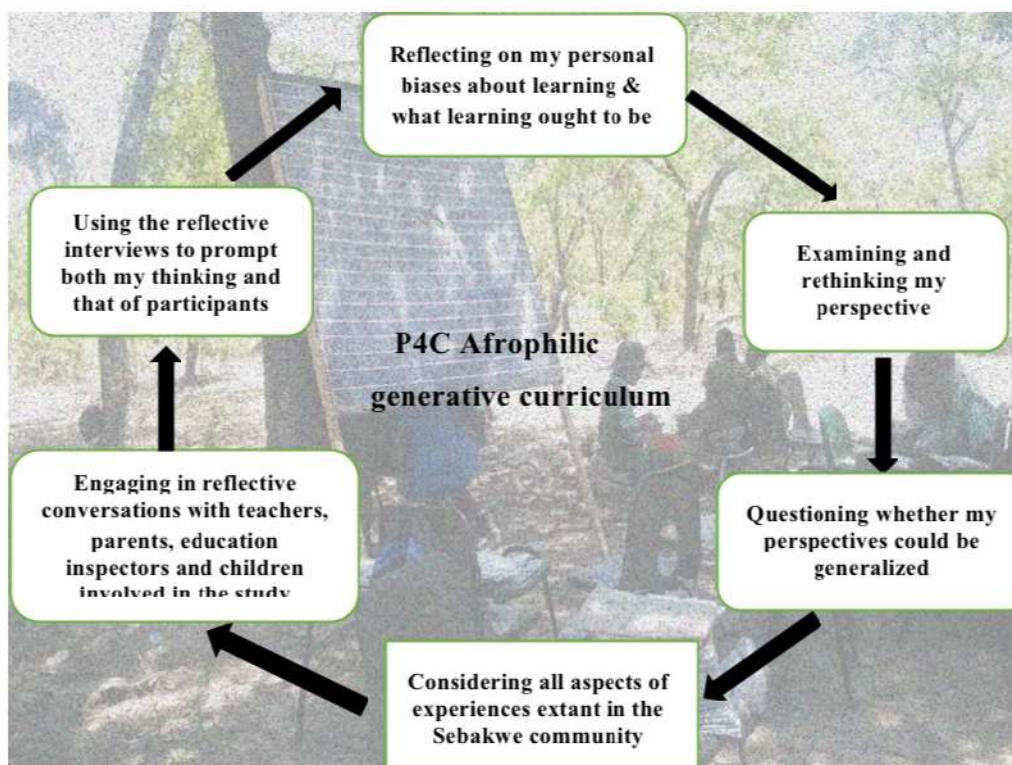


Figure 1.0 *mind map of the critical reflective cycle with Afrophilic formative intervention*

The potential validity problem for this study was the impact of ‘The Hawthorne effect’ (Brannigan & Zwerman, 2001), which occurs when participants change their behaviour because of being part of a research study. This is possible because the participants participated in three formative intervention workshops to select Afrophilia learning artifacts and were aware that they were part of a formative intervention study during face-to-face reflexive interviews, which may have changed their general behaviour or responses to questions. To ensure that this does not have an impact on the reliability of my data, I made the purpose of the study known. Furthermore, because I was an “insider formative interventionist” (Bhurekeni, 2021), the time I spent with the participants allowed them to become accustomed to being observed and begin to behave naturally. Also, because I used critical reflexivity to solve such problems, especially during the coding and transcribing of the audio and video recorded data sets, my awareness may have reduced its impact (Brannigan & Zwerman, 2001). I understood that the answers I sought in my study could not be discerned without the context of the participants with whom I worked, so I paid close attention to context. Thus, I was alert to the problems embedded in generalized ethical frameworks and their implications for ethical practice²⁹ within the context of resettlement schools.

²⁹ The Philosophy for Children Afrophilia project was conducted in accordance with Rhodes University’s ethics clearance committee code of practice (ethical approval tracking number

To make the study more context-sensitive, data that was elicited was analyzed using the postcolonial discourse analysis approach. The approach is unique in that apart from using it to analyze the linguistic type of discourse, one may opt to focus on the macro elements of discourse and the politics of discourse (Sawyer, 2012). In this article I focused on the macro approach to discourse as it allowed me to reflect on representation, identity and agency, the nature and role of language in society, and the wish for decolonial studies to give voice to disadvantaged and silenced groups such as the resettlement schools that I worked with. I was able to generate the themes that I used in data presentation and analysis by using postcolonial discourse analysis. Again, the research questions aimed at identifying historical and contemporary barriers to effective learning in the resettlement areas involved, as well as how P4C as a potential transformative pedagogy could address the challenges, influenced the themes.

How P4C has evolved in Southern Africa

P4C, founded as a pedagogical approach by Matthew Lipman, originated in the United States of America. The approach, established in the 1970s, focuses on teaching thinking skills through philosophical dialogue and has since become a world-wide approach (Gorard, Siddiqui, & Huat See, 2015). This global acceptance of the approach depends largely on its ability to help children develop complex cognitive skills and predispositions related to critical reflexive thinking such as: to evaluate, ask questions, criticize, be thorough, and build congenial and collaborative relationships (Daniel & Auriac, 2008). Thus, unlike the discipline-specific philosophy that is much aligned to the teaching “of formal logic stripped of experiential anchors” (Daniel & Auriac, 2008, p. 4), philosophy for children promises to cultivate skills and predispositions that could be located outside the academy. Furthermore, recent research has shown how P4C can be utilized as a decolonial approach in colonial-weighted educational settings (Bhurekeni, 2021). The prospects of this liberatory potential have attracted scholars in southern Africa, as the region has for long been under the burden of cultural technologies of domination (Terreblanche, 2014).

Turning now to a nuanced critical reflection on the practice of P4C, we find out that it has emerged as a pedagogical advancement in southern Africa. Discussions of P4C by scholars located in this region are connected by a common foundation, specifically their adoption of the definition of philosophy as a method of thinking even without having to explicitly say it. According to Daniel and Auriac (2008), philosophy as a way of thinking has its roots in Socratic questioning and in pragmatism and its goal is the construction of truth through the ‘sociality of thought’, whereby knowledge and meaning-making are related to immediate context (Derry, 2013).

for the research is (2017.12.08.04) and was approved by the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education in Zimbabwe (MoPSE, letter dated 09 May 2017).

Now, given the uniqueness of the P4C pedagogical approach and how it promotes development of rational, open-minded thinking in children (Ndofirepi & Cross, 2015), this approach is attracting the attention of various researchers in the region (see Haynes & Murris, 2009; Ndofirepi, 2011; Letseka, 2013; Ndondo & Mhlanga, 2014). Factors influencing this attention have been explored in several studies. For instance, Ndofirepi (2011) mentions the crisis situation in Africa as one of the reasons for situating philosophy for children within the region. As an ‘edifying philosopher,’ Ndofirepi (2011) cites the superimposition of the colonialist cultural political system on indigenous communities and contends that philosophy for children ought to consider being sensitive to the African child’s life-world. Here, sensitivity to context implies the privileging of contextualized forms of representation through which events and objects are presented in terms of their concrete particularity and inline with the heritage language that embodies their real meaning (Derry, 2013). This falls in line with Lipman’s (1996) emphasis on children’s ability to draw on their own cultural experience and to think abstractly. However, it must be noted that simply including the cultural aspects of the learners is not sufficient, as learners and teachers are encouraged to engage with the culture in a way that reflects epistemological and critical depth (Giddy, 2012).

While Ndofirepi (2011) made recommendations to situating P4C within the African milieu, Murris (2000) came up with a more applied approach to the practice of philosophy for children. For Murris (2000), P4C could be done through applying a range of philosophical stimuli that is not solely text. For instance, P4C facilitators/teachers can use picture books, play a piece of music, or show a documentary film. Murris (2000) concurs with Ndofirepi (2011), Letseka (2013), Ndondo and Mhlanga (2014), and Bhurekeni (2021) that the development of philosophy for children in Africa and the world over has shifted the role of the teacher. Children are now to be seen as co-inquirers in the learning process and the teacher must not “stamp in knowledge” (Green, 2017, p. 38); his/her main focus should be on ensuring that learners are exposed to a conducive but all the same suitably challenging learning environment.

Scholars in P4C (including those from the global south) are constantly looking for the best way to activate the transformative potential of philosophical practice in schools. As a result, P4C has found a place in educational debates centered on the democratic conception of education and the improvement of literacy and learning (Gregory, Haynes, & Murris, 2017). According to Ndofirepi and Cross (2015), philosophical practice in schools is a participatory initiative that requires educators to consider learners’ interest and create space for them to voice their opinions as contributing agents to knowledge creation. As a result, in addition to advocating for a more localized approach to the practice of philosophy for children, the P4C program in Africa has evolved in a more similar fashion to that of other continents, where it is expected to help children become more reasonable, participative, and critically thinking citizens.

A pedagogy for transformation

As seen in the preceding section, P4C has been introduced in education to provide alternative ways of looking at education and society itself, specifically using the ideas of P4C to see the world from the perspectives of children (Ndofirepi & Cross, 2015). Children, particularly in societies characterized by gerontological thinking, tend to rely on adults to speak for them, and when there are no adults to speak for them, they remain silent, and no one appears to be concerned about their perspectives on the world in which they live. Through the practice of community of inquiry, P4C connects adults with the special capacities present in childhood such as wonder, curiosity, and imagination (Mohr Lone, 2012). The practice of community of inquiry in philosophy for children, in which children's voices are prioritized, necessitates the transformation of the teacher's role in order to transform the classroom into an influential discursive space that can be part of the process of dialogue, social transformation, and engaged citizenship (Murriss, 2000; Ndofirepi & Cross, 2015). Thus, philosophy for children extends the process of dialogue and philosophical engagement to all citizens as the foundation of transformational pedagogy.

Moving to a more practical analysis and considering what philosophy for children might look like, especially in resettlement schools that lack teaching and learning materials (Jenjekwa, 2013), reflects the natural progression of the discussion into transformative approaches to education. Typically, philosophy for children in any learning situation, regardless of the learners' background, supports the notion that both learners and the teacher are creative and autonomous co-inquirers (Gregory, Haynes, & Murriss, 2017). This is consistent with the ideas of Shor and Freire (1987), who believe that knowledge is created and re-created in the classrooms through dialogue between students and teachers. Gregory, Haynes, and Murriss (2017) provide a more profound idea of philosophy for children, arguing that it is a "framework for collaborative exploration of significant questions, for freedom of thought and speech, for participatory dialogue, and for collaborative self-governance" (p. 1). To explore this point further, Echeverria and Hannam (2017) support the position that community of inquiry in philosophy for children is a model of educational praxis, hence it can enable conditions necessary for transformation to exist. Therefore, philosophy for children is noted as an approach that aims to bring about transformation or to motivate collective action to achieve educational transformation by investing in the endeavour to teach children to be reflective critical thinkers in order to question and challenge orthodox educational practices that sustain reproduction of the status quo.

Findings from the formative intervention study

The information presented here is derived from document analysis processes, observations, and the author's own reflective interviews with participants. While the interviews covered a wide range of topics related to the study, I have chosen to narrow my focus on the use of heritage languages and language-related knowledges as these are more relevant for this paper.

Historical antecedents continue to determine the curriculum

On June 26, 2018, I had my first reflective interview with Mbuya VaChihera (81 years old), my study guardian. Mbuya VaChihera explained that colonial formal education was introduced in the area when she was a girl of almost six years old, so she was thought to be too young to go to school. As a result, her parents would hide her in the granary whenever a teacher arrived in search of school-age children. Her interview is presented here to offer the historical context of the education system.

Researcher: *So, when you were older, did you get a chance to go to school?*

Mbuya VaChihera: *Yes, when I was a little older, the teacher came and wrote our names, and our first class was held under a tree.*

Researcher: *Can you say that your learning experiences were the same as before you enrolled for formal schooling?*

Mbuya VaChihera: *It was different because we had been taught to count “motsi, piri, tatu, china, chishanu, tanhatu, tanhatu, chinomwe, rusere, pfumbamwe, gumi) at home, but now in school we would sing “one stone in a line if I add one, they add up to two, two stones in a line if I add one they add up to three,” until you reach ten. We couldn’t understand because we were now using a different language, ‘English,’ and we couldn’t tell what a line was because all we did was sing, so you see my son, language was our main challenge... Even when our parents were instructed to help us, they would do so little guidance because it was not our language.*

Mbuya VaChihera could not walk to school to join others in observing the philosophy for children lessons, so there was nothing else she could say about the philosophy for children pedagogical intervention. She did, however, emphasize that learning about one’s culture broadens one’s understanding and competitiveness. Her narrative above shows how the dawn of imperial British colonial government in Zimbabwe (around 1890s) was marked by a direct replica of the British system of governance and as a result the education system that was instituted in colonial Zimbabwe followed suit (Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training [CIET], 1999; Siyakhwazi & Siyakhwazi, 2013). Literacy was the main emphasis within this system of education even though the only available literature was in English (CIET, 1999). During my interview with Mbuya VaChihera, she reiterates that,

“... they (missionaries) wanted us to learn to read and write. We were told that if we go to school, we would be able to write letters for our parents and read the bible, reading and writing were so important to them.”

Subsequently, English has always had a privileged status above African indigenous language such as ChiShona and IsiNdebele. Hence, it became a language of governance and the main medium of instruction in schools. Of this downgrading of African languages and a blind

clinging to the language of imperial British colonial masters, we have a remarkable illustration in the writings of (CIET, 1999).

Colonial governments had allowed the teaching of the major languages, ChiShona and IsiNdebele from grade 1 to University level as subjects. The languages were not used as media of instruction and their status was regarded as inferior to English. English thus remained the official language, medium of instruction in schools, a compulsory subject, and a requirement in all school certificates. Time allocations for ChiShona and IsiNdebele at the University, teachers, and lecturers of ChiShona and IsiNdebele and authors of literary works in indigenous languages were relegated to a lower status compared to their English counterparts (CIET, 1999, pgs. 157-158).

Clearly it is evident that English did not only become a medium of instruction in schools and universities, but it literally became a language of power as it was authoritatively observed as the language of commerce, administration, and international relations (CIET, 1999; Zimbabwe Education Act, 1987). This however created learning barriers especially given the fact that the medium for transmission of most Afrophilia knowledges has largely remained preliterate. The shift to literacy and use of English as medium of instruction led to the abstraction of curriculum from the life experiences of the learners (Siyakwazi & Siyakwazi, 2013). Ngũgĩ wa Thiongo illustrates Mbuya Va Chihera's views when he asserts that the colonial education and the hierarchies of languages that it created brought about a new meaning of education as:

It makes them [the colonized children] see their past as one wasteland of non-achievement and it makes them want to distance themselves from that wasteland. It makes them want to identify with that which is furthest removed from themselves; for instance, with other people's languages rather than their own (Thiongo, 1986, p. 3).

Little has changed in the postcolonial period (1980-2020) as English has practically remained the language of instruction in schools even after the educational reforms that have seen Zimbabwe taking a heritage-based turn in education (MoPSE, 2014; Bhurekeni, 2020). Rather than repudiate this colonial legacy, as argued in literature, the postcolonial Zimbabwean government embraced English, indicating the endurance of coloniality within the curriculum.

Curriculum withholds the minority at the periphery

The grade 7 timetable uncovers that the subordination of other African languages, such as those excluded from the timetable, had practically morphed into the axiomatic. Even some of the African languages that are represented on the timetable, their time allocation is in the afternoon when children had already written other examinations. The situation is worse in resettlement schools where very few speakers of these minority languages are enrolled and consequently end up being co-opted into registering for one of the dominant languages. It would be interesting for readers to note that this is not the same for other languages such as

English, ChiShona, and IsiNdebele. Teachers affirmed that while there is a legislature in which at least 15 indigenous languages are accepted for use in formal education, this recognition is often expressed only in word because English continues to dominate as the language of instruction in schools (Kembo, 2000).

Figure 1.1: 2020 Grade Seven Timetable



ZIMBABWE SCHOOL EXAMINATIONS COUNCIL

2020 GRADE SEVEN EXAMINATION TIME-TABLE

EXAMINATION DATE	MORNING SESSION	SUBJECT/PAPER	AFTERNOON SESSION	SUBJECT/PAPER
Thursday, 3 December	9.00 a.m. – 11.00 a.m. (2hrs)	0001/1 English 1	2.00pm-3.30pm (1hr 30mins)	0008/1 Nambya 1
Friday, 4 December	9.00 a.m. – 11.00 a.m. (2hrs)	0002/1 Mathematics 1	2.00pm-3.30pm (1hr 30mins)	0010/1 Xichangana 1
Monday, 7 December	9.00 a.m. – 10.30 a.m. (1hr 30mins)	0004/1 Shona 1 0006/1 Ndebele 1	2.00pm-3.30pm (1hr 30mins)	0007/1 Tonga 1
Tuesday, 8 December	9.00 a.m. – 11.00 a.m. (2hrs)	0005/1 General Paper 1	2.00pm-3.30pm (1hr 30mins)	0009/1 Tshivenda 1 ^
Wednesday, 9 December	9.00 a.m. – 10.30 a.m. (1hr 30mins)	0003/1 Agriculture 1	2.00pm-3.30pm (1hr 30mins)	0011/1 Kalanga 1
Thursday, 10 December	9.00 a.m. – 10.45 a.m. (1hr 45mins)	0004/2 Shona 2 0006/2 Ndebele 2 ^	2.00pm-3.45pm (1hr 45mins)	0007/2 Tonga 2
Friday, 11 December	9.00 a.m. – 11.00 a.m. (2hrs)	0005/2 Mathematics 2	2.00pm-3.45pm (1hr 45mins)	0008/2 Nambya 2
Monday, 14 December	9.00 a.m. – 11.00 a.m. (2hrs)	0003/2 Agriculture 2	2.00pm-3.45pm (1hr 45mins)	0010/2 Xichangana 2
Tuesday, 15 December	9.00 a.m. – 10.30 a.m. (1hr 30mins)	0001/2 English 2	2.00pm-3.45pm (1hr 45mins)	0011/2 Kalanga 2
Wednesday, 16 December	9.00 a.m. – 10.30 a.m. (1hr 30mins)	0005/2 General Paper 2	2.00pm-3.45pm (1hr 30mins)	0012/1 Sesotho 1
Thursday, 17 December	1hr 45 mins	0009/2 Tshivenda 2 ^	1hr 45 mins	0012/2 Sesotho 2

Literature is replete with examples of how minority societies are often subjected to such forms of education or how power can be used to deprive learners of languages and knowledges related to their cultural history of practice in favour of the dominant group (Ndhlovu, 2011). Dube (2020) is critical of how state hegemony has affected postcolonial Zimbabwe's language policy at the expense of minority languages. According to Chabata (2007), the reality in schools did not align with the expectations of the National Constitution that indigenous languages be taught at least up to the first three grades of elementary education. This is mainly because teachers would be preparing learners for examinations which are mainly written in English. From my many years of teaching in primary school, I have also realized that children are more comfortable with reading and writing in a language that they understand, while they find it difficult to read or write in the second language. However as reflected on the examination timetable, four out of the five subjects that are written for the grade seven national examinations are written in the learners' second

language. The language barrier is fragmented, and learner agency improved only when the centrality of heritage languages and local heritage knowledges is re-asserted in schools. This is because learning will be a continuation of what learners learn at home.

There is a need to pay attention to the decolonial conflicts on curriculum reform

On July 3, 2018, I interviewed Mr. Kandimire, who had observed the first two sessions of the pedagogical intervention.

Researcher: ... *Let us reflect on use of indigenous languages in school, what is your take on this issue?*

Mr. Kandimire: *Using the vernacular as a teaching method has great benefits for the learner because it is easier to understand and to relate to than foreign languages. Moreover, the language associated with the learner's life experience makes it more realistic for the learner to express themselves in relation to their environment and worldview. Learners take long to grasp concept and to complete grades because of using a foreign language.*

Researcher: *According to your own observation, what do you think is the reason for this easy learning?*

Mr. Kandimire: *Such an education creates a bridge between the home and school, also take note that everyone needs to be given the opportunity to speak and to be listened to, this is what I noticed during your lessons. Again, it is sensitive to the dynamics of power between the learners and the teacher.*

Mrs. Musaengana and Ms. Madimbe were interviewed next on July 5, 2018, and their views on use of heritage languages and language-related knowledges were similar to Mr. Kandimire's. Mrs. Musaengana, on the other hand, emphasized that while it is important for schools to use heritage languages as medium of instruction, English should not be abandoned because children will need it when they travel to other areas where they will be unable to use their heritage languages. While Mr. Sibanda, whom I interviewed on April 4, 2019, appears to agree with Mrs. Musaengana, he contends that "English should not be taken as a measure of intelligence," a point of view that was also expressed during a formative intervention workshop with teachers held on June 21, 2018. Mr. Sibanda went on to endorse the philosophy for children pedagogical intervention, saying:

Our education had an antecedent toward Western culture hence our children are copying other people's cultures. This has an effect on our culture as it has been obliterated, soon we will lose it all, say for example our nutritional foods, some children no longer value them, or they totally don't know some of our small grains. So, this initiative of teaching our indigenous cultural heritage builds in our children the Zimbabwean identity... Our cultural experiences also help our children to develop critical thinking skills. Take for example mahumbwe, children would learn a lot of problem-solving skills from the child's play, even ngano "folk story", there is

so much that our children can learn from the stories... Lessons derived from these activities based on our cultural heritage are what taught us to “vanhu vane hunhu” (good, nurtured people).

Ms. Mubaiwa (interviewed on July 17, 2019) believes that it is appropriate for an educational program to draw its content and activities from the learners’ cultural heritage in order to reduce foreign cultural influence on the learners. She did, however, advise that the philosophy for children program be sensitive to technology as an emerging aspect of the curriculum.

All interviewees in this section have shown the paradoxes that arise in postcolonial education reforms. The substance of the above findings is that, while reforms have been made to detach the education system from its colonial antecedent, coloniality remains and it continues to influence what goes into the curriculum and the influence that it has on the learner (CIET, 1999). Over the many decades of colonialism, Western logic has been entrenched in the country to an extent that the so-called Western standards are still inadvertently underpinning the education system in Zimbabwe and these undermine efforts that the country has made in attempting to detach from these colonial antecedents. Moreover, from the time of Zimbabwe’s political independence, several ideologies about the cultural and historical homogeneity of pre-colonial Zimbabwe were used to legitimize the curriculum standardization and confirmation of a homogenous culture (see CIET, 1999; MoPSE, 2014). I consider the remarks made by the interviewees pertinent for two reasons. To begin with, if what Mr. Sibanda has said is cogent, then it makes this formative intervention an exigency in postcolonial Zimbabwe. Again, the remarks made with concern to English prompts one to infer that language still has a critical role to play in influencing identity; whose language does one need to be identified with on the international, regional, and local arena? Here I argue, as most decolonial scholars have done, that the language one uses does not have to be a reflection of a foreign culture but should be reflecting indigenous human experiences.

P4C inspires inquiring minds and normalizes questioning

To gain a more in-depth understanding of the impact of the formative intervention, two grade 5 learners were interviewed separately on January 29, 2020, both of whom did not give me consent to use their names for the interviews, so they are coded as janLC2020 and janLC29 in the study.

Researcher: *Good morning, janLC2020. You are one of the learners in the philosophy for children class; how old are you?*

janLC2020: *Good morning, how are you? I’m ten years old.*

Researcher: *How many philosophy for children sessions have you done so far?*

janLC2020: *We’ve had five sessions so far, and I trust we’ll have another one this afternoon.*

Researcher: *You seem so excited. How are the philosophy for children sessions going?*

janLC2020: *Aah, the philosophy for children sessions are so exciting because we will have the opportunity to dialogue and ask each other questions, and we will be speaking in Shona, as opposed to other lessons where we are told to use English. Remember Mr. Sibanda's folk story (ngano)? Everyone can now tell the story, even those who are not in our class, and people are still discussing some of the issues raised that day.*

Researcher: *So that's why you are so excited about today's session. What else can you tell me?*

janLC2020: *Yes, because Shona makes it easier for us to talk about what we want, and because during the sessions we learn about things we don't usually talk about. Even at home, we no longer have time for story telling because we'll be doing homework, so the sessions give us a chance to thinking and talk about other things that are relevant to our lives. They don't keep us occupied with book work.*

Researcher: *So, you say they're important in your life, but how? What makes them so?*

janLC2020: *Um, let's say that when we engage in dialogue during the sessions, you learn something and realise its implications for your life. Some stories and proverbs discourage bad behaviour by demonstrating how those who misbehave are treated. As a result, you will easily understand their true meaning in life. Even expressing ourselves is something that we learn through philosophical dialogues.*

Researcher: *Okay, thank you very much for your time. I hope we can meet again after the impending sessions.*

janLC2020: *Thank you.*

According to janLC29, the sessions have augmented her Shona vocabulary, "*now I can use some proverbs (tsumo) on my own because I was able to grasp their true meaning during the philosophy sessions.*" Based on these findings, it is evident that the practice of philosophy for children is fundamental in transferring values such as an inclination to be critical of the information that one is exposed to and giving reasons in support of or against certain points of view (Haynes & Murris, 2009). This shows that language in philosophy for children is more than just a means of communication; it also shapes the people's way of thinking. According to Lipman (1992), "...nothing teaches children reasoning better than the close and careful examination of the multiform uses of language itself and their consequent discussion of their own observations and inferences" (p.6).

The emphasis in this paper is on how the learners' heritage language influences the development of deep conceptual meaning shaped by cultural heritage knowledge and the effective application of the concepts in real life situations (wa Thiong'o, 1986). Lipman drew inspiration from Vygotsky, a sociocultural theorist who believed that language is a linguistic tool that humans inherit from their culture, and it objectifies one's private ideas in ways that make them accessible to the whole community. According to Chung (2002), nations rely on education as a mechanism to accomplish national goals. The philosophy for children formative intervention has given pointers that if scaled up it can abet promotion of heritage languages in schools. Hence, I argue that national schools or public education are ubiquitous as an important way to accomplish the goals of the international decade of indigenous languages. This is because the practice of philosophy for children abets cultural transmission and as evidenced by the interviews, it makes learners more participative and reasonable. Active participation situates the learner as a co-inquirer rather than a passive inheritor of pre-existing knowledge. In light of this, I contend that cultural representation in schools is more realistic when pedagogical interventions such as philosophy for children support and embed learners' cultural histories.

Implications of the findings for policy planning and implementation

From the data presented above it could be noticed that the pedagogical challenges obscuring the Zimbabwean education system are deeply cultural. Henceforth, the need to focus on liberatory pedagogical approaches, and inclusion of contextualized forms of knowledge representation in the curriculum. The integration of philosophy for children with indigenous languages as was done in my study seem to have potential to link curricula to community building and local heritage. Thus, to promote and preserve indigenous languages there is need to ensure implementation of the Education for All policy. Nation-states must therefore aim to enact educational reforms that contribute to the shaping of both the individual and the society; in this way contemporary education would come close to being "a common good" (Lotz-Sisitka, 2017, p. 63). Ensuring the public good status means first enacting a curriculum and pedagogy that reflect socio-cultural bonds between the school and the society (UNSECO, 1996).

Use of heritage languages as a medium of instruction is helpful in ensuring the "development of conceptual vocabulary in these languages to cope with modern technology, the sciences and the arts" (wa Thiong'o, 1993, p. xiv). Thus heritage languages as medium of instruction is a decolonial turn that will help many people realize that the West is not the sole progenitor of formal learning practice. Again, affording learners of African descent an opportunity to use their indigenous languages in schools is a move towards granting them a hybrid-middle-space from which to assume the "right to name the world for themselves" (wa Thiong'o, 1993, p. 21). This is because philosophical dialogue within the community of inquiry draws from the learners' personal experience, and through collaboration and feedback from others, critically generates new thinking and learning.

An emerging problem of policy abstraction

The problem of policy abstraction emerged as I was scoping out the implications of the Philosophy for Children Afrophilia formative curriculum intervention on policy planning and implementation. Reasons that lead to policy abstraction, as discussed before, include the non-conducive nature of the current education system. This is because educational policies in Zimbabwe tend to characterize the Zimbabwean community as undifferentiated and homogenous. In my earlier publication I cautioned that this leads to the paradox of superficial interpretation of unhu/ubuntu philosophy of education and advanced a need for deeper analysis of the present reality (Bhurekeni, 2020). The other reason that leads to policy abstraction is that of low stakeholder engagement (including teachers) which offers a poor perception on public opinion, making policies ignore the plurality of contexts and diversity of the communities' cultural histories of practice. This shapes many policy frameworks in the interest of one group while segregating other groups. As a result, what will be witnessed (as is the case for the Zimbabwean education system) is an insufficient focus on implementation and an absence of a coherent implementation strategy, especially for those groups that were earlier not included. According to Shizha and Makuvaza (2017), government policies in Sub-Saharan Africa are shaped and influenced by a neoliberal anti-people approach. As a result, governments (including Zimbabwe) have imposed policy frameworks on the people without their consent.

Towards a harmonization of theory and praxis

Drawing from the practical implementation of the Philosophy for Children (P4C) Afrophilia formative curriculum intervention it could be surmised that education policy implementation is an evolving process that involves many stakeholders. Thus, as Chimhundu (1997) observes, high quality public policymaking is transparent and open to broad societal participation. By so doing, the implemented program will be able to address societal problems timely and with a minimum waste of available resources. Those in leading positions should not show pessimism and cynical approaches to the inclusion of heritage languages and language related knowledges. It was emphasised that, if education is to play a decisive role in reducing exclusion of individuals who are marginalized in today's formal schooling due to ethnic or linguistic grounds, it must play an even greater role in integrating intangible cultural heritage and the heritage languages through which they are transmitted into curricula. This emphasis is consistent with Eze (2008) and Hountondji (1996, 1997) who saw an urgent need to live and practice the indigenous cultural heritage in its diversity rather than assume it to be homogenous. Again in this paper I am aware of the asymmetrical cultural and linguistic relation that was established in the country by the education system, as it dislodged indigenous heritage practices and languages from minority groups to the periphery (Ndhlovu, 2011). In spite of this, caution should be exercised as the MoPSE integrates indigenous heritage and languages into the curriculum, so that other global knowledges are not outrightly rejected. This is because, as stated in the UNESCO report of the International Commission on Education for Twenty-first Century, "...the values needed for twenty-first century ... are rooted in local, national, and global cultures" (UNESCO, 1996, p. 216).

Taking cognizance of this, especially considering the international decade of indigenous languages, will ensure effective involvement and participation of all citizens.

Conclusion

The methodology section describes the critical reflection or reflexivity of philosophy for children. My intent in carrying out the critical reflexive work was to find out how the Philosophy for Children Afrophilia curriculum intervention can enable educational transformation. This paper has demonstrated how philosophy for children could be an alternative approach in effecting educational transformation. For institutions and educators working with the heritage languages and language related knowledges, it is encouraged that these local heritage knowledges should not become discursive strategies that give the appearance of change, while at the same time promoting interests that further fragment, co-opt, and defy ancestral collectivities, knowledges, territories, and sensibilities, in the name of transformation, progress, and development. Future research should focus on developing teacher training manuals or booklets for effective and coherent introduction of the philosophy for children program and potential scaling up to other schools and provinces.

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A6: Enacting Environmental Ethics Education for Wildlife Conservation using an Afrophilic 'Philosophy for Children' approach

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Abstract

Environmental ethics education (EEE) has in recent years emerged as a critical tool for wildlife conservation research. Despite this environmental ethics education is paradoxically predominated by traditional forms of western science such as the concept of Anthropocene which appear to exclude aspects of African life-worlds where the natural environment is considered a heritage component and is linked to onto-religious understandings of human existence. The purpose of this study is to explore how African heritage-based knowledges and practices are understood by children who identify and understand the relevance of their totems and taboos associated with them, in relation to wildlife conservation. The study from which this paper is derived utilised formative interventionist methodology complimented with a multi-voiced decolonial approach to explore whether children-participants aged 8 to 11 years understand the purposes of their totems and associated taboos. To achieve this I used an Afrophilic philosophy for children pedagogical approach, which foregrounds dialogical learning and development of critical reflexive thinking skills. Emerging findings indicate that children associated their totems and connected taboos as tools for protecting

against environmental pollution, and minimising resource over-extraction. Findings further demonstrate an improved learner agency and development of ethical reasoning among children. Given how participants' respect for environmental conservation and sustainability was informed by the significance they place on their totems, I recommend the need for schools to develop generative curricula that takes seriously context-based solutions to environmental problems. Future research should also consider understanding environmental conservation issues from a context-based perspective, which can inform existing heritage practices and pedagogies.

Keywords: environmental ethics education, Afrophilic philosophy for children, ethical-reasoning, heritage-knowledges

Background and Context

Since the 1970s, environmental ethics has been a fundamentally evolving part of formal education (Taneja & Gupta, 2015). Taneja and Gupta (2015) have defined environmental ethics as a subfield of philosophy which focuses on environmental values that include cultural attitudes, practices, and approaches to securing and supporting biodiversity and ecological frameworks. During the same period that environmental ethics was becoming a recognized component of formal education, a new educational approach known as philosophy for children emerged. Mathew Lipman (2003) is among scholars who have been accredited for introducing 'Philosophy for Children' as an educational approach to promote critical thinking in children.

Research within the field of education has pointed to beneficial outcomes of philosophy for children in enhancing learning in schools. D'Olimpio (2014) for instance has argued that philosophy for children is useful as it exposes children to group dialogue thereby opening avenues for them to become active thinkers with the potential to develop a variety of critical reflexive thinking skills along the way. For Author (2021a) philosophy for children is a creative pedagogy that has potential to improve learner agency which conventional imperial colonial pedagogical approaches in Africa had previously excluded and obliterated from classroom activities. Ristiniemi, Skeie, and Sporre (2018) have associated philosophy (here in philosophy for children) with a creative pedagogy of environmental ethics education which could improve existing environmental sustainability practices.

International agencies such as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) have also endorsed philosophy for children as one of the empowering pedagogies for learners. For instance, UNESCO (2005) has noted that philosophy for children could play an important role in meeting the expectations of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs). This is more relevant if we consider SDG 4 on ‘inclusive and equitable quality education’, SDG13 on ‘urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts’, SDG15 on ‘sustainable ecosystems, re-forestation and increasing biodiversity’.

In many countries, the practice of philosophy for children has been underscored as an ideal pedagogical approach in shaping the moral/ethical standard measure associated with environmental problems (Cam, 2011). Zimbabwe has policies in place that support the UNSDGs such as the Zimbabwe National Environmental Education Policy and Strategy of 2003 (Chimbodza, van Ongevalle & Madondo, 2004). However, it appears as if little has been done to ensure that this policy is practically implemented. Against this background the purpose of this paper is to explore how African heritage-based knowledges and practices are understood by children in Sebakwe resettlement area who identify and understand the relevance of their totems and taboos associated with them in regards wildlife conservation. Wildlife conservation challenges in the Sebakwe resettlement area include an increase in uncontrolled poaching, destructive veld fires, and visible signs of human encroachment into wildlife areas. In the following section, I discuss in depth literature on philosophy for children, situating it as a potential tool for enacting environmental ethics education, as well as literature on education philosophy to best support environmental ethics education in schools.

Philosophy for Children and Environmental Ethics Education

The philosophy for children pedagogical approach utilised in this study was extended via Afrophilia learning artefacts. As previously explained in Author (2021b), the Afrophilia learning artefacts were selected during formative intervention workshops with parents, and educators. The goal of selecting heritage-based learning lenses that are socially situated was to explore how children understand such knowledges and practices and as well as how such knowledges and practices inspire development of critical reflexive thinking skills in children.

Over the years, practitioners in the field of philosophy for children have discovered that ‘community of inquiry’ which serves as the philosophy for approach’s main pedagogical edge, exhibits the following characteristics: inclusiveness, participation, the quest for meaning, questioning, and discussion (Lipman, 2003, Mohr Lone, & Isrealoff, 2012). The community of inquiry approach was used in the study as a collaborative learning process aimed at allowing learners to take responsibility for their own learning with support of parents and teachers. According to Harpaz (2005) learners assume more responsibility through working together as a community to discuss multiple viewpoints to reach an eventual conclusion as a “community of thinking” (ibid, p. 136).

The community of inquiry approach nurtures a social environment that provides participant discussants space for co-engaged social innovation through philosophical exchange (Goering, Shudak & Wartenberg, 2013, O’Donoghue, 2016). Again, the community of inquiry approach provides participant learners with the tools for "talking back" to the narrative of textbook-focused wildlife sustainability, as well as assisting them in developing what Scott and Fraser (2010) refer to as intersubjective knowing. Intersubjective knowing refers to the exchange of experiences, thoughts, knowledges, and understandings among a group of people informed by their indigenous philosophies and cultural history of practices (Scott & Fraser, 2010).

Intersubjective knowledge could be socially situated, encouraging learners to acquire new information and knowledge while also becoming aware of their own prejudices (Mohr Lone, & Isrealoff, 2012). This is significant because it allows a community of inquiry discussants to integrate and engage with a broader conception of knowledges as they engage with life's bigger questions (Mohr Lone & Isrealoff, 2012). In this case, the discussants are more likely to bring into the classroom knowledges that are not commonly found in their school curriculum. For example, the following questions guided the framing of the community of inquiry sessions considered in this paper: What heritage-knowledges influence children's perspectives on wildlife conservation? How can heritage practices like totem identification help to advance environmental education in schools?

By incorporating questions from the participant learners’ life-world, the community of inquiry pedagogy positions itself as a context relevant approach to teaching and learning

(Goering, Shudak & Wartenberg, 2013). During the philosophy for children session, it is usually observed that community of inquiry have the potential to mediate socially oriented activities towards progressively sustainable ways of knowing and doing things together in a finite world (O'Donoghue, 2017). In this case, the discourse that emerges from a discussion of the questions, such as those mentioned above represents an ontological shift towards dialogic reasonableness (Scott & Fraser, 2012). In this study, an ontological shift occurs when learners and teachers re-conceptualize the traditional categorical structure of classroom reality. According to Freire (1970) in traditional teaching-learning discourse, the teacher is typically regarded as the provider of knowledge to passive learners. However, as a result of the new direction ushered in by the practice of philosophy for children, teachers and learners may begin to recognize learning as a dialogue-based process in which they aspire to understand the views of others. In the section that follows, I establish the Afrophilia learning focal point by looking deeper into the indigenous philosophy of unhu/ubuntu as an Afrophilic frame for environmental ethics education.

Unhu/Ubuntu frame for Environmental Ethics education

The world (Sebakwe resettlement area included) is looking for an alternative practice-based wildlife sustainability model that also ensures economically low carbon output (Clough, 2010). To accomplish this, a new mindset that underscores interdependence and an ethic of care as necessary components of existence is required (Praeg, 2014). In southern Africa, where this study is being conducted, it appears that a potentially powerful mindset is embodied in unhu/ubuntu philosophy, which promotes human understanding within the unity-in-diversity of life's ecology (Le Grange, 2012). Emphasis in unhu/ubuntu philosophy is on the development of a social disposition of participating in-existence with others (both people and non-human animals). According to Le Grange (2012), the philosophy of unhu/ubuntu emphasizes the need to comprehend that being human entails thinking about the self in harmony with people and the entire biophysical world. This study's discussion of unhu/ubuntu is related to a conceptualization of unhu/ubuntu philosophy as a decolonial philosophy of education. In this regard unhu/ubuntu has an ecocentric leaning³⁰ as well as an

³⁰ Le Grange (2012) used the concept 'ukama' (relatedness) to sharpen his argument that Ubuntu is not limited to the anthropocentric definition, but that it also embodies ecocentric leanings.

ethical commitment that nurtures people to consider how they relate not only to themselves but to the entire universe.

According to Le Grange (2012) an ethical obligation is the benchmark that “concerns: doing things for the good of others; to think of oneself as bound up with others; and to value family (in a broad sense of the term) as well as wildlife (as it is inextricably bound to human beings) for its own sake and not for its efficacy” (*ibid*, 2012: emphasis added). Unlike more traditional forms Western science which have created an abstracted nature-culture dichotomy by failing to connect with context-based heritage-knowledges and practices, unhu/ ubuntu has a unique perspective in shaping environmental ethics education as a situated practice (Maware, 2013). This positions unhu/ubuntu as an a potentially interesting frame that differs from inherited colonial approaches, which appear to be biased toward more standard forms of Western science, because it takes a holistic approach to understanding human life and the environment (Le Grange, 2012; Maware, 2013). As a result, there are connections between education and African indigenous philosophy ontological concepts of the human person, which provides a nuanced understanding of a person as a being-in-becoming through ‘doing’ (here in onto-ethical mode of participation) in communion with others and the entire cosmos (Eze, 1997).

Tymieniecka (2007) acknowledges that education qualifies to be asserted as an existential coordinate of the human condition, which in this case is echoed through unhu/ubuntu philosophy. Unhu/Ubuntu embodies the existential experiences of indigenous people involved in my study (Praeg, 2014, Author, 2020). Thus, the study's goals of environmental ethics education were (re)imagined in this context using unhu/ubuntu philosophy. Unhu/Ubuntu ontology has strong synergies with the natural environment (wildlife), resonating a bond between the African being status and the natural environment, as stated by Mbeki, (2015):

I owe my being to the hills and the valleys, the mountains and the glades,
the rivers, the deserts, the trees, the flowers, the seas, and the ever-changing
seasons that define the face of our native land (Mbeki, 2015).

Mbeki’s (2015) sentiments contain undertones of an affirmation that the African child’s life world (heritage-based belief systems included) is inextricably linked to water, plants, and

animals. This reflects an interdependence between humans and wildlife (Maware, 2013). According to Clough (2010) the interdependence of humans and nature influences eco-friendly behaviours. Thus, the interdependence illustrated here as embedded in unhu/ubuntu philosophy creates spaces for a collective sense of responsibility and consolidating active participation with concrete experience and reflection. Unhu/ubuntu offers an ecosophical treatise that acknowledges the interconnected co-existence of humans, the earth, and other sentient beings (Le Grange, 2012). In the section that follows, I will highlight the study's problem statement.

Research problem

As an educational approach, philosophy for children has done little to tap into heritage knowledges and practices drawn from southern Africa, such as totems and their associated taboos, to develop a framework for context-based environmental ethics education. As a result, little is known about how such African heritage-based knowledges and practices are understood by children who identify and comprehend the significance of their totems and the taboos associated with them in terms of wildlife conservation. This gap presents a challenge when it comes to implementing a context-relevant environmental ethics education plan.

Research methodology

Philosophy for children; community of inquiry sessions were conducted in Sebakwe resettlement primary in which 15 grade 3 children were involved. My role as a researcher and teacher in the study to which this paper contributes was to support the development of a sociocultural approach to context-based philosophy for children in Zimbabwe, which translates into the development of a learning culture in schools and critical reflexive thinking in children (Author, 2021a). As a result, the research was conducted within the context of formative intervention work, as I worked to investigate a generative curriculum transformation process that was co-led and owned by the participants (Engeström & Sannino, 2010).

According to Engeström and Sannino (2010), formative intervention methodology considers culture and history with the goal of creating a space where researchers and their participants can form collective concepts. In the context of my research, I as the researcher together with

participants worked as a collective entity committed to curriculum transformation. I was present in Sebakwe resettlement area as a full-time teacher and later as part time Ph.D. scholar³¹ over a period of 16 years. In the last four years, I led formative intervention workshops, participated in community of inquiry sessions, and conducted reflexive interviews with teachers, children, education inspectors, and parents. Jackson's 'Good Thinker's ToolKit' (Appendix A) often used in philosophy for children was used to analyse data that was transcribed for this paper (Jackson, 2013, Author, 2021a). The toolkit consists of seven letters, W-R-A-I-T-E-C, each of which is meant to represent a cognitive skill that is part of becoming a good thinker (Jackson, 2013). According to Goering, Shudak, and Wartenburg, (2013) the toolkit is designed to facilitate the development of higher order thinking by measuring and fostering progress in an inquiry. The transcriptions and preliminary analyses of these data were also utilized to aid the processes of generative curriculum transformation by being presented to, and deliberated with teachers, parents, and education inspectors.

This study forms part of a more extensive Ph.D. project that involved an in-depth literature review to scope the history of curriculum in Zimbabwe, and 3 formative intervention workshops with parents, teachers and education inspectors. These activities were followed by 10 community of inquiry sessions with learners and then a sequence of reflexive interviews with parents (7 interviews), education inspectors (3 interviews), learners (6 interviews) and teachers (7 interviews) over a period of 4 years. Part of the data that surfaced in this study has previously been published in academic journals (Author 2020, 2021a and 2021b). In focus in this paper is a need to understand how African heritage-based knowledges and practices are understood by children who identify and understand the relevance of their totems and taboos associated with them, in relation to wildlife conservation.

Children were given start-up activities that influenced dialogical engagement during the community of inquiry sessions. The activities intended to elicit children's understanding of their heritage-based knowledges and practices. In table 1, I describe two heritage-based activities that informed the community of inquiry sessions that motivated this paper. The

³¹ The Rhodes University ethics approval tracking number for this study is 2017.12.08.04, and I also received approval letters from the MoPSE head office on May 9, 2017, and the Midlands provincial office on May 22, 2017. I also received consent letters from all the participants.

activities are derived from week 5 and 6 of the 10 community of inquiry sessions that I conducted with learners.

Table 1: Description of heritage-based activities that informed the community of inquiry sessions held in weeks 5 and 6 with children.

Activity 1 Totems and their purpose	Activity 2 Conservation related taboos
Objective: Participant-children will engage in a discussion about the significance of totems (as a heritage practice) in wildlife conservation. Description: Learners were asked to draw an animal or totem pole symbol. The drawings were inspired by the imagination of the learners, but some learners knew the animals because they live near a wildlife ranch (Iwaba ranch). This activity falls under the topic: Identity, Family history and Local Heritage in the Family and Heritage Studies Primary School syllabus (2015-2022), see also activities in the Family and Heritage studies grade 3 textbook p, 3-5.	Objective: Participant-children will create a list of wildlife conservation taboos and discuss their importance in and for conservation education. Description: During the activity learners listed conservation taboos, which we divided into aquatic taboos and those aimed at flora and fauna preservation. The list was done in the learners' home language (Shona), and later translated into English for the purpose of this publication. Henceforth, they are presented below giving first the original words and then the English equivalent of the taboo.

Findings

The activities and community of inquiry sessions stimulated learners' interest while also demonstrating their understanding of and ability to apply heritage-based knowledges and experiences in formal education. The findings highlight how heritage-based practices mobilise learner's agency during formal classroom sessions, as well as how they can be used to protect against pollution and reduce resource over-extraction. In addition, learner participation in community of inquiry sessions appear to have led to a discussion in this study that resonates with Clough's (2010) concept of 'responsible lifestyle learning.' This is because

findings of the study point to the emergence of an onto-ethical mode of participation in environmental education. This mode of participation is shaped by questions about how children use the heritage-knowledges and practices with which they identify to influence how they interact with their natural environment. In this section, I discuss the findings that emerged from the activities and philosophical discussions that took place during the community of inquiry sessions.

Context-based p4c activities mobilise learners' agency

The heritage-based activities were transposed to a problem-posing approach that seemed to connect well with the community of inquiry approach because it drew experiences from the learner's life world. This mobilised learners' agency as they were able to draw their own totem pole symbols and list aquatic, flora, and fauna taboos, as illustrated in figure 1, figure 2A and 2B and table 2. The lesson observations and data sets show that learners' active involvement was a result of their agency being mobilized. According to Freire (1970), this empowers learners to initiate, manage, and sustain their own learning. The agency reflected in learners' drawings, participation in dialogue in community of inquiry sessions, and their listing of flora, aquatic, and fauna taboos allowed learners to critically reflect on their role in the world and their interdependence with nature. An example of this can be found in one of the learners' responses during the community of inquiry session in week 5:

Teacher: Is it possible for humans and wild animals to live side by side without causing problems?

Arnold: I think it is possible because we are all animals, and because we as humans can use our brains, we are the ones who must think of what to do with the animals.... before the people removed the fence that fenced Iwaba ranch, we lived next to the animals without even noticing them, but now that the fence has been removed, they are causing us problems...

Arnold's response demonstrates that humans play a role in determining how they may co-exist with wild animals by deciding how and where wild animals can live. However, it is important to note that, while the learners' responses are important in demonstrating how they critically reflect on their role in the world and their interdependence with nature, the assumption he offers raises ethical questions. Figures 1 and 2A and 2B show the learners' mobilized agency, as mentioned earlier.

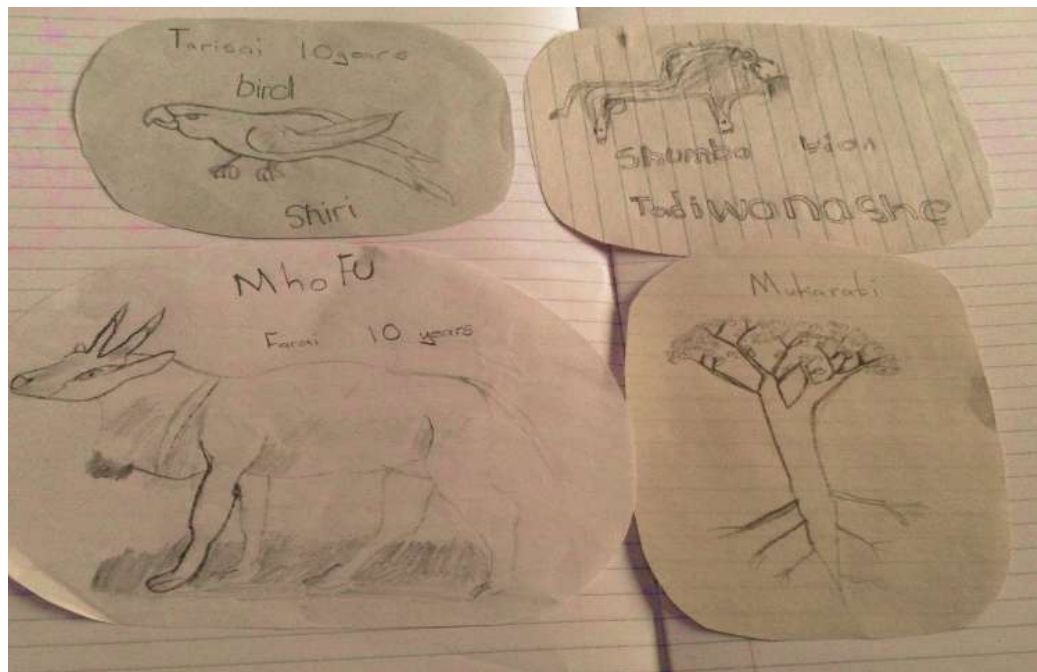


Figure 1: A selection of learners' drawings of totem pole animals and or symbols (from Week, 5 session 5): Fish eagle (Hungwe/Nyoni); Lion (Shumba/Sibanda); Eland (Mhofu/Mpofu) and Burkea tree (Mukarati/ Umnondo).

In connection with the totems pole symbols learners were also asked to list flora and aquatic taboos as shown on the table below and also in children's work in figure 2A and figure 2B. while the children's work simply identifies the taboos and their implications, the table below illuminates some of the scientific concepts explained in the children's formal school curriculum textbooks.

Figure 2A: Learners' work on aquatic taboos also presented on table 2 with an English translation for readers who are unfamiliar with the Shona language. The work was part of the activities leading to the community of inquiry session of week 6

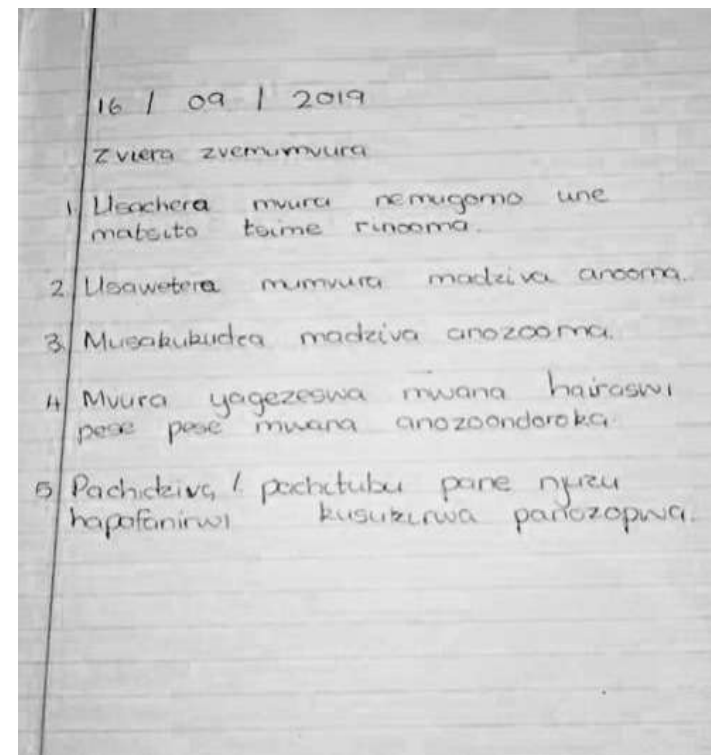


Figure 2B: Learners' work on flora and fauna taboos is also presented on table 2 with an English translation for readers who are unfamiliar with the Shona language. The work was part of the activities leading to the community of inquiry session of week 6.

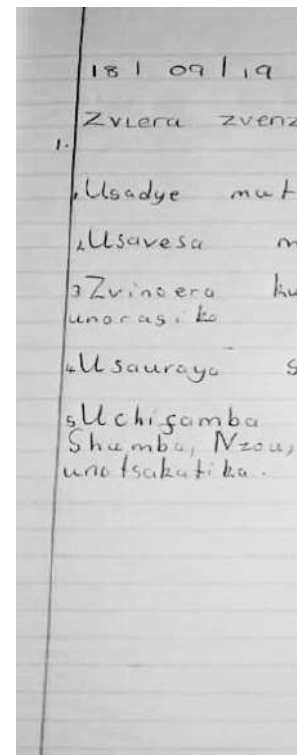


Table 2: Children's list of aquatic, flora, and fauna taboos (See **Figure 2A** and **2B**). The table was developed to demonstrate the connections between the taboos and scientific concepts in the learners' books.

Taboo	Description/ Category		Minimise against			
	Aquatic	Flora & Fauna	Pollution	Resource over extraction	Accidents	Cruelty & Bad behaviour
Usachera mvura nemugomo une matsito tsime rinooma. <i>(If you use ash-tainted tins to get water, the well will dry up.)</i>	X		Ash can cause chemical changes that affect water quality			It is bad behaviour to add a substance that make water taste unpleasant
Usawetera mumvura madziva anooma. <i>(If you urinate in rivers, the water will dry up).</i>	X		Urine can introduce bacteria, toxins and other harmful substances			It is a sign of both cruelty & bad behaviour to urinate in water
Musakukudza madziva anozooma <i>(Don't use nets when fishing, the rivers will dry up).</i>	X			To avoid extinction of some fish species	To avoid drowning in rivers	
Mvura yagezeswa mwana hairaswi pese pese nekuti mwana anozoondoroka. <i>(If you dispose the baby's wash water everywhere, the baby will become thin).</i>	X		Soaps and detergents can affect the soil chemical composition and cause plants to wilt			
Pachidziva/chitubu pane njuzu hapafanirwi kusukirwa nekuti panozopwa. <i>(People should avoid washing dishes in springs or pools that inhabit mermaids as the water may dry).</i>	X		can decrease the breeding ability of aquatic organisms	Avoid extinction of organisms		
Usadye mutupo unobva mazino. <i>(You will lose your teeth if you eat your totem).</i>		FF		Minimise extinction of some species		

Usavesa miti yemichero, masango anooma. <i>(Fruit trees should not be used as forests will droop).</i>		FF		Minimise extinction of tree species		
Zvinoera kutuka muchero wemusango, unorasika. <i>(It is a taboo to curse indigenous fruit trees while in the wild as you may get lost).</i>		FF				It is cruelty and bad behaviour to show disrespect
Ukaitira tsvina muzhira unoita mamota pamagaro. <i>(If you defecate on walkways you will have boils on your buttocks).</i>		FF	Human waste can cause excessive growth of algae and weeds			It is cruelty and bad behaviour to expose human waste openly
Usauraya shato nokuti mvura haizonai. <i>(Do not kill a python, or it will not rain).</i>	X	FF		Pythons are some of the largest snakes in the world and are a protected species under The Zimbabwe Parks Wildlife Authority		It is cruel to kill something that one does not eat.
Ukadya hwowa mupengo unopenga. <i>(If you eat wild mushrooms you will suffer from mental illness).</i>		FF			To avoid human poisoning through eating mushroom	
Uchifamba ukaona mhuka dzinenge Shumba, Nzou neNyati usaridza mhere unotsakatika. <i>(If you come across Lion, Elephant and Buffalo -The Big Five- in the wild, do not scream or you will disappear)</i>		FF	To protect the numbers of The Big Five from declining		To avoid death through direct conflict with wild animals	

Ukasenga mwenje musango unozoita muroyi. <i>(If you carry a burning light in the forest, you may become a witch or wizard).</i>		FF			To avoid causing veld fires	It is cruel to intentionally cause veld fires as this exposes animals to danger
Ukatasva imbwa unoitita muroyi. <i>(If you seat on your dog's back, you will become a witch or wizard).</i>		FF				It is cruel to abuse other animals
Ukauraya rwaivhi unozofa uchifunuka muviri. <i>(If you kill a chameleon, you will die from scale rot).</i>		FF	To protect the numbers of chameleon species from declining			It is cruel to kill animals especially those one does not eat
Ukauraya datya hakuzonayi. <i>(If you kill a frog it will not rain)</i>	X			Avoid the over-harvesting of frogs		It is cruel to kill animals that you do not eat

Context-based p4c practices minimise pollution and resource over-extraction

From the list of taboos provided above (Table 2, Figure 2A and Figure 2B) and the dialogue that followed, it is evident that the taboos suggested by children appear to have the potential to govern how people interact with their environment by prohibiting use of items perceived as sacred. Children listed the following trees as some of the species that should not be cut down for material (e.g. fencing poles, furniture and firewood) or harvested if fruits are not yet ripe;

Muzhanje (Sugar plum *Uapaca kirkiana*)

Muhacha (Mobola plum *Parinari curatellifolia*)

Mutamba (the Natal orange *Strychnos spinosa*)

Mutohwe (Snot apple *Azanza garckeana*)

Munhengeni (Sourplum *Ximenia caffra*)

Muuyu (Baobab tree *Adansonia digitata*)

According to Farai, one of the learners during the community of inquiry (Week 5 -Session 5: Exploring the purpose of aquatic, flora and fauna taboos), it is illegal to use fruit trees such as those mentioned above as this may lead to serving a jail term. Below is a dialogue from the community of inquiry session highlighting some of the consequences of not observing the stipulated taboos.

Farai: If you use some of those trees as firewood or fencing poles you may be arrested.

Tinevimbo: ... especially Muuyu, Chief said anyone caught cutting down the tree will be arrested.

Teacher: Besides being arrested what else could happen if you use these trees as firewood or as fencing poles?

Tinevimbo: I was told that if we fence our garden with poles from these trees our crops will be destroyed by baboons or other wild animals.

Tadiwanashe: ... we were told by my grandmother if we don't obey the rules there won't be rain and people will start experiencing so many diseases.

It is evident from the excerpt above that both the learners and the teacher were capable of inferring the consequences of disobeying taboos, as well as offering examples, counter-examples and reasons as they engaged in an inquiry process. This demonstrates how the W-R-A-I-T-E-C (Appendix A) can be used in community of inquiry sessions and how it may

potentially improve higher-order thinking skills. Furthermore, it is evident that taboos govern the types of indigenous trees used in the Sebakwe resettlement community and children understand the function and purposes of these taboos. According to Mubaiwa (parent, interviewed on July 17, 2019) such cultural values are aimed at monitoring human behaviour especially children when they play alone without the supervision of the elders. She goes on to explain that:

Mubaiwa: Zviera (taboos) help to transmit to the children the social values expected in the society. It's a way of teaching that forbids bad behaviour in both the young and the old as it warns them of the likely consequences that can befall them or the whole community if not obeyed.

The idea of monitoring human behaviour, particularly that of the younger generation, also surfaced during the community of inquiry session. The following excerpt is a continuation of the above dialogue from week 5 community of inquiry session.

Teacher: If I understand you correctly, it appears that when people break these taboos, bad things happen. Is it always true that bad things happen when people break rules?

Abel: I don't think it's true, last week elephants destroyed crops in our field but we haven't done anything.

Tarisai: What Abel is saying is true, baboons always come to destroy our maize field even when we haven't done anything. Our parents just tell us these things so that we won't behave badly... 'Hanzi ukagara munzira unoita mamota' *You will get boils if you sit on the road.* But it's not true, their fear is just that you may be run over by a car.

Tadiwanashe: I think adults teach us about these things because they only want I to think on our own what really happens if you do something like what Tarisai has said.

The findings demonstrate how taboos that are observed in the Sebakwe community are passed on from one generation to the other for purposes of protecting the environment and also regulating human behaviour. This concurs with the definition of taboos given by Makamure and Chimininga, (2015) that taboos are avoidance rules that forbid members of Shona communities from performing certain actions, such as eating some kinds of foods (ibid, p. 8). However, beyond this, taboos also help enhance children's development of

critical reflexive thinking skills as well as development of ethical reasoning as demonstrated in the next section.

Context -based p4c activities help children develop ethical reasoning

Findings also show that children were also capable of weighing multiple perspectives in order to make informed decisions. This demonstrates that children understand and can reason about ethical issues related to their life experiences. According to the Jackson good thinker toolkit W-R-A-I-T-E-C it is possible that children may offer reasons in support of their opinions (Jackson, 2013). The following extract is based on the Week 4 lesson on Ethics, exploring the topic/question, *‘What makes an action right or wrong?’* Here children are positioning themselves as knowledgeable with ethical reasoning to solve problems:

Abel: It is not good to start veld fires or even to put up wire snares because that will kill other animals, even our cattle could be killed...

Tadiwanashe: Yes, I think Abel is right, animals also need food. How would you feel when someone burns your granary?

Tatenda: ... but can we blame someone who might have caused the veld fire by mistake, if you are clearing your land and then the fire is blown away by the wind. My father also said we must burn grass so that our cattle can have fresh grass when it germinates.

Abel: But when you burn grass you may kill some small animals and insects that live under grass.

Tatenda tried to give what could be regarded as a self-serving justification of an unethical behaviour, but other learners were quick to question him:

Tarisai: So how do we know that it was a mistake because someone can just set out fire and claim that it was a mistake?

Tatenda: I think when someone does something bad intentionally, they don't feel bad about it, but when I apologise or try to correct the mistake it shows that that was not what I wanted to do.

Merriam: if that is the case then no one will go to jail because people will just apologise,
I think we have to look at what you would have done or caused to happen otherwise
people would just give excuses.

Abel: So, Merriam are you saying explaining what could have happened is wrong?

From the excerpt above it could be seen that children contended with a variety of ethical positions as they tried to come up with possible solutions. It could be inferred that the learners' discussion followed the ethical reasoning definition of looking at the right and wrong conduct or approaching the issue from a moral point of view like what Tadiwanashe did when he asked others how they would feel if their food storage were destroyed. It's easy to see how the dialogue falls within the letters of the Good Thinker ToolKit 'W-R-A-I-T-E-C' (Appendix A). Learners, for example, were able to provide Reasons to support their claims or assumptions. Abel provided reasons for why he thought it is undesirable to cause veld fires at the start of the dialogue, and others were capable of making inferences like Tarisai and Merriam did. The findings expand on and deliberate a key dimension of the broader study, namely that of situated-intergenerational-significant learning. The next section reflects on this aspect of the study.

Discussion

The nexus between unhu/ubuntu, p4c and environmental ethics education

This nexus evolved from the philosophy for children (p4c) Afrophilia, Environmental ethics education plan as illustrated in figure 2 below

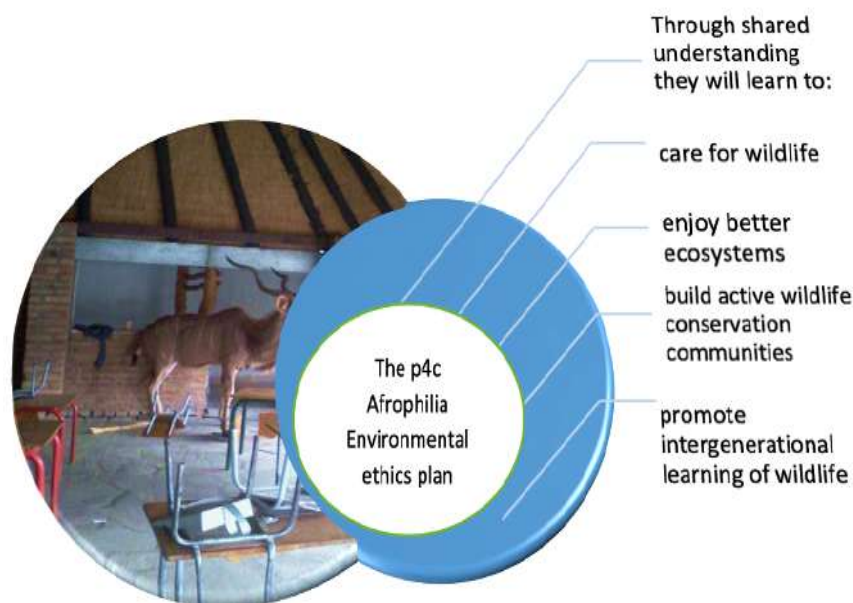


Figure 3: A generative onto-ethical mode of wildlife conservation participation that emerged through the study’s ability to enhance development of ethical reasoning and facilitate a shared understanding of the purpose of heritage-based practices. The figure also shows a Kudu that was photographed in the classroom after escaping from the dogs that were chasing it, disrupting an ongoing community of inquiry session.

The findings, especially the learner dialogues, indicate the need for integrating into the school curriculum knowledges that are significant to the learners’ life world as these potentially allow children to make sense of the world around them (Clough, 2010). This was reinforced through use of culturally oriented artefacts such as totems and taboos drawn from the learners’ life-world (Table 2) that were aimed at stimulating the learners’ imagination, which Vygotsky (2004) describes as an essential aspect of one’s cultural life and thought system.

The philosophical dialogue through the community of inquiry enabled the learners to make use of their shared understanding of their learning through totems and taboos. Emphasis in the learning activities was not on enhancing individual understanding, but to enhance knowledge-building within the group that results from joint meaning-making in a shared context such as the community of inquiry (Stahl, 2015). This and the fact that the activities were drawn from the learners’ everyday experiences give pointer to the fact that learning need not be diametrically opposed to the social practice in which it is taking place (Engeström, 1996).

For the activities reported in this paper and in the broader study the learning process were based on Vygotsky's three key themes: culture, language, and the zone of proximal development ³²(Vygotsky, 1978). As a way of example, the Afrophilia artefacts (totems and taboos) that were used evolved and emerged from the cultural histories of practice of the people in the Sebakwe community involved in the study. These practices subsequently broadened the knowledge base of the learners involved because the community of inquiry process allowed them to approach the discussion from a broader conception of knowledges as shown in table 2 above where the learners' assumptions are linked to the formal curriculum knowledges.

According to participants such as Mubaiwa quoted above, part of the knowledge and conservation techniques that were shared in the study are an inheritance from the ancestry of the people in the area passed from one generation to the other. These inherited heritage knowledges such as taboos (*zviera*) and totems (*mitupo/ isibongo*) utilised in the community of inquiry resemble what Masuku (2018) referred to as trans-generational impartation of knowledge. This, according to Masuku (2018) is essential in helping learners recognize their own epistemological backgrounds.

The generative onto-ethical mode, as well as the dimension of situated-intergenerational-significant learning, represent a relational and interactive achievement because they are not hierarchical but rather synergistic, with success in one strand of learning resulting in success in other strands. Learner participation in a community of inquiry makes it easier for them to share their experiences (learning as shared understanding) and as a result, they can make sense of their own world (situated learning). This creates space for critical reflection on how they exist in the world (reflexive learner agency) potentially allowing them to care for wildlife, enjoy better ecosystems, build active wildlife conservation communities, and promote intergenerational- wildlife learning. The implications of this for teaching and planning are that teachers should not prioritise one strand of learning over another strand, nor should they prioritise one goal of the generative onto-ethical mode of wildlife conservation

³² Zone of proximal development is defined as "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86). In this study the connection between the Vygotskian zone of proximal development and the indigenous heritage-based practices is to demonstrate how these facilitate development of higher-order thinking.

participation over another.

Concluding reflections

Children actively participated in community of inquiry sessions in which it was revealed that totems and taboos play a number of roles in the Sebakwe community in Zimbabwe. According to Tadiwanashe, a learner-participant during a community of inquiry, totems “*help them learn about their relatives and family history*” (week 5, session 5). This is consistent with literature stating that totems represent the clan's history and are used during rituals to communicate with ancestors (Shoko, 2007). As evidenced by the findings, members of the Sebakwe resettlement area are not expected to eat or abuse the plants or animals from which they received their totems.

The Afrophilia activities illustrated in the research as start-up capital for philosophical dialogue in a community of inquiry demonstrate how the pedagogical approach is compatible with the local context and could be a useful strategy for supporting wildlife conservation (Kideghesho, 2008). In this regard, the paper suggests that environmental ethics education emerges when local community heritage knowledges and practices are integrated into the curriculum through enacting pedagogical approaches that are compatible with their application. The research has revealed that the community of inquiry pedagogy and the Afrophilia experiences create space for generative and networked epistemic engagement with a broader conception of knowledges.

While there is only one case in focus here, it shows up some implications for re-thinking school-based conservation education. As shown in the case school-based conservation policies and environmental ethics education can be enriched via considering the potential role those indigenous cultural histories of conservation practice play in shaping future conservation research, education, and practice.

The implications of this case also point to potential for exposing more teachers, parents, and learners to the theory and practice of Afrophilia-based philosophy for children, which, as demonstrated in this paper, is a “critical pedagogy and methodology, not only of teaching but also as a mode of general inquiry and research” (Gregory, Haynes & Murris, 2017). In this way, education could be practiced in a way that differs from the teacher-textbook-based form of teaching and learning that places a strong emphasis on examination success. As shown in

this case, implementing an inquiry-based approach to teaching and learning will ensure that school activities are focused on assisting learners in making sense of the world around them by gaining deeper understanding of their immediate context and broadening the curriculum to include other relevant knowledges and practices.

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- APPENDIX B: Jackson’s good thinker toolkit *WRAITEC* (Adopted from Jackson, 2013)**

Good Thinker's Letter	What is it used for?	Question Stems & Claim Starters
W What do you mean by...?	<i>Seeking clarity</i> - "W" is essentially meant to capture the aspect of thinking that involves sensitivity to complexity, possible ambiguity, and multiplicity of meanings. "W" questions are clarifying questions.	- What do you mean by...? - What does the author mean by? - What is the...? - What have I forgotten to ask? - What else do I need to know?
R Reasons	<i>Thinking about why</i> - "R" reflects that for a philosophical thinker it is not enough to simply offer an opinion. Opinions need to be supported by reasons. Are some reasons better than others? When we want to know WHY we ask reason questions.	- Are reasons being offered to support claims? - What are the reasons...? - One of the reasons...
A Assumptions	<i>Acknowledging/making clear what we take for granted</i> - "A" recognizes that an important part of philosophical thinking is becoming aware of and making explicit assumptions that underlie a discussion, position, argument or presentation. Identify assumptions, recognize how those assumptions are influencing what we are seeing and judging, and identify other assumptions that can be made.	- Is it reasonable to assume...? - Are we aware of and identifying key assumptions being made? - An assumption embedded in this argument/claim is... - The author is assuming...
I Inferences	<i>Thinking about "if...then"</i> - "I" represents "If ... then's...", inferences, and implications. IF, for example, we do, or don't pursue a particular line of action, THEN what follows? What are the consequences? Inferences have a starting point (something seen, heard, smelled tasted or touched) and an ending point (a "place" the mind "moves" to that is beyond what was presented at the starting point). I may see a person frown (STARTING POINT) and infer they are sad (ENDING POINT).	- Is it reasonable to infer _____ from _____? - If _____ then is it reasonable to infer _____? - From _____ I infer _____.
T Truth	<i>Thinking about what is true, and the implications of what we think is true</i> - "T" concerns is what's being asserted in fact true? How can we find out? What we take for granted as true must meet certain standards? What are those standards? How do we measure what's true? Even if we aren't sure if something is true can we imagine what might be the implications if it is true?	- Is what's being said true, and what are the implications if it is true? - If _____ is true, then what does that imply? - If _____ is true does that imply _____? - When _____ is true it implies _____.
E Examples Evidence	<i>Offering evidence to prove a claim is true</i> - "E" is one way in which clarification of a position or assertion can be accomplished. It is a way of making a general claim specific or testing a claim by presenting an illustrative example. Equally important is the offering of evidence to support assertions. What is the evidence? Evidence looks different depending on the discipline you are in. What does evidence look like in science? Social studies? Math? Language Arts?	What are some examples of _____? Are EXAMPLES being given or is EVIDENCE being offered to support or illustrate claims? _____ is an example of _____.
C Counter – Examples	<i>Offering counter-evidence to prove a claim is not true</i> - "C" reflects the important task of testing the limits of a claim or position by searching for a way to prove it false or at least to test the limits of the claim.	What are some counter-examples to _____? Are there any COUNTER – EXAMPLES to the claim being made? _____ is a counter-example to _____.

A7: Decolonisation and improvement of learning opportunities: Impact of Afrophilic Philosophy for Children (p4c) curriculum intervention in Sebakwe primary schools in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

The Afrophilic philosophy for children (p4c) in focus in this paper, is a version of Philosophy for Children (P4C) that draws insights from Lev Vygotsky and Mathew Lipman, with great antecedence toward language socialisation and couched within the philosophical foundations of unhu/ubuntu. This article is part of a broader Afrophilic p4c study conducted in Sebakwe resettlement schools in Zimbabwe. It discusses how Afrophilic p4c can be a useful model for decolonisation and improving learning opportunities, especially for children in disadvantaged schools. Drawing on my experience as an insider formative intervention researcher and employing researcher reflexivity as a methodology, I argue that Afrophilic p4c contributes to advancing a heritage-based approach to transformative education, which is a new emphasis in Zimbabwean education policy. This work presents a ‘third space’ by contextualising curriculum content knowledge in a collaborative learning centred classroom setting, resulting in the development of cultural confidence and competence for learners. The implications of this paper and the study to which it contributes is that the integration of indigenous heritage knowledges via sociocultural learning theory applications in the curriculum potentially leads to the advancement of higher order thinking skills in children. Finally, the article makes some recommendations regarding the need for additional research on this topic, specifically how more context-relevant curriculum and pedagogical interventions could be used to inform educational transformation in Zimbabwe.

Key words

Decolonisation; Afrophilia; Philosophy for children; Learning opportunities; Third space

Background and context of the study

Education in Zimbabwe today, not unlike in many African countries, is failing to help learners to discover the significance of their cultures and life experiences because the education on offer is disconnected from their lives, continues to reflect Eurocentric bias, and largely remains designed according to historical colonial trajectories (Shizha & Kariwo,

2011). Few countries in Africa have managed to substantively transform education in ways that allow learners to connect their daily lives and experiences to education (Chitumba, 2013). Education thus remains largely alienating from a linguistic as well as conceptual and experiential perspective (Shava, 2019; Zazu, 2012) – a problem that has given rise to calls for heritage-based curricula (Zimbabwe Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MpSoE), 2014; Shava, 2008; Zazu, 2012; Chitumba, 2013) to strengthen ‘learning as connection’ or meaning making and de-alienation (Lotz-Sisitka & Lupele, 2017; Shava, 2019; Zazu, 2012; Ncgoza & Chikunda, 2018).

This problem of alienation in education persists in Zimbabwe (more so in the resettlement schools under study, see below), despite a policy turn towards heritage-based education (MPSoE, 2014) and intentions to decolonise the curriculum. Internationally, substantive education theories building on the works of well-known figures, such as John Dewey (1932) and Lev Vygotsky (1978), indicate that learners’ cultural capital should be merged with curriculum content in such a way that the activities of the outer world are reflected in schools in order to advance learners’ abilities for meaning making and success. Vygotsky is famous for arguing that the social world offers potential for meaning making via the psychological process of internalisation. This same principle is being recognised in international discourse on educational transformation (e.g., UNESCO, 2021) which argues for a ‘new social contract for education’ that brings the life worlds of children, communities, schools and curriculum closer together. Yet these progressive philosophical, educational, theoretical and policy guidelines remain largely unpractised in the schooling system in Zimbabwe, and in the resettlement schools under study.

It is this problem that calls for a need to frame and navigate a “third space” (Bhabha, 1994, p. 54) within the Zimbabwean primary school classroom context that is the focus in this study, in which learners can relate their cultural capital to curriculum content via their own meaning constructions. This process of framing and navigating a ‘third space’ within the Zimbabwean primary schools involved exploration and development of an Afrophilic philosophy for children (p4c) approach via an intensive formative intervention study in the Sebakwe resettlement schools in Zimbabwe, where I am a teacher-researcher. The intention was to explore if this approach has potential to undo the tradition of a colonially inherited education

process that was systematically based on a model that negated indigenous experiences and meaning-making processes.

The Afrophilic p4c³³ approach developed in this study, offers insight into a version of P4C that draws insights from Vygotsky (1978) and Lipman (2013) and which emphasises language socialisation. In particular, the approach is socioculturally framed within African philosophical foundations of unhu/ubuntu³⁴ (Author, 2021). This is consistent with calls for decolonisation of the Zimbabwean curriculum, recently given impetus via a heritage-based turn in new curriculum policy (Ndofirepi, 2011; MoPSE, 2014). This follows ongoing efforts to address remnants of colonialism and associated forms of Eurocentrism in the country, which continue to create epistemic, linguistic and learning impediments for Zimbabwean children (Presidential Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training [CIET], 1999; MoPSE, 2014; Shizha & Kariwo, 2011; Zvobgo, 2003; Rodney, 1972).

This paper forms part of on-going exploratory work on the potential of an Afrophilic p4c learning lens, being developed by the author (Bhurekeni, 2020; 2021), that explores and elaborates unhu/ubuntu as a decolonial philosophy of education. It does this by examining the potential of an Afrophilic learning lens in a p4c community of inquiry (CoI), which foregrounds children's indigenous languages and cultural capital as tools to promote cultural agency and learning outcomes. The Afrophilic learning lens, draws African (Sebakwe community included) cultural histories of practice, including storytelling, folklore, totem recitation, songs, and games into the curriculum context, and is aimed at capturing “the political, and cultural complexities – and contradictions – which animate the historical *and contemporary* dynamic of African [unhu/ubuntu] philosophy” (Eze, 1997, p. 2, original emphasis). In the study, folklore stories, totem recitations, poems, proverbs, riddles, the natural environment (flora & fauna), arts, and games are all considered as Afrophilia reflexive artefacts that are outlets of philosophical thought, and which hold learning and meaning making possibilities for children (see Lipman, 2003).

³³ In this work I explicitly use ‘Afrophilic p4c’ to differentiate the emphasis of this work from mainstream Philosophy for Children (P4C) work. The lowercase p4c also illuminates the exploratory nature of the work, which draws on, but also elaborates, P4C as a field of study as originated by Lipman (2013).

³⁴ See elaboration of this and other related concepts below.

Previous research that informs this paper has shown that context-based P4C couched within a frame of decolonising methodologies could be a precondition for learners to actively participate in society (Reed-Sandoval, 2018; Ndofirepi, 2011; Author, 2021). According to Ndofirepi (2011), implementing P4C in schools, specifically in Africa, enables a third space within which learners begin to critically interpret the cultural, economic and political circumstances of their lives. Earlier findings from research implementing the Afrophilic p4c intervention in Zimbabwean resettlement schools demonstrated that the approach influences a change in teachers' roles, competences and practices (Author, 2021). What is less clear from the studies mentioned above is how Philosophy for Children, specifically the Afrophilic model that emphasises sociocultural learning, could serve as a future framework for decolonisation and improving learning opportunities for learners in disadvantaged schools, and what this means for the turn to heritage-based curriculum in Zimbabwe.

Methodology: Case study and reflexive formative intervention approach

As indicated above, this is an exploratory study. It is conducted from my position and role as a primary school teacher, teaching and conducting intensive, qualitative case study research (Sayer, 2010) in the resettlement area under study. Sayer (2010) explains that case studies normally involve intensive investigation into a phenomenon and are constituted by qualitative data involving studies of individual agents in their contexts, as well as the use of interview, observation, and ethnographic-type data, and triangulation and analysis of multiple sources of qualitative data (see Appendix A). The case study is constituted as a theoretical and practical formative intervention-based study in which I proactively reviewed Zimbabwean curricula and the decolonial intentions of the new heritage-based curriculum via historical analysis and developed and reflexively implemented an Afrophilia p4c community of inquiry approach with parents, children and teachers in the study area.

As indicated above, the study was implemented in the Sebakwe resettlement area in Zimbabwe. Sebakwe resettlement schools are among the marginalised resettlement schools that emerged between 2000 and 2002 following Zimbabwe's fast-track land reform programme (Jenjekwa, 2013). The schools in the Sebakwe community rely on children from low-income families who practise subsistence farming to support their children's education. As a result, the schools frequently lack adequate teaching and learning support materials, and

few educational innovations reach these schools, despite a national commitment to heritage-based curriculum reform. The resettlement schools were formed in the period when the country experienced severe political, economic and financial hyperinflation with the education system failing to keep pace, causing learners to struggle to meet labour-market demands (Gory, Bhatia, & Reddy, 2021). In response, the Zimbabwean government enacted a full-fledged curriculum reform (2015–22), shifting from content knowledge mastery to competency-based curriculum, which was phased out by grade level for operational and logistical efficiency (MoPSE, 2014). According to Gory, Bhatia and Reddy (2021), the curricula reforms were driven by the need to align the education system with 21st century skill-based curriculum and STEM education, while also promoting a heritage-based foundation. Resettlement schools, which were already under-resourced with no proper classrooms or teaching and learning resources (Mujuru, 2020), were forced to abandon the old curriculum in favour of the updated curriculum, just like the rest of the country's schools, with little support.

I have spent 15 years working in Sebakwe resettlement area in Zimbabwe, first as a non-graduate teacher and now as a PhD candidate. This places me as an insider 'formative interventionist' (Engeström, 2011) in the research process because I can be identified as someone who shares roles, identity, and experiences with the participants. As an insider, I was required to follow the unhu/ubuntu ethics as practiced in the Sebakwe area in order to meet indigenous criteria which can judge research 'not useful', 'not indigenous', 'not friendly' (Smith, 1999; Declaration on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples, 1993). As indicated above, my intention with this research was to explore the possibilities of an Afrophilia p4c approach to enhance learning potential and outcomes for learners in a 'third space'.

The children who participated in the community of inquiry sessions came from families with no formal educational history beyond basic primary level because their parents were former commercial farm workers. This is reflected in the parents' demographics presented in Appendix D3. Additionally, the educational experiences of the children involved in this study, like those of many other primary school children in postcolonial Zimbabwe, are shaped by colonial legacies passed down through the country's education system (Shizha & Kariwo, 2011). This is the legacy that has shaped both my experiences as a learner in rural

Chirumhanzu and my experiences as a teacher working with learners at the periphery. Hence, my reflexivities in this paper and the research to which it contributes are informed by the conditions of marginalisation and social abjection, as well as my persistent struggle to (re)learn the epistemic ideas (Afrophilic learning lenses) of the African philosophy of unhu/ubuntu to which I was exposed by my grandparents at a young age and as a graduate student during my MEd philosophy studies.

I endeavoured to deal with the complexities of working as an insider formative intervention researcher in this case study by practicing reflexivity, adhering to local values and norms, and building support structures with the assistance of Mbuya VaChihera, my study guardian. I was able to discuss any concerns (arranging workshop and interview dates and times) and manage my relationship with the participants amicably (Smith, 1999). Practising reflexivity involved adopting a multi-perspective and multi-voicing practice in accordance with qualitative research principles such as paying attention to methodological consistency, being sensitive to local context, obtaining a satisfactory and applicable sample, and adhering to virtuous ethical standards (Palaganas, Sanchez, Molintas, & Caricativo, 2017).

Dowling (2006) defines reflexivity as a process and concept that requires a researcher to give critical-analytic attention to his/her role/s in qualitative research. I used researcher reflexivity to respond to the following questions because I believed they were critical in charting the path to effective decolonisation and improving learning opportunities: *How does sociocultural learning theory support and contribute to the connection of informal learning in community and school-based learning? How will the experience of an Afrophilic Philosophy for Children change the perspectives of learners, teachers and parents on learning what learning is, and how will it enrich the development of critical reflexive thinking skills in learners?* To ensure rigour in this study, I used and adopted Lincoln and Guba's (1986) well-known qualitative research criteria of credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability, as shown in Appendix B. Further, because the intervention component of the research was multi-voiced and participant driven, the findings of this study are shaped by the participants, as reflexivity required me to give careful attention to their contributions.

Conceptual dimensions of the study

As introduced above, this study drew on, and developed, an Afrophilic p4c approach through drawing on sociocultural learning theory, as well as more mainstream P4C research. The Afrophilic p4c framing explored in this study draws on uhunu/ubuntu philosophy, and the sociocultural learning theory it draws on has particular concepts such as ‘zone of proximal development’ which are significant in this study. Bringing these together required use of the concept of ‘third space’. I elaborate further on the conceptual dimensions of the study below.

The concept *Afrophilic philosophy for children (p4c)*, as developed in my work, is a “version of Philosophy for Children that draws insights from Lev Vygotsky and Matthew Lipman to emphasise language socialisation and is framed socioculturally within African (unhu/ubuntu) learning foundations” (Author, 2021, p. 7). It draws on the Lipman tradition of Philosophy for Children but elaborates this further. According to Lipman, Sharp, and Oscanyan (1980), the Philosophy for Children curriculum was designed to improve the thinking process and help children to think for themselves, particularly by challenging them to make, say, and do things in more imaginative and thoughtful ways than the previous curricula did. Consequently, the Afrophilic Philosophy for Children intervention being developed in my study, like other approaches influenced by Lipman, appreciates John Dewey’s idea that the development of thinking should lie at the heart of school education (Saeed, 2013). It also uses a community of inquiry approach to embed face-to-face encounters (Green, 2017), derived from Charles Sanders Peirce’s conception of a worldwide community of scientific inquiry (Ndofirepi, 2011). Unlike Philosophy for Children in the Lipman tradition that used purpose-written philosophical novels, such as *Harry Stottlemeier’s Discovery* (Lipman, 1971), the Afrophilic p4c intervention in this study, makes use of African cultural artefacts such as poems, stories, and songs.

In the case study, these artefacts are deployed in creating a ‘*third space*’ for enabling meaning making and learning critical thinking skills. The concept of ‘third space’, briefly introduced above, is derived from the work of postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha. In this study it refers specifically to a place where learners bring their home knowledge and experience together with school knowledge and discourses to achieve curriculum decolonisation while improving learning opportunities for meaning making and critical thinking. According to Quigley and Hall (2014), the third space concept in education is a space that connects learners’ worlds with the world of school while valuing instructional and everyday discourses to support but not compete with curriculum discourse. Ordinarily, third

spaces are created when curriculum content knowledge, children's life worlds, and instructional discourses are combined and authentically integrated by the learner.

Engagement with Afrophilic cultural artefacts in the study further seeks to develop *African unhu/ubuntu learning foundations*. Though the word unhu/ubuntu varies by language, the concept of unhu/ubuntu is found in most African cultures, particularly in Southern Africa (Mugumbate & Chereni, 2019). In this study, the indigenous identity, awareness, retention and thought systems that learners bring to school and integrate with school content knowledge to create a third space meaning of how they understand the world, are referred to as unhu/ubuntu learning foundations because they are rooted in unhu/ubuntu philosophy (Ramose, 1999). Eze (1997) situates African philosophy as a counter-colonial practice that influences the development of self-understanding, a proposition that is best articulated in the works of Leopold Senghor, Kenneth Kaunda, Kwame Nkrumah and Julius Nyerere. Although I strongly support this liberatory/decolonial notion of African philosophy (Author, 2020), I recognise that Africa is not a closed system of values but embraces a diverse set of values. As a result, the indigenous knowledge foundations of my study are intertwined with the dynamic sociopolitical ecology that Africa has been exposed to since pre-colonialism, colonialism and postcolonialism.

As explained above, the Afrophilic p4c is **socioculturally** framed because sociocultural theory has multidimensional transformational benefits in educational contexts (Lui, 2012). As indicated above, the work of both Dewey and Vygotsky emphasise the sociocultural foundations of learning. Lev Vygotsky's theory, also known as 'sociohistorical' or 'cultural-historical' theory, was developed as a practical tool that has helped educators elaborate the transformative potential of sociocultural education (Zaretskii, 2016). This practical focus gives attention to the practice of teachers who help to mediate knowledge from the social plane, but also includes the learner's ability to internalise knowledge and to act. According to Green (2017) the explanation of intellectual development offered by sociocultural theorists like Vygotsky is supportive of the practices that P4C proponents consider central to education, as they are also concerned with learners' meaning making and thinking skills. Thus, there is resonance between sociocultural theory and Philosophy for Children, which Green describes as "a context of social mediation in which adults and children share perspectives and evaluate them in terms of their reasonableness" (Green, 2017, p. 42).

Typically, the collaboration between adults and children is best examined within the sociocultural concept of the *zone of proximal development*, in which learning, and development are viewed as “a dialectical unity in which learning does not follow but leads development” (Vygotsky, 1978 cited in Holzman, 2017, p. 26). In sociocultural terms the zone of proximal development could be defined as:

the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers. (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86)

In classroom contexts the zone of proximal development could be understood as a symbolic space that facilitates enactment of communicative learning methodologies; it resonates with the notion of ‘third space’ used above but offers further nuance of what typically occurs in this space from a learning perspective. In the zone of proximal development, the learner needs the mediation guidance of more knowledgeable others, whether teachers, adults or peer collaborators, in order to go beyond what they can attain via individual effort. Social interaction initiates development of the zone of proximal development (Lantolf & Aljaafreh, 1996) and involves ongoing dialectical development, as the learner attains a next level of ability/development, after which the zone moves forward in anticipation of the next development level (Zaretskii, 2016). This movement, when well mediated, creates great potential for learning and ongoing meaning making as further learning is supported or ‘scaffolded’ by more knowledgeable others in the ZPD (Zaretskii, 2016). The mediation process is not equated with knowledge transfer – rather it should focus on aiding expansion of children’s existing learning, knowledge and experience base. It is through internalising knowledge and experiences during mediated co-creative activities that learning-related development can take place (Vygotsky, 1978; Lantolf & Aljaafreh, 1996). This process is vital in framing a decolonial framework, especially for education systems dominated by the teacher-talk approach to learning, as it may better foster meaning making, learner agency, and critical thinking in ways that can address the problem of alienation in education.

In this study *decolonisation* is understood as an on-going process towards the dismantling of structures and systems (education included) that perpetuate the status quo, especially the problem of alienation in education, thus also addressing asymmetrical power dynamics (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). Put differently, the concept entails coming to terms with the

(ongoing) effects of colonialityⁱ as a disconcerting problem that needs to be confronted and cleaned out (Grosfoguel, 2007). In the Zimbabwean education context, decolonisation therefore signifies a move away from what the Ministry of Education (CIET, 1999) has identified as the continuity of imperial cultural hegemony in curriculum and pedagogy. As indicated above, this includes addressing the colonially inherited education structures that exclude African cultural heritage knowledges. This is important because such exclusions position learners as epistemically disempowered agents (Reed-Sandoval, 2018), producing alienation (Shava, 2008). Thus, decolonisation in education is not just about dismantling or critiquing structures and systems, but demands an expansive process of remembering, valuing and revitalising indigenous heritages and knowledge systems for their learning potential; in other words, it requires situating educational inquiries in relation to the existential reality or life worlds of learners (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018).

The Afrophilic p4c curriculum formative intervention, implemented via a 3 field decolonial ‘quadrant’ process model

Efforts to establish an Afrophilic p4c curriculum for Sebakwe resettlement primary schools in Zimbabwe was a complex process that required substantive research and enagement over a five-year period, of which three years actively engaged learners, teachers, parents and educational officials in the formative intervention process at classroom level. To map out the process followed, I developed a ‘force field’ diagram (Figure 1) that shows four quadrants reflecting the developing process to move towards a transformed curriculum object.³⁵

³⁵ Object here refers to ‘object of activity’ which gives activity its purpose and meaning as used by Vygotsky and post-Vygotskian theorists. The object of activity in focus is the transformation of curriculum towards a more robust decolonial curriculum.

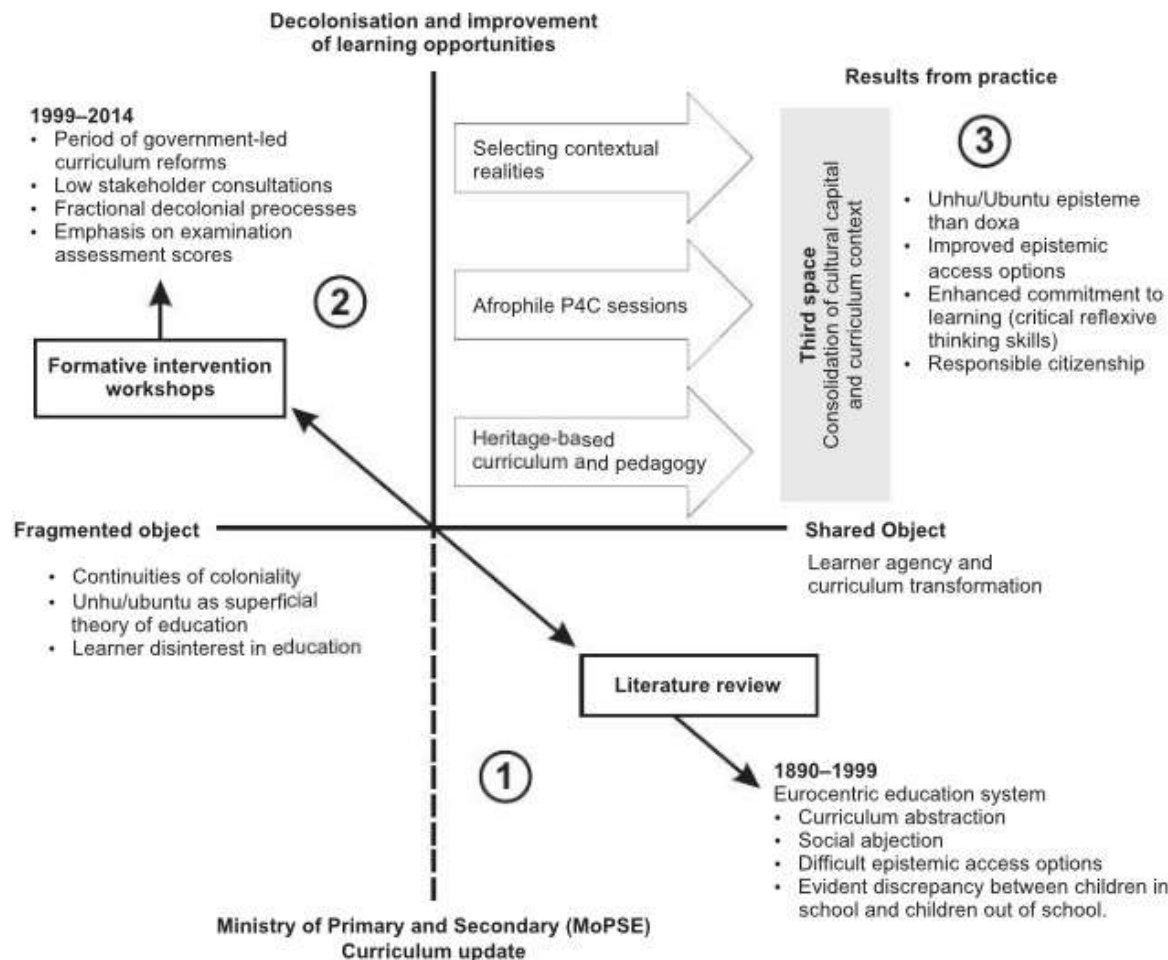


Figure 1: A field-based quadrant model reflecting the development of an Afrophilic p4c formative intervention towards a shared object that strengthens learner agency and curriculum transformation.

The two bottom quadrants allowed me to map out the historical sociology of the past curriculum via literature review, contemporary policy review and education system ‘status quo’ analysis (Author, 2020). Information in the bottom right quadrant is directly defined by the existence of the formal colonial education values in the curriculum, which was paradoxically inherited by the post-independence government until 1999 (see Commission of Inquiry into Education and Training [CIET], 1999). The left bottom quadrant, under the heading ‘fragmented object’, highlights some of the barriers to effective learning in schools that emerged from the inherited curriculum from 1890 to 1999. These are: continuities of coloniality, superficial interpretation of unhu/ubuntu philosophy in recent educational reforms, and learner disinterest in learning (Author, 2020). These informed the further analysis of the current status quo, and the conceptualisation of the formative intervention, or the activities reflected in the top quadrants of the model.

Findings related to the new government curriculum reforms, as well challenges such as fragmented decolonial approaches, over-emphasis in examination scores, and poor consultation and support in the curriculum reform process, emerged from a literature review and reflexive interviews (Author 2021a, 2021b). The findings associated with this quadrant mainly demonstrate the government's efforts toward curriculum decolonisation shortly after the 1999 Presidential Enquiry into Education Report (CIET, 1999), and which then influenced a heritage-based curriculum reform. As indicated above, it was the poor articulation and implementation of these policy reforms that motivated this study and its formative intervention component, that sought to explore the potential of an Afrophilic p4c approach to decolonising curriculum reform in practice. .

This led to the formative intervention activity (reflected in the right top quadrant), and my subsequent participation in a series of multi-voiced (see Appendix D for participants' demographics) formative intervention workshops where context-relevant Afrophilia reflexive artefacts were selected for teaching and learning in 10 Philosophy for Children lessons with learners [9 girls and 7 boys] (see Appendix C). The workshops also allowed me to share with and introduce the theory and practical aspects of P4C to fellow teachers who joined in the process of the intervention. This involved introducing the process-based analytical tools that were used for classroom lesson (CoI) observations (Author, 2021).

Afrophilia reflexive artefacts (African proverbs, music, picture books, images, and folklores) were identified and selected in order to create a synergy between p4c intervention and the Zimbabwean primary and secondary education curriculum. During the Afrophilic p4c sessions, learners, invited guests, and the teachers explored context-driven topics/themes through open-ended questioning and dialogue. As way of example, a poem, or folklore story could be recited or participant-discussants could sing a song, then learners would generate questions emanating from the stimuli provided (further empirical detail of these lessons are reported in Author 2021a). Following the question generation, learners would selected a suitable question from their list of questions and engage in the enquiry process. Figure 1 (righthand top quadrant) shows broadly the steps that were undertaken in developing the Afrophilic p4c generative curriculum, (see Author 2021a, 2021b for empirical reports on how the lessons played out).

The Afrophilic p4c sessions were followed by reflexive interviews with parents, teachers, education inspectors and learners. The broader areas of questioning that guided the reflexive interviews are provided in Appendix A. The broader questions for adult participants (shown in Appendix A) explored aspects to do with participant's understanding of the Zimbabwean education system and their reflections on the Afrophilic p4c intervention process, especially their reflections on the study's purpose and intent. For the learners, the questions (shown in Appendix A) explored their experiences of the community of inquiry and the possible benefits of CoI and p4c in general. Emerging from these activities, as illustrated on the quadrant diagram, was an understanding of curriculum as a shared object anchored on unhu/ubuntu episteme and contextualised in such a way that it creates a third-space opportunity for meaning making.

This process of engaging with curriculum reform via the force-field model was not only an academic exercise. Of interest is that the same process understanding is carried in the experience and dialogue of the participants. For example, one of the participants who has been a teacher since 1978 explained that,

During the early years of our independence, the government implemented policies, aimed at detaching the education system from the colonial experiences. It is no secret that many schools were built during this period, but the colonial system was so engrossing that the government was unable to completely abolish the inherited western education values in order to maintain 'standards'. But I'm starting to realise that this is why we continue to teach our children some curriculum content that devalues our culture. Previous reforms have also taught me that the government does not consult stakeholders, particularly those in remote areas and, worse, those in these newly established resettlement schools like us. (Research journal, workshop records 20/02/2018)

Another participant (a parent) intoned a similar explanation:

Some reforms are imposed on the teachers and parents; we often learn about the reforms on the radio; some of us do not even have radios or televisions, so we will only learn about a new programme or subject from our children when they return from school. Imagine if a grade one child

could better explain the changes if we and the teachers are also in the dark. I believe we should be involved; I understand we cannot all be included at the same time, but they should try to find representatives who will consult with us and provide feedback; I believe this will result in better change. (Research journal, workshop records 20/02/2018)

As evidenced by the two participant responses above, there is need for a multi-voiced approach to curriculum reform, as well as a more context-relevant curriculum. Thus, the decolonial quadrant model and the processes involved in constructing the study offer lessons in showing specific ways and means by which stakeholders can play a role in influencing curriculum transformation. Following their participation in identifying and selecting Afrophilia artefacts as well as reflecting on the broader aspects of the education system, participants started to make greater demands for educational quality and for a curriculum relevant to community needs. In the following section I discuss the main impacts of the p4c intervention.

Study findings: Impact of the Afrophilic p4c curriculum intervention in Sebakwe Resettlement Area

Following the community of inquiry sessions, I conducted 12 individual reflective interviews with 1 education inspector, 4 teachers, 4 parents and 3 children,ⁱⁱ data analysis revealed that the socioculturally framed Afrophilic p4c had made an impact in the study area. According to one Great Zimbabwe University lecturer who attended one of the communities of inquiry sessions while visiting the area for student teacher assessment visits:

The approach is novelty and pioneering, actually it is a real emancipation of the learner. The Sebakwe resettlement learners and their parents and such resettlement schools have untold stories. This allows them to champion their stories while also making learning relevant to their context. (William, a lecturer, March 21, 2019)

From qualitative analysis of the reflective interviews, three themes emerged. namely, collaborative learning-centredness; context-relevant curricula; and development of cultural confidence and competence. These are discussed below.

- **Participation in community of inquiry fosters collaborative learning-centredness**

The reflective interviews were able to gather insights into the extent to which participation in community of inquiry using culturally oriented artefacts led to collaborative and critical reflexive thinking skills development. As indicated by one of the teachers,

I initially mistook the community of inquiry for a form of group work and thought to myself, “Why bother?” I often assign group work tasks to learners in my class. But now I realise CoI is much more than just group work. In group work, learners are much more concerned with finding correct answers, whereas in CoI, learners are much more concerned with building on each other’s understanding to improve their thinking. It’s fascinating to sit back and watch these children converse without being obsessed with outclassing each other. (Manyarara, Teacher: July 4, 2019)

Manyarara was not the only one who confused the community of inquiry with group work discussions in class. Some teachers observed that, despite the fact that the approach, such as group work, was applicable in almost all the subjects they taught at primary school level, CoI would devalue their position in the classroom, making learning activities more dominant than teacher-talk. Teachers generally agreed that CoI is more learning-centred and would help learners understand concepts better than the traditional teacher-centred approach because CoI encourages learners to form their own opinions and help each other gain a better understanding of the topic. The following excerpt from week 2 session 2 [see Appendix C] demonstrates how learners help each other during the community of inquiry:

Abel: Fungisai if you read our social studies textbook it says members of parliament are the law makers, we did the lesson last term maybe you were not around.

Tirisai: Do you remember when we listed our ministers and their ministries that was when we did what Abel is talking about.

Fungisai: Yes, I remember, but what about Chiefs do they also make laws?

The same themes of collaboration and learning-centeredness emerged in the interviews with children. Farai, one of the study's participants, explained that she has learned to listen and understand other's perspectives in order to make a meaningful contribution to conversation. *"During the P4C sessions, we listen to others and to ourselves and then learn to see things from the way others see them in comparison to our own perspective. That way, we will be able to see things in a different light than before"* (January 29, 2020). She says the Afrophilic p4c has helped her to develop an attitude of questioning things she used to take for granted, such as questioning the hidden meaning of a folklore story or proverb.

The teachers, children and even parents in the Sebakwe resettlement area did not only see p4c as an alternative approach to teaching. The participants felt that the approach was part of learner empowerment as children could engage in 'free and open dialogue' (Sharp, 1991). In the case context, all the dialogues were driven from context-based Afrophilia reflexive artefact as shown in Appendix C. Ordinarily, in P4C there is great use of open-ended questioning; as a way of example the following dialogue is excerpted from the week 9 session on human rights, concerning children's rights:

Teacher: Do you think children do what they always want?

Learners: No.

Teachers: So, what is it that stops children from doing what they want?

Tatenda: At times parents do not allow us to do the things we want... They say we will behave badly so they always tell us what to do.

Abel: When we are at school we do not always do what we want because we follow school rules.

Teachers: Do you have rules when you play your own games as children?

Learners: Yes.

Teachers: So, do you think it is adults [parents/teachers] who stop you from doing what you want?

Tadiwanashe: No, we always have rules... even adults have rules that they follow. If you always do what you want then you may be in trouble with other because you may do what they don't like.

Teacher: Who would like to follow on from what Tadiwanashe says, Tarisai, what do you think?

While the questions that the teacher was asking encouraged learners to participate and to think deeply, they also encouraged the teacher to be critical in how he crafted his questions so as to keep the dialogue going. Hence, in questioning their own practice, it is hoped they will be able to “reimagine relations and obligations in response to the concerns of children” (Wall, 2010, p. 1).

- **The Afrophilic Philosophy for Children Intervention is context-relevant**

The participants found common connections between p4c and the indigenous ways of being and knowing. Though P4C and sociocultural theory – as presented above – do not principally emerge from the same socio-historical-political location as an Afrophilia learning lens, it was found in practice that the conceptual framing of the study offered a resonating heuristic model for Afrophilia learning processes as found in social context. In Afrophilic learning processes,

when children are given a task to complete, there is always an adult monitoring their progress, the adults do not just let children work on given tasks on their own this includes small tasks such as cooking, the children are monitored so that when they encounter a challenge they are assisted. This seems to help children accomplish given tasks and as a result the children will be able to work on the task on their own. (Research journal, 19/05/2018)

This observation resonates with an explanation that was offered by a parent:

There is no set schedule for learning at home; the child is always learning. All I do is keep an eye on the children and correct them when they make a mistake. When I want to emphasise the lesson, I tell a story that is relevant to what the children will be doing. This way, they will remember the story and it will be more relevant to them. We allow children to do things on their own so that they can complete the activities even when we are not present. What I saw during your lessons made me happy because when we were in school, teachers would force us to memorise what they taught us, and you would forget it in a matter of days. It differs from learning alone or with

minimal assistance, I can tell you what my mother told me years ago because she would let me and my sisters figure things out on our own [with her background support]. (Mubaiwa, parent, 19 June 2018)

Among the perceived connections between P4C and Afrophilic learning processes is the recognition that the approach does not create separate worlds for children and teachers. There is a lot of interlinking and constant feedback as the adults monitor their children's progress. According to an interview with one of the learners:

Abigal: It makes us think about what we learn and do at home because some of the questions make us think even of the things we do at home.

Interviewer: Can you think of an example of the things you have done during the sessions?

Abigal: there is a time when we were doing a lesson [session] on things that are right and wrong you cannot only think of things that are right at schools and not at home. You have to think of all the things that you do.

The findings show that a connection could be established between what the learners already know and the school activities. According to Lotz-Sisitka (2013) this notion of 'learning as connection' potentially helps learners to abstract general concepts or principles from concrete examples. As school activities become situated within an authentic context or the learners' life world, the opportunities for learning, social participation. and change expand once more because learners will be able to activate their prior knowledge in ways that allow new understanding and learning which. as shown above, reflects the fundamental principles of sociocultural learning theory as conceptualised within an Afrophilic uhunu/ubuntu philosophical frame that emphasises relationality – children can relate what they experience in the world with what they learn in school and vice versa.

- **Afrophilic Philosophy for Children fosters development of cultural confidence and competence**

Working for 3 years with the same children in a multi-levelled class with age category 8–11 years on a heritage-based Afrophilic p4c intervention helped the learners to develop cultural

confidence and competence. Figure E2, Appendix E showcases learners dressed in their traditional dress ready to perform a cultural dance which, in the context of this study, is a demonstration of their confidence in their culture. Not all learners who participated in the community of inquiry are of the same cultural background, hence the ability to understand and interact with people from other cultures, as the learners did during community of inquiry, is an indication of cultural competence. The following excerpt [from week 3, see Appendix C] also demonstrates the learners' cultural confidence and competence as they engage in dialogue, each drawing from their own experiences of life:

Tadiwanashe: I think my dressing gives me my identity because when I am dressed in my school uniform every can tell that I am a school child.

Tinevimbo: I agree with Tadiwanashe because even at church we have uniforms and people can tell which church I go to when they see my uniform.

Abel: For me I don't think a uniform can give me my identity because even someone who is no longer at this school can have the same uniform as mine, I think it is my language that makes me, me. People can hear me speaking Shona and know who I am.

Teacher: Is it the things that are identified with you that makes you, you or whom you are that makes you, you?

Tarisai: I think what people say makes me, me.

Abel: Tarisai can you explain, because I still think my language makes me, me.

Tarisai: Well, in school we speak English, but people can tell it is not our language, I speak Ndebele but people like Nomsa can tell I am not Ndebele because of how I speak.

Farai: Maybe it is the things we learn in school and at home that makes me, me

From the learners' dialogue it can be noted that they have a positive attitude towards exploring their identities regardless of the differences in their own cultural background. This

positivity towards cultural difference and the willingness to learn about other cultures, as shown by some learners in Figure E2 who participated in the mbakumba dance, which is predominantly a Shona dance, demonstrates cultural confidences and competence. The discussion section reflects on the findings and their implications in the resettlement schools' context.

Discussion

The findings provide insights to understand that the Afrophilic p4c intervention could be viewed as a collaborative-learning-centred educational approach. Collaborative-learning is associated with learners working together in small groups in order to improve their own and each other's learning (Johnson & Johnson, 1999). However, effective collaboration is often compromised by cases of unequal individual participation and lack of communicative skills, which is why in community of inquiry the teacher or facilitator has to be involved to make sure all learners have an opportunity to participate. To create a supportive context for collaborative-learning teachers can make use of context-relevant stimuli and open-ended questions that appear to motivate learners to want to enquire more about the topic or discussion. The teacher may also ask for learners who might not have said anything to make their contribution.

Sociocultural theory through the concept of the zone of proximal development supports the notion that human learning and development depends on connection/togetherness as the more knowledgeable members assist or scaffold the less knowledgeable members (Vygotsky, 1978). This kind of support is also evident in Afrophilic learning contexts. Afrophilic p4c fosters a cooperative engagement that is grounded in unhu/ubuntu philosophy, which is often voiced in the aphorism, "I am because we are, and since we are therefore, I am" (Mbiti, 1969, p. 215). This is consistent with sociocultural theory which perceives humans as social creatures capable of communicating and whose lives are better led within groups and societies based on shared ways of utilising language, ways of thinking, social practices and tools for getting things done (Mercer & Littleton, 2007).

During the Afrophilic p4c lessons learners explored a variety of heritage-based activities that helped them to develop cultural confidence and competences. This potentially contributed to improved learner agency as the learners identified with some of the activities (songs, dances), developing confidence and competence, and were not shy to participate. From the findings it

can be inferred that in this study two aspects of unhu/ubuntu philosophy which informs the Zimbabwean education curriculum were also mirrored, namely unhu/ubuntu metaphysics, which strengthens the idea of learner as a participative agent/being in a relational manner, and the epistemological strand which is primarily a function of experience (Ramose, 1999). This philosophical framing helped to make the Afrophilic p4c more context-relevant.

Through the practice of Afrophilic p4c I discovered that the dialogue initiates more personalised teaching and learning experiences that are applicable to context, and that this facilitates meaning making in learning for the children. Moreover, as has been stated before, the unfolding of the community of inquiry embraces both the learner and teacher in a form of social activity that deepens and enhances relational and contextual social participation and which also involves parents and the school community. This social participation enables learners to internalise the activities, habits and vocabulary and ideas of the members of the community in which they grow up and extend this with concepts and ideas that are in the curriculum (Vygotsky, 1978). As stated by Mooney (2013), Vygotsky reinforces the idea of social participation when he says:

Personal and social experience cannot be separated. The world children inhabit is shaped by their families, communities, socioeconomic status, education, and culture. Their understanding of this world comes, in part, from the values and beliefs of the adults and other children in their lives. Children learn from each other every day. They develop language skills and grasp skills and grasp new concepts as they speak to and listen to each other. (Mooney, 2013, pp. 100–101)

Furthermore, this case study also showed that participation in collaborative learning-centered activities anchored on Afrophilia learning foundations can close the knowledge gap between generations, as was shown by parent, teacher and community ‘multi-voiced’ contributions to the children’s learning. Ordinarily, the collaboration between adults and children that usually takes place during scaffolding in sociocultural learning is helpful as it reduces “the tyranny of time and generation gaps...” (Marechera, 1990, p. 40). This shows potential for the socioculturally framed Afrophilic p4c approach to also support lifelong learning as children continue to inquire into life’s bigger questions. Here, the process develops spontaneously and places the teacher (more knowledgeable ‘other’) in “the position of a developing adult” (Zaretskii, 2016, p. 156). The case study also showed that learners can co-engage in activities

that foster development amongst their peers. As a way of example, the picture in Appendix E shows children helping each other with their reading homework during lunch hour after they had learned the practice of co-inquiry during their p4c session. Learners' exposure to life's big issues during the Afrophilic p4c programme presented an opportunity for learners to begin to master the art of independently coping with a diversity of life and learning challenges. The absence of such an experience for learners (especially those in already disadvantaged schools such as the Sebakwe resettlement schools that were the focus of the case study) may result in learners failing to make significant progress in education. In this study period I noticed that learners became more interested in learning as learning became more meaningful for them, which was a change from before the intervention.

In the light of these findings and discussion, and given the limitations of the case study for wider generalisation, yet with insight into its potential for expanded uptake, backed by the literature reviews and substantive engagements undertaken to develop and explore the potential of this approach to decolonising the curriculum, and realising the intentions of the heritage-based curriculum policy intentions, I make the following recommendations for further research.

As was shown in this study, the 'third space' approach to the curriculum-pedagogy-decolonisation triad surfaced from continuous engagement with parents, teachers, education inspectors and children during the Afrophilia p4c formative intervention workshops, community of inquiry sessions, and reflexive interviews. As a result, I would recommend a need for additional research on this topic, specifically how more context-relevant curriculum and pedagogical interventions could be used to inform educational transformation in Zimbabwe, and potentially elsewhere, to strengthen learners meaning making and reduce educational alienation. In regard to further stakeholder engagement in curriculum reform there is also a need to include and consult other relevant stakeholders during the curriculum reform processes. Place-based curriculum reform grounded in uhnu/ubuntu philosophy and implemented through approaches such as that modelled by the Afrophilia p4c intervention in this study, should be further researched for their sociocultural learning potential that captures and includes learners' life worlds into curriculum reforms *in practice*. Such approaches are needed to address the lack of practical implementation of decolonial policy intentions.

Competing interests

The author has no competing interests to declare

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Appendix A: List of the broader areas of questioning that guided the reflexive interviews

Adults	Children
The interviews probed the community participants, parents, education officials and teachers on their experiences and reflections on (these broad areas of questioning): • The current school curriculum and their understanding of the current educational philosophy • The educational policy that suggests that there is a need to base education on the Unhu/Ubuntu philosophy • Their reflections on the workshop which surfaced local indigenous knowledge and artefacts for possible use in teaching lessons • Their reflections on the lessons if they observed any (they will also be invited to view some of the video's if they were not able to attend the lessons). • Their reflections on the study's purpose and intent • Any other reflections on the curriculum intervention.	The interviews probed the children on their experiences and reflections on (these broad areas of questioning): • Their understanding/description of the community of inquiry (CoI) • Their reflections on the CoI sessions which utilized local indigenous knowledge and artefacts as start-up capital • Their reflections on the benefits of CoI and p4c in general • Their reflections on their involvement in the CoI sessions and in the study in general • Any other reflections on the curriculum intervention

Appendix B: Credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability criteria (Adopted from Lincoln & Guba, 1986)

<u>Rigour Criteria</u>	<u>Purpose</u>	<u>Original Strategies</u>	<u>Strategies applied in my study to achieve rigour</u>
Credibility	To establish confidence that the results (from the perspective of the participants) are true, credible and believable	• Prolonged and varied engagement with each setting • Interviewing process and techniques • Establishing investigators' authority. • Collection of referential adequacy materials • Peer debriefing,	*I was an insider-formative interventionist with 15 years working experience in the Sebakwe resettlement schools. *Interview protocols were sent a week before the interview and the interviews were audio recorded. * I undertook philosophy for children training courses and participated in conferences to sharpen and deepen my knowledge and skills to perform my roles as a formative intervention researcher *Participants selected Afrophilia reflexive artefacts *I constantly visited my study guardian for debriefing and kept interactions with other participants.
Dependability	To ensure the findings of this qualitative inquiry are repeatable if the inquiry occurred within the same cohort of participants, coders and context.	• Rich description of the study methods • Establishing an audit trail • Stepwise replication of the data	*I prepared a teacher's resources pack for use during the formative intervention workshops *Data collection process for the study was developed in detail * Collected data was coded according to emerging themes
Confirmability	To extend the confidence that the results would be confirmed or corroborated by other researchers.	• Reflexivity • Triangulation	* As explained in the methodological, I utilised a reflexive journal *A tripod of theoretical lenses were applied for the study (decolonial, Curriculum, sociocultural theory) and diverse data sources were used.

Transferability	To extend the degree to which the results can be generalized or transferred to other contexts or settings	• Purposeful sampling to form a nominated sample • Data saturation	*I purposively selected participants basing on their proficiency of following languages Shona, IsiNdebele and Chi Tonga and their understanding of African cultural learning heritage as expressed in the Sebakwe resettlement area *Data analysis was done and the outputs were published or submitted for consideration in different journals as either conceptual or empirical papers.

Appendix C: Afrophilic P4C session themes and goals

P4C Lesson	Theme/ Topic	Afrophilia start-up capital	Goal/ Objective	Guest Participant(s)
Week 1: Session 1	Friendship & Betrayal Identifying the qualities/ aspects of a good friend	Folklore story: Tsuro na Gudo	- Learners will express why human beings need friend(ship) - Learners will identify the qualities or aspects of a good friend(ship) - Learners explore the qualities/ aspects make-up good friend(ship) or betrayal.	2 parents and 3 teachers
Week 2: Session 2	Justice/ Rules & Laws The law-making process/ Whose responsibility is it to make laws and pass judgement	Local newspaper cutting on death penalty Social studies textbook: Rules and Laws topic	- Learners will explore the law-making process in their community & at school. - Learners will identify the law-making body of the government - Learners explore the implications of the death penalty to unhu/ubuntu way of living.	
Week 3 Session 3	Identity What makes you, you?	Pictures of different people	- Learners will be able to offers reasons in support of their claims - Learners wonder about those things that are identified with them	
Week 4 Session 4	Ethics What makes an action right or wrong?	A mbira song	- Learners will be able to identify human-induced challenges i.e. land & water pollution - Learners explore those things that make an action right or wrong	A parent who presented the song.
Week 5 Session 5	Environmental Ethics The purpose of Aquatic and flora & fauna taboos	Totem pole symbols A list of flora & fauna taboos	- Learners will be able to identify their totem pole symbols. - Learners list flora & fauna taboos. - Learners explore the implications of	4 parents 2 teachers 1 education inspector

			selected taboos to environmental conservation and management.	
Week 6 Session 6	Environmental Ethics Totems and environmental conservation		• Learners will be able to identify their totem pole symbols. • Learners list flora & fauna taboos. • Learners explore the implications of use of totems to environmental conservation	
Week 7 Session 7	Leadership & Responsibility What makes one a good or bad leader?	Folklore story Totem Oration	• Learners will identify different leadership responsibilities • Learners explore those qualities that constitute good leadership	A parent who narrated the story in front of the children.
Week 8 Session 8	Art How do we know what good art is?	Different pictures and artefacts	• Learners identify different pictures • Learners will find an example of an art that teaches them something • Learners explore what makes some art good and not	
Week 9 Session 9	Human rights Do individual have rights?	Pre-printed list on human rights A traditional song that emphasises group work	• Learners will identify children's rights • Learners will explore the rights individuals are entitled to in a context that emphasis communalism.	2 teachers
Week 10 Session 10	Bravery & Identity What is a hero?	Stories about the liberation struggle A folklore story	• Learners will identify the qualities of a hero. • Learners explore those things that make one a hero or not.	

Appendix D: Participants Demographics

D1: Indicating learners demographics. [The same learners in a multi-levelled class with age category ranging between 8-11 years old participated in the study. Note the change in learners' age over the 3-year period].

Year	Total Enrolment	Boy	Girl	Parent	Guardian	African Traditional Religion	Christian	African	Mother Language			Age [In years]				
									Shona	Ndebele	Tonga	9	10	11	12	13
2017	15	7	8	10	5	1	14	15	11	3	1	3	8	4		
2018	16	7	9	9	7	1	15	16	11	3	2		3	8	5	
2019	16	7	9	9	7	1	15	16	11	3	2			3	8	5

D2: Inspectors & Teachers Demographics. [The same teachers and inspectors were involved in this intervention study from 2017 to 2020. A total of 13 educators participated in the study. Also shown in the table is an increase of participants from 2018-2020 period and the changes in qualifications as they continue to advance with their studies].

Year	Total Teachers	Male	Female	African	Christian	Administrator		Teacher		Inspector		Mother Language			Qualifications	
						Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Shona	Ndebele	Tonga	Diploma	Graduate
2017	9	4	5	9	9	1		2	3	2	1	6	2	1	5	4
2018	13	6	7	13	13	1		4	5	2	1	8	4	1	8	5
2019	13	6	7	13	13	1	1	4	4	2	1	8	4	1	6	7
2020	13	6	7	13	13	1	1	4	4	2	1	8	4	1	6	7

D3: Parents Demographics. [The demographics are for the same parents for the 4-year engagement; thus, a total of 12 parents participated in this study].

Year	Total	Male	Female	African	Christian	African Traditional Religion	Mother Language			Age [In years]					Education level			
							Shona	Ndebele	Tonga	35-45	46-55	56-65	66-75	76-85	Standard 1-3	Primary	Secondary	Terti ary
2017 - 2020	12	7	5	12	10	2	6	4	2	2	3	3	3	1	2	6	3	1



E1: The picture shows learners a few weeks into the start of the Afrophilic p4c intervention (2017) helping each other with their school work



E2: The picture shows the same learners, including some who joined the class at the end of the intervention (2020), dressed in traditional regalia waiting to perform a cultural dance. Though this picture is not reflective of the learner's cultural competence, it demonstrates their cultural confidence.

APPENDIX B

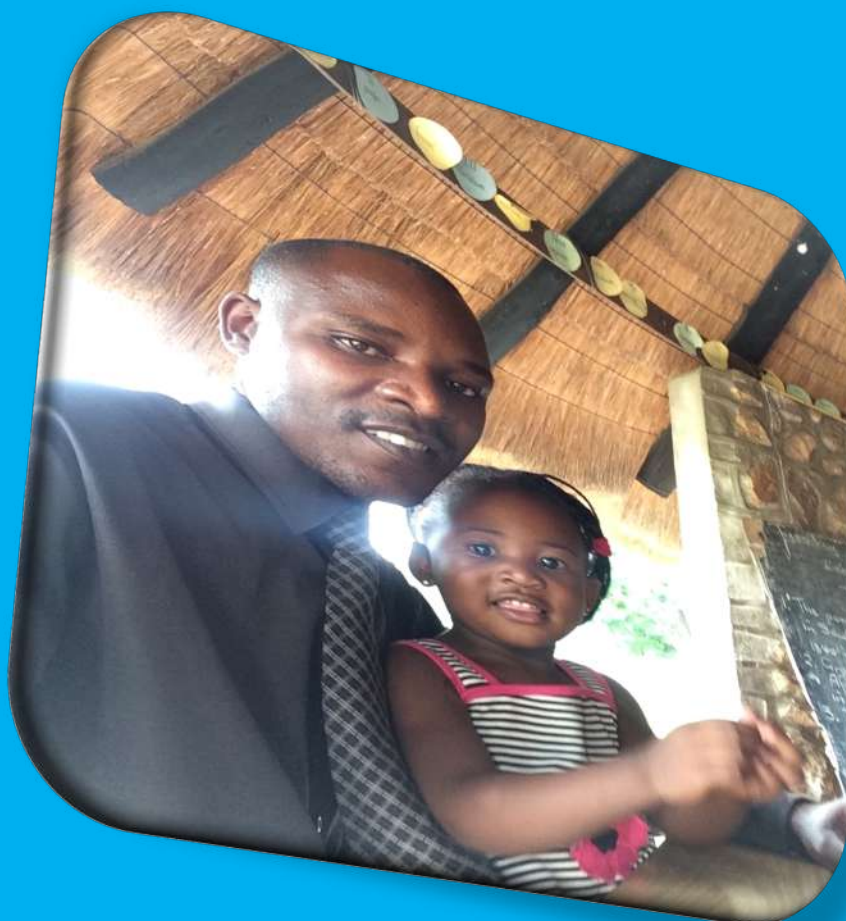
AFROPHILIC PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN (P4C), PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' DRAFT BOOKLET

NOTE: THIS BOOKLET WILL BE FURTHER DEVELOPED FOR PUBLICATION AND
SHARING WITH TEACHERS FOLLOWING THE FINALISATION OF THIS THESIS

P4C TR'S BOOKLET



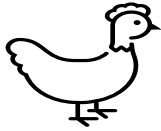
AFROPHILIC PHILOSOPHY FOR CHILDREN {P4C}



PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS TRAINING BOOKLET

With

THEORY AND PRACTICALS



Foreword

The educational programme known as Philosophy for Children (p4c) got its start in the 1970s, in Montclair Public Schools in New Jersey in the United States. Subsequently, the Institute for the Advancement of Philosophy for Children (IAPC) was established at Montclair State University then Montclair State College under the leadership of Mathew Lipman and Ann Margaret Sharp. Over the years philosophy for children (p4c) has gained rapid international interest culminating in the establishment of the International Council for Philosophical Inquiry with Children (ICPIC) and other institutional structures aimed at advancing philosophical thinking in schools.

The advancement of philosophical thinking in schools marks a divergent route from traditional didactic models of teaching that are product-oriented and centred on learner achievement in examinations (Ndofirepi, 2011). This divergence drifts towards democratic models of teaching that allows for ‘diversity in reason’ (Eze, 2008) among learners. According to (Lipman, 2003) thinking is best polished through disciplined discussion, in a community of enquiry. In so doing he argues in support of encouraging children to be reflective citizens at an early age to help them become reflective adults. Over the years it has been noted that philosophy for children has several positive effects in education namely, improvement on the quality of thinking for instance ‘dialogical, dialectical and argumentative’ reasoning (Santi 1993), teaching of democratic community values and that it fosters curriculum extension through use of culturally modified and curriculum relevant materials (Fisher 2003, p.198).

Despite the positive gains of philosophy for children, not all educators nor educational thinkers are convinced of the wisdom of having young learners engrossed with philosophy. In ancient times Plato is ranked among such sceptic and much recently the voice of John White is made more visible when he regards philosophy to be “a difficult academic enterprise, dealing with abstract matters far removed from children’s usual preoccupations and requiring a capacity for hard, continuous logical thinking” (2001, p.20). Other critics of the programme have dismissed it as imperialistic (Biesta, 2011), undemanding (Conroy, 2008) and unsocratic

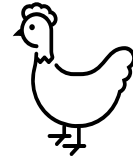
(Smith, 2011). Henceforth children are perceived to be lacking "some capacity for rational thought which adults have" (Hughes, 1992, p. 39). From the arguments proffered by those against the philosophy for children programme it is evident that they looked at the child as a finished product development primarily determined from the outset.

However, what the critics claim about the child's incapacity to do philosophy could also be true for an average adult. Moreover, critics need be reminded that philosophy for children is a programme of philosophical education, different from academic philosophy. In philosophy for children learners participate in open, dialogical inquiry without having to go through a teacher-directed agenda of studying traditional canons of philosophy.

The p4c Afrophilia teachers resource pack acknowledges that now more than ever teaching calls for innovative models and techniques that are going to deliver on relevance, practicality, and applicability in everyday life. Furthermore, I believe this teacher's resource pack is part of efforts to go beyond mere identification of problems in school curricula and will contribute meaningfully towards equipping teachers with more knowledge on the application of the 'community of inquiry approach' and incorporation of Afrophilia learning lens in their teaching to enrich the value of what learners take home at the end of the day. The community of inquiry depicts a classroom environment in which learners feel welcome and motivated to learn from each other as they engage in a process of sharing ideas and opinions as well as appraising each other's reasons and propositions (Haynes, 2007; Jackson, 2004). Thus, while the p4c Afrophilia- teachers resource pack is informed by prior academic theory and praxis (Robinson, 2011), it also traverses other ways of enriching the possibilities of philosophical inquiry with children especially those situated in disadvantaged areas.

Even though the resource pack aims to support teachers in their professional development, it can be of use to interested practitioners and artists to inspire child led approaches to personal learning. Henceforth, the p4c Afrophilia- teachers resource pack opens an in-betweenness that offers children opportunities to develop as creative citizens, actively engaged in shaping their lives and the communities around them.

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Thank You

Ndatenda

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PART 1: A THEORETICAL INTRODUCTION

Introduction

We teach for so many reasons this p4cAfrophilia- teachers resource pack is prepared for one of those reasons- teaching for critical reflexive thinking. This document introduces a formative intervention plan for primary school teachers and argues that one of the best pedagogical approach teachers can utilize to add value to their work is by adopting and incorporating philosophical discussion with children through an approach called philosophy for children. Philosophy for children seems esoteric and unfamiliar to many people in Zimbabwe especially at primary school level simply because philosophy is not included as a required subject for both primary and secondary schools in the country. Unknown to most people is the fact that children ask philosophical questions, wonder about the world and life's big questions early--- What do dogs think about us since we don't speak their language? What kind of person should I be? Is justice possible?

According to (Mohr Lone & Israeloff, 2012) the idea of exploring philosophical questions with children allows for the development of critical thinking, argumentation, writing and speaking skills which are the most sort after transactional currency in 21st century education. The sociocultural approach to philosophy for children is a new phenomenon, especially when it comes to teaching philosophical dialogue in schools at the periphery. Many Zimbabwean teachers have extensive experience teaching group discussions and other approaches to group activities. A sociocultural approach to philosophy for children be add-ons to learning through shared/ collaborative activities. The approach encourages the practice and refinement of reasoning in diversity and effective communication skills. It can now be included in the p4cTr's program. This automatically opens new opportunities for teaching critical reflexive thinking using Afrophilic learning lenses (e.g., creating the community of inquiry, using culturally significant artefacts, peer scaffolding). In addition, this project is important when STEM subjects are becoming a higher priority. This is because the philosophical approach cautions us that it is not in the constituency of science to evaluate, judge, conceptualize and prioritize but the role of philosophy.

Who is this resource pack for?

This P4c Tr's Booklet is intended for a broad audience, but the main audience is likely to consist of In-service and Pre-service Teachers and Philosophy for Children facilitators. In addition, researchers and philosophers interested in this area may find it relevant to their work. The booklet is of great interest to anyone involved in the development of academic research, and passionate about foregrounding learner agency in Afrophilic perspectives and enhancing their reasoning in diversity. Emphasis will be placed on how the Philosophy for Children facilitators can establish classroom contexts that support intergenerational and endogenous learning and incorporate the life experiences of the learner into the curriculum.

Teacher Training

The P4c Tr's Booklet aims primarily at philosophy for children facilitators becoming familiar with the sociocultural approach to philosophy for children project and the phenomenon for enhancement of critical reflexive thinking skills couched within Afrophilic contexts. This goal can be achieved by providing support to teachers who want to engage their learners in meaningful discussions, to construct knowledge and understanding, rather than considering learning as a tedious course of action aimed at 'ticking off' narrow prescribed targets. Two examples are included of a two-days' workshop and an analytical tool for mediating and critically observing Philosophy for Children Lessons. Facilitation of community of inquiry sessions and use of culturally oriented artefacts as start-up capital in stimulating philosophical discussions form the backbone of the sociocultural philosophy for children project. The resource pack has links to a list of websites and references for further reading on philosophy for children.

Content based on hands-on experiences and research

During the Sociocultural Approach to Philosophy for Children, the formative intervention researcher participated in a series of workshops and training courses, and philosophy workshops in Zimbabwe and South Africa. This resource pack is the result of these activities and consultations with parents, teachers, and children in a group of schools. The resource pack can then be used to train non-teaching staff and experienced teachers to become familiar with p4cAfrophia tools to facilitate philosophical dialogue with learners. A general rule to be observed in this resource pack is the fact that the formative intervention program is based on the model of “reflective practice” (Splitter, 2014, p. 91)—that is teachers can only be trained to facilitate the program by getting them to practice philosophical thinking and reflecting on their own practice.

The sociocultural approach to philosophy for children project

The sociocultural approach to philosophy for children is a platform that provides Afrophilic based tools and a pedagogy to practice critical reflexive thinking skills and enhancing reasoning in diversity. This resource pack therefore serves a community composed of parents, guardians, education inspectors, curriculum planners and learners with:

- Easy access to innovative and interactive decolonial tools for learning and teaching critical reflexive thinking skills within a community of inquiry.
- Theoretical and pedagogical guides to assist philosophy for children facilitators/ teachers.
- Exercises and tools for stimulating philosophical dialogue in classrooms.
- A practical example of curriculum transformation upon which an expansive decolonial reform agenda could be enacted in order to ensure inclusion of local heritage knowledges
- A pedagogical approach that foregrounds critical, creative, and caring thinking skills, questioning skills, and teamworking/ peer scaffolding.
- Space for the promotion of engagement with philosophical ideas as a means of encouraging deeper learning.

The sociocultural approach to philosophy for children project was inspired by a common set of challenges that primary school teachers especially those in resettlement schools face on everyday basis, including:

- The ephemeral nature of classroom interaction which makes it difficult for learners to obtain feedback on their performance, preventing them from properly enhancing their agency.
- A fractional decolonial approach to curriculum reform that makes epistemic access to knowledge difficult in classrooms.

- An abstracted and highly examination driven curriculum that translates into learner disinterest in learning.
- A textbook based learning model that pressures learners to perform academically in narrow ways even though challenges of the modern world and the persistence of coloniality (in the global South) demand that learners develop means to critically analyse facts/ information.

Sociocultural approach to philosophy for children project contributes to filling these gaps by designing a generative curriculum model supported and built by a large community that enjoys and takes advantage of the possibilities offered by an active participant driven community of inquiry. In addition, the project has potential in widening access to cultural capital, fostering imaginative creativity and empathy and cultivating an onto-ethical mode of participation in learners. Practically this project is designed to help both learners and teachers to appreciate that while unhu/ubuntu-led morality should be compassionate, it also needs to be appropriately critical. The sociocultural approach to philosophy for children is here enacted as an educational approach for learners to be able to tackle the philosophical problems that feature in their everyday lives. In so doing the project endeavours to overcome issues of educational disadvantage especially in the context of resettlement schools and to educate for individual empowerment and educational transformation.

What is Philosophy?

In this resource pack emphasis is made on use of the community of inquiry as the teaching methodology. One unique feature of the methodology is that it positions philosophy as cooperative effort (Sprod, 2001). This is true if one considers (Deleuze & Guattari, , 2003)’s position that ‘philosophy is the art of forming, inventing, and fabricating concepts’ (ibid, 2003, p.2) for one cannot arrive such a position without taking into account the effort made by others in shaping the understanding of philosophy. Fig 1 below briefly explains what philosophy is, but readers must understand that the question ‘what is philosophy’ itself is philosophical in nature and as a result there is no definitive answer to such a question.



NB. Philosophy is as much about answers as questions (implied by the logic of a question) but the answers are provisional, tentative and often conditional inferences. Thus, the answers in philosophy have a particular character.

The etymology of the word philosophy comes from two sources “philia” meaning love & “sophia” meaning love of wisdom.

Though there is no agreed upon answer to the question, “what is philosophy” many definitions acknowledge that philosophy locates itself within the humanistic field that attempts to resolve fundamental questions through reason. These questions fall within 5 broad categories:

- **Metaphysics** (which deals with questions of existence, i.e. What is the purpose of life? Does God exist?).
- **Epistemology** (which deals with questions to do with knowledge, i.e. How do we know what we know?)
- **Ethics** (deals with questions on values, i.e. Should all of humanity share the same values? Can kindness change the world?)
- **Political** (focus is on society and governance, i.e. What are a citizen’s duties to the government or to society? How should society be governed?)
- **Aesthetics** (the study of art, i.e. Can food be beautiful? What should art be like?)

Philosophy and the 4Cs

According to (Honderich, 1995) in philosophy, philosophers deal with questions that are:

- **Conceptual** concerned about the 'big' ideas in life
- **Common** they are rooted in everyday activities
- **Contestable** informed by a diverse opinion and often the answers are not unanimously agreed upon
- **Central** anchored on how humanity perceives its relationship with the worlds

Philosophy diverges from other subject areas such as science, maths, geography, history or physics in the sense that one cannot find answers to philosophical questions through asking an expert, conducting an experiment or searching the internet. NB- in philosophy there are no definitive answers, philosophers seek multifaceted conception of the subtleties and complexities of a still unsolved problem (Fisher, 2003). Ordinarily, philosophy can also take the form of deeper self-reflexivity (meta-cognition), it is common knowledge that philosophers think about their thinking (Lipman, 1991). When people engage in the search

for philosophical answers we say they are involved in philosophical enquiry. The process of enquiry often draws them into dialogue because it requires them to communicate their thoughts and listen to others' ideas as well. Fisher (2003) explains that philosophical dialogue creates an opportunity for us to see a problem through someone else's eyes. This opens a hybrid space through which we can better understand the people around us as well as gaining a deeper understanding of the problem at hand.

What is Philosophy for Children?

Philosophy for children is a distinct social practice with a universal practical value which acts as an ideal mechanism for democratically enriching the curriculum. The universal practical value of philosophy for children is in that the approach is interdisciplinary, and all teaching and learning is underpinned by a philosophical dimension. As a pedagogical approach philosophy for children creates a third space within which learners develop a voice and the confidence to speak. Most interestingly for this project the approach is aimed at moving beyond advancement of learner agency and cultivate in learners the ability to make good judgements and critical reflexive skills to potentiate ethical decision making especially in this age of the Anthropocene. Furthermore, the approach offers both program facilitators/ teachers and learners space and time to think deeply, for themselves for the sake of thinking itself, put differently it offers participants space to think about their own thinking.

Viewed in this way, philosophy for children then is a “pedagogy of searching” (Kizel, 2016) opposed to the traditional teaching methods that heightened teacher agency and viewed learners as recipients of knowledge. Contrary to the traditional perspective on teaching and learning, philosophy for children encourages learner participation and it moulds in them better listening skills which manifest in the development of meaningful discussions (Shapiro, 2012). More generally, philosophy for children avoids presenting philosophy as a body of knowledge for students to consume (Cam, 2006, p. 12). This falls inline with Lipman (2003) whose idea was to transcend school-based teaching through introduction of an education programme that allows learners to focus on the development of their thinking, judgment and reasonableness. Emphasis here, is on philosophy’s potential in offering learners improved reasoning and other essential academic life skills.

Like other teaching and learning approaches philosophy for children is aimed at encouraging development of thinking skills usually identified in many taxonomies of thinking skills. The skills could be listed as:

- **Information-processing skills:** enable learners to analyse and interpret information to demonstrate their understanding of important concepts and ideas. Here, the facilitator may ask questions such as: *What do we know from the information provided? From your analysis what else do we need to know?*
- **Enquiry skills:** learners search for solutions to problems through asking relevant questions and collaboratively participating in problem-solving activities. Common questions that could be asked during a philosophical enquiry to cultivate development of enquiry skills include: *What do we want to find out? What question(s) do we want to ask?*
- **Reasoning skills:** often through the use of language learners give explanations, give reasons in support of opinions, make judgements and pass decisions. Guiding questions include: *Is there an explanation in support of your opinion? Are there good reasons for believing or refuting it?*
- **Creative thinking skills:** enable learners to apply critical imaginations to their thinking, proffer possible hypotheses and seek alternative explanations and solutions. Facilitators can use questions such as: *Can we think of another question? Is there another possible view point?*
- **Evaluation skills:** one of the objectives of the philosophical dialogue is to enable learners to develop criteria for judging the value of ideas, critically examine other people’s ideas and practice being self-

critical. During philosophical dialogue facilitators can ask questions such as: *How has this changed our perception? What do we still need to think about?*

Philosophy for children has a vantage point in that it fosters dispositions that make the skills effective (Fisher, 2001). The dispositions that can be divided into two sets are derived from the dialogical nature of the philosophy for children approach. According to (Fisher, 2001) the dispositions that make philosophy for children a unique approach are 'caring', 'collaborative' or 'connected' thinking (pg. 3). Ordinarily, these dispositions allow one to take responsibility for his or her own thinking and to be able to cooperate with others within a group. This translates into the development of self-esteem, empathy and respect towards others (Fisher, 2001). In the sociocultural approach to philosophy for children formative intervention this is guided by the unhu/ubuntu onto-ethical mode of participation.

The idea of a community of inquiry

The 'community of inquiry' which is the pedagogy at the heart of philosophy for children and has its traditional roots in the works of Charles Sanders Peirce particularly his essay titled 'The Fixation of Belief' published in 1887 and also in John Dewey's pragmatism, the social psychology of George Herbert Mead and Lev Vygotsky. Community of inquiry approach as practiced in philosophy for children is concerned with the application of philosophical thinking/inquiry in forming beliefs and opinions (Cam, 2000). This is a slight departure from the notion of community of inquiry that Sanders and Dewey promoted as they gave precedence to scientific inquiry (Sharp, 2007). The community of inquiry as explained by Sharp (2007) offers learners a chance to reflect on and reconstruct their experience collaboratively using tools and procedures that are recognizably philosophical. Here the community will consist of a collection of learners and the facilitator/teacher who will be guided by their common interest, aims, purposes and intentions of beliefs (Sprod, 2001). Underling the community of inquiry is the diversity in thinking that characterise the

pluriversal nature of our communities. Henceforth, Mohr Lone & Israeloff, (2012) submits that the community of inquiry functions primarily as a collaborative structure. This makes a strong connection with (Traverso, No date) who reasons that the community of inquiry approach presents an operational spot that makes intersubjective inquiry possible. This influences a change of roles for the teacher, for example the teacher have to demonstrate a reticence about imposing his or her own views and considers other perspectives with an understanding that there is no final or straightforward answer to the questions being explored.

According to (Lipman, 2003) by converting the classroom into a community of inquiry one is offering learners a chance to demonstrate empathy as they interact, support and or challenge each other to supply reasons for unsupported opinions. Lipman made sturdy emphasis that:

We can now speak of “converting the classroom into a community of inquiry” in which students listen to one another with respect, build on one another’s ideas, challenge one another to supply reasons for otherwise unsupported opinions, assist each other in drawing inferences from what has been said, and seek to identify one another’s assumptions (Lipman, 2003,p. 21).

This is essential especially when one considers the notion of “epistemological modesty” which affirms that among a group of learners, the teacher included everyone is fallible and potentially hold views that could end up being erroneous (Mohr Lone & Israeloff, 2012). Thus, in community of inquiry members are guided by a sense of common purpose, which is to resolve the inquiry at hand (Splitter, 2014). It has to be noted that the community of inquiry approach is the path towards the cultivation of an inclusive, supportive and co-operative ethos within the learning spaces.

In so doing the community of inquiry could be viewed as a transformative concept in which teaching is an interchange of experience (Lipman, 2003). Here, the learner brings his/her experience and it is the role of the teacher to interpret that experience. Moreover, the community of inquiry is an exploratory and self-critical practice guided by the following ideals:

- It aims at producing a product- (but this does not take the form of an assertive conclusion)
- It has a sense of direction (following the inquiry where it leads)
- It is dialogical (each argument evokes a counterargument)
- It has a structure (not exclusively free of purpose)

- It has procedural rules

Since the community of inquiry is dialogical and has procedural rules it denotes a sense of learning together (Lipman, 2003). Thus, learners engaged in a community of inquiry will later discover that they can benefit from the learning experiences of other learners in the classroom. Thus, in community of inquiry learners and their teacher learn through their own participation and through the participation of others. Henceforth, two of the underlying principles in community of inquiry are autonomy of thought and participation. Informed by these principles (Lipman, 2003) reasons that learners should learn philosophy by doing it, not by learning about “the refined, finished end-products” of philosophical inquiry (ibid, p. 20).

Sociocultural learning in community of inquiry

According to (Golding, 2010) philosophy for children is visibly built on the Vygotskian sociocultural theory and is also informed by Mead’s ideas on learning. In particular the emphasis in philosophy for children that engaging in philosophical thinking and inquiry demands social co-participation, negotiation and internalisation. In line with Golding (2010), Sprod, (2001) reasons that the community of inquiry offers a consummate setting for sociocultural learning especially when one considers the role of the zone of proximal development in shaping learning spaces. The zone of proximal development is a conceptual space in which learners can operate with scaffolding from others but they are incapable of operating on their own (Vygotsky, 1986). Vygotsky, (1986) explains that:

Every feature in the child’s cultural development appears twice: first on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first *between* people (*interpsychological*), and then *inside* the child (*intrapsychological*). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory and to the

formation of concepts. All the higher psychological functions originate as actual relations between human individuals (ibid, p. 57)

Thus, within the community of inquiry learners can operate with scaffolding from peers and from the teacher/facilitator who is also a co- inquirer. The implication being that the learners' thinking is not entirely a private affair taking place in the learners' head but emerges as a result of internalisation of linguistic communication with others (Cam, 2006). This concurs with Lipman's remark that "thinking is the internalisation of dialogue" (Lipman, 1980, p. 23). Manifest in Lipman (1980)'s assertion is the fact that dialogue or collective learning is the channel through which one learns to think for oneself. Thus, learners learn to think through taking up public speech which they gradually subvocalise until it becomes internalized and silent (McInerney & McInerney, 2006). Due to this close relationship between philosophy for children and sociocultural learning theory, philosophy for children makes strong emphasis on taking advantage of situated learning processes in learning spaces.

GROUP ACTIVITY COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY

In groups of 5, participants are expected to take part in a community of inquiry activity. Participants may follow the suggested activities below but they are supposed to be as creative as they can be.

Resources plain A4 sheets, counters, large felt tips

Organisation No tables, chairs in a circle.

Step 1 (Getting set) Let participants sit in a circle. If participants are new to each other take time for participants to introduce themselves.

Step 2 (Presentation of stimulus) Present the stimulus (this could be in the form of story, film, song, poem, question, proverb), then after presenting give participants a post-it note.

Step 3 (Thinking time) Ask participants to reflect on ideas that most interested or puzzled them (Create time for individual thinking).

- Step 4 (Question making)** Let each group develop a question collaboratively. Participants are expected to rephrase, construct a new or choose a question from the group by consent.
- Step 5 (Question airing)** Write your question down on the A4 piece of paper and put it on the floor for all to see.
- Step 6 (Clarifying questions)** Each group give reasons in support of their selected question, other groups can ask clarification questions
- Step 7 (question choosing)** Let each participant cast their votes using either beads/counters. The vote is cast by putting the bead/counter on the selected question. Advice participants not to cheat by casting two votes at a time. The question with the most votes is to be used as your start-up capital. Aim is to focus your enquiry on trying to answer the question.
- Step 8 (Setting the rule)** As you start the enquiry agree on ways in which participants can take turn, i.e. current speaker passes a ball to the next speaker, put up your hand to indicate that you want to speak.
- Step 9 (First thoughts)** The person/ group with the question that has scored the most votes start off the discussion. Ordinarily, the person/ group explains how they arrived at the question.
- Step 10 (Building the discussion)** The teacher/facilitator should avoid ventilating his/ her opinions- all the teacher/ facilitator can do is to ask questions that help participants to deepen and reinforce their thinking. To keep the discussion going the teacher/facilitator can ask questions such as; Is there anyone who wants to add something? Can anyone give a counter example/ argument? Who can suggest the kind of evidence that we can need to support the claim?
- Step 11 (Last thoughts)** Let participants share their final words- these are uncontested thoughts.

Asking a Philosophical Question

The ideas suggested in this section are not exhaustive, facilitators of the program can be as creative as they can. Of importance to notice is the fact that a philosophical question is open-ended and does not have a definitive answer, mostly it is a question for collective thinking. Not all questions that are discussed within a community of inquiry are philosophical questions even though at times they could be open-ended. As a way of example some speculative and specific questions may tend to be open-ended without taking the form of a philosophical question which often looks at issues that are generally or universally applicable.

Highly speculative & highly specific question	Philosophical question
• Why is mbuya nehanda smiling?	• What makes a painting beautiful?

NB. When dealing with highly speculative & specific questions the answers are often the result of one's imagination rather than the application of reason. As a result, it's near impossible for one to justify the claims one may give to a question like "why is mbuya Nehanda smiling" as the claims are generally speculative or guess work. In Philosophy for Children teachers can make use of a tool that helps learners to identify philosophical questions- "the question quadrant" which was developed by Phil Cam. Here, learners generate their own questions in response to a stimulus (an Afrophia reflexive artefact) and then identify where in the question quadrant the question may best fit. This helps them in making a choice on which question best suits a philosophical enquiry.

What makes a question a philosophical question?



The ability to ask philosophical questions is an important component of philosophical skill development. However, facilitators must be aware that even the most innocuous questions can spark a philosophical debate (Lone, 2011). The point here is that our responses to the questions, rather than the questions themselves, determine whether or not a philosophical exchange occurs. As a result, in some cases, the question posed may not be philosophical, but it has the potential to elicit deep philosophical reflection. **NB:** People with a philosophical ear can turn almost any question into a philosophical dialogue, much to the chagrin of our friends and family, who may just want a straight answer to a simple question for once. In practice, however, most p4c sessions, which are typically 30-40 minutes long, require the generation

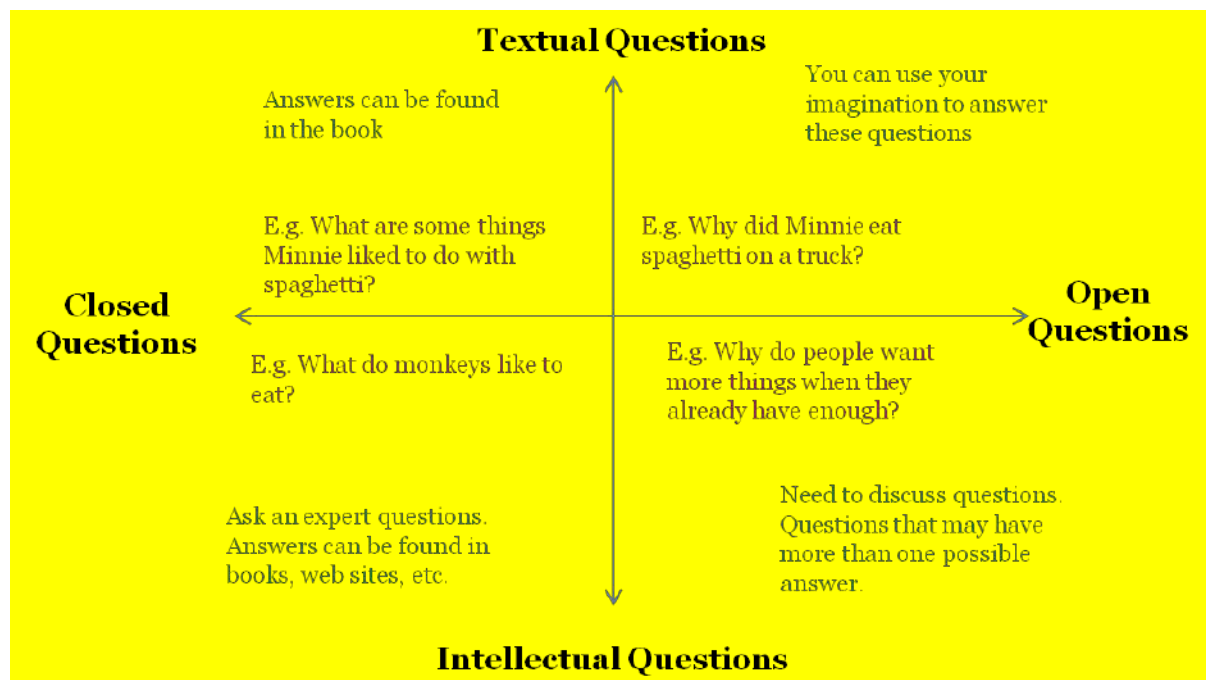
of questions that do not require manipulation in order to generate philosophical discussion. I've added the following list of things to consider when developing a philosophical question with students in the future.

A philosophical question:

- Must be unsettled and abstract but not unanswerable
- Is not easily answered by appealing to empirical facts
- Has contestable answers that take us to deeper levels of abstraction as we consider possible responses
- Should elicit philosophical reflection
- Is a question on which we may disagree, on which we can debate the merits of possible answers, and on which we can speculate together.



The question quadrant



Question quadrant Source: <http://sustainedsuccess.blogspot.com/2009/03/creating-questions.html>

The Afrophilia perspective

The abstract noun Afrophilia means love of Africa and Africans, but here the noun is a ‘metonym’ (Prinsloo, 2013) – a ‘discourse’ which is a source of philosophical reflexion which is embodied in the Zimbabwean communities (Rettova, 2004). Moreover, the concept Afrophilia “includes critical aspects of certain oral traditions as well as some artistic and literary works of Africans” (Bell, 2002, p. 22). Yet again the Afrophilia perspective in sociocultural philosophy for children is anchored on the principles enshrined in Unhu/Ubuntu philosophy, these include interdependence; dignity; self-respect; respect for others; co-operation; forgiveness; sharing and equality. Unhu/ubuntu is at the centre of the sociocultural philosophy for children in Zimbabwe as the philosophy has been noted to be the “soul force that drives almost every facet of societal life in African societies” (Muzvidziwa & Muzvidziwa, 2012, p. 27). Furthermore, there is strong synergy between unhu/ubuntu and teaching and learning as the school outcomes are often influenced by the principles enshrined in unhu/ubuntu.

The Afrophilia standpoint emphasized in this resource pack takes after Hountondji who reasons that learning is a product of discussion- henceforth, Afrophilia learning emerge as a “Dialectical event in language” (Bell, 2002, p. 31) and also integrates the methods and techniques of acquiring knowledge so distinctive of modern disciplines of study. Though this is the case with Afrophilia learning caution is made on the application of rationality. The system of rationality to be applied in this formative intervention approach is one that is relevant to context and the life-world of the participants (Wiredu, 1980). The question of relevance is best approached through a process of mutual selection or of natural diffusion of ideas across diverse geo-political cultures that are inherently respectful of each other (Mungwini, 2019). In this case the selection criteria would work best if informed by specific practices, experiences and historical frameworks of learners from the community involved in the formative intervention.

Application of this decisive factor in selecting start-up capital/ Afrophilia reflexive artefacts in philosophy for children replicate the flow of postmodern educational reform that considers working with a broader conception of knowledges. It has been perceived that “society is in the midst of a shift away from the concept of an objective, knowable, factual world... toward a concept of constructed worlds where knowledge is contested and partial.” (Slattery, 1995, pp. 9-28). The resultant effect of this shift is perceived to be the welcoming of a pluralistic

understanding of the world consistent with the pluriversal nature of our communities. Again such an undertaking is curicial in helping us avoid what (Gordon, 2011) elucidates as the imperial significance of standards which is also synonmous with coloniality. Accorddding to (Gordon, 2011) the imperial significance of standards is marked by a situation where one form of knowing claims to be superior to other forms of knowing.

Avoiding imperial significance of standards in this resource pack is curial as it will help us understand ourselves and “see another’s world as it is” (Bell, 2002, p. 1). Importantly, this will help philosophy for children teachers and learners to consider indepth the opportunities of cultural “transvaluation”, and become more tolerant to differences between cultures and viewpoints as they engage in the community of inquiry. I propose therefore that the Afrophilia reflexive artefacts should aim to be “universal in character but are [*to be*] identified with the African context in particular” (Bell, 2002, p. 21). The reason for such a suggestion is that unhu/ubuntu philosophy today is distinctly engrained in its postcolonial reality and because of this it speaks to the outside world (the global north) out of its lived experiences with the former imperial colonial masters (Eze, 1997; Bell, 2002). Henceforth for the African children to truly understand themselves they need to be in constant dialogue with the world and a diverse Afrophilia reflexive artefacts drawn from its rich heritage will give them the tools with which to express themselves and the culture.

Epistemic philosophical progress in philosophy for children

Golding , (2010, p.17) reasons that “epistemic philosophical progress occurs when we produce epistemically better answers, solutions and ideas about philosophical problems and issues”. This notion of epistemic philosophical progress make it possible for us to explain why/ what makes one philosophical idea better than the other and it give us the tools and criteria with which to judge whether philosophical progress has been made. Put differently epistemic philosophical progress in philosophy for children entails a movement towards the truth, much as philosophy is said to be guided by the search for truth (Lipman, 1988). More openly, epistemic philosophical progress is suggestive of a drive from a philosophical problem to a resolution. Thus, for a community of inquiry to be regarded as worthy while it has to make progress towards the truth (Golding ,2010). However, participants have to be aware that truth is an elusive concept- which is difficult to tell when one has reached or not. Henceforth, the suggestion that epistemic philosophical progress is when participants involved in dialogue arrive at one or more reasonable philosophical judgements regarding the topic of their discussion (Gregory, 2008). Here, participants focus on promoting deeper epistemological participation than relying on ‘doxa’ which is belief in a commonly believed public opinion that is unjustifiable (Bhurekeni, 2020). Producing epistemically valuable reasons requires that we employ standards for judging philosophical progress. As a way of example the standards that could be utilised include but are not limited at; being more coherent, avoiding the ploy of fallacies, arguing with robust logical support and making connections with other conceptions and empirical data (Golding ,2010). Lurking behind these suggestions is the understanding that in philosophy there are no definitive answers or ‘truth’, hence these standards could be legitimate and useful indicators of progress (see also the analytical tool for mediating philosophy for children leassons offered at the end of the booklet).

Assessment in philosophy for children

In the history of philosophy, it is uncommon that philosophers evaluate others especially based on academic merit. According (Mohr Lone & Israeloff, 2012) the formalisation, professionalisation and institutionalisation of philosophy led to the assessment of learners' progress and assessing philosophy teachers. This is the case as in standardised learning, learners should be able to obtain feedback from their teachers and education inspectors need to evaluate the teaching progress. Teachers/facilitators of philosophy for children have to be aware that assessing is in its form a normative and political undertaking as it involves a diverse set of unexamined assumptions (Mohr Lone & Israeloff, 2012). In this case it is therefore advised that good philosophy assessment obliges both learners and teachers to be critical in their approach to subject matter and not to replicate what is already there. Thus, the practice of philosophy invites self-assessment as each person is often decreed to 'know thyself' (Lipman M. , 2003).

Assessment is one of the key pillars in the contribution to learning and progress at all levels especially at primary and secondary education level. In practical terms assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning, National Curriculum Framework (NCF), (2012). The sociocultural philosophy for children formative intervention is committed to education's contribution to the 'public good' (Mqgwashu, 2016), therefore it foregrounds educational purposes that encourage the accrual of benefits for all rather than exceptional individuals. Ordinarily, two types of assessment are dominant in the education system today;

Assessment for learning this is done while learning will be taking place. Teachers/facilitators take advantage of this form of assessment to determine what those tasks that learners can do in relation to learning (make use of the zone of proximal development). Participants can make use of an analytical tool for mediating and critically observing p4c lessons.

- **Assessment of learning** ordinarily, this form of assessment is done at the end of

a session, school term or at the end of the grade calendar. For subjects that are taught as modules or interventions that implemented for a given time space, assessment of learning will take place at the end of the module, or the intervention set time.

Consideration is made in this resource pack on the need to take a decolonial shift that focuses on assessment as a social practice not independent of institutional challenges. Examples of assessment methods commonly used in philosophy for children include developing a **P4c Thinking journal** (www.21stcenturyphilosophers.com). This could be a journal for individual reflection, or you can make it a whole class journal. **NB** the rule is to allow learners to be as creative as they could be as they express themselves in the journal. Apart from the thinking journal teachers/ facilitators can make use of an assessment form that was suggested by the Council for Education in World Citizenship (CEWC) (see, next page for the form). While the form is a good resource for assessing the learners progress, teachers/ facilitators have the liberty to generate other assessment questions.

Philosophy for Children Assessment form



How Am I Doing? My Questioning Skills

Name: _____
Class: _____
Subject: _____

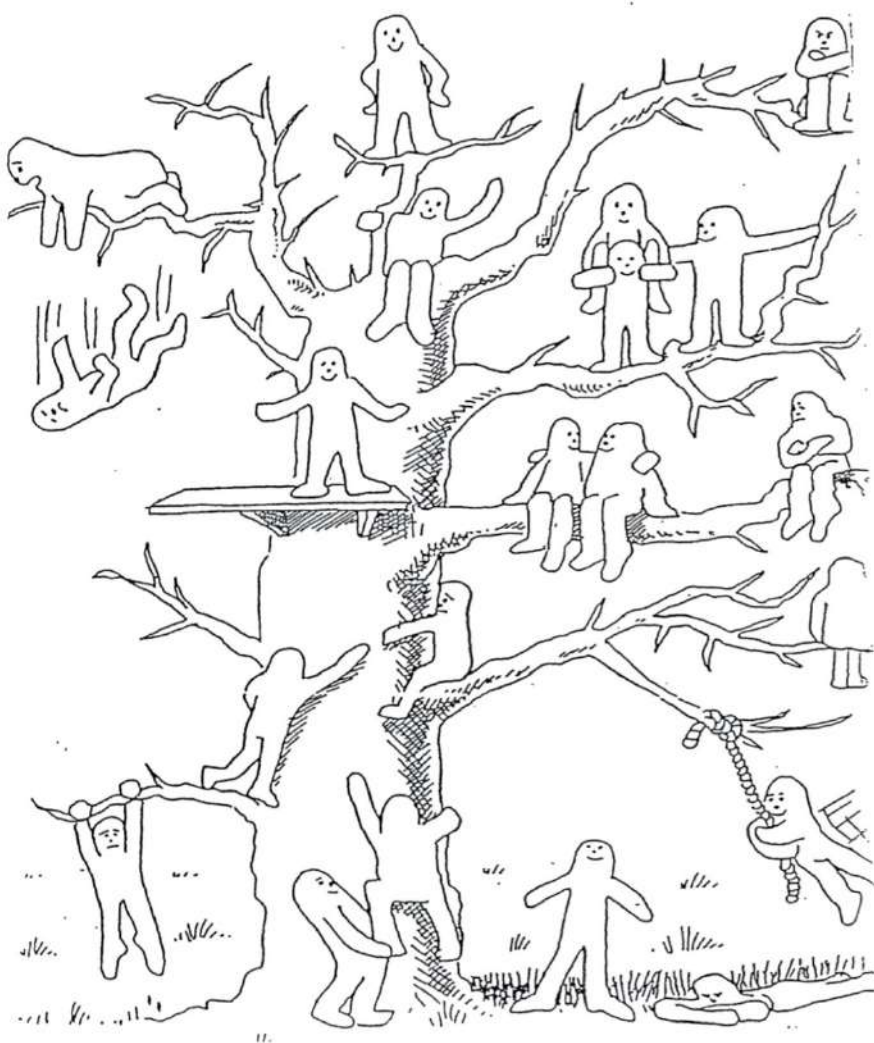
Being able to ask the right sort of questions can really help us to learn – questioning is a really important skill, which we practise all the time in P4C. This sheet has been is to help you to think about how your questioning skills are developing in P4C sessions. Think carefully about your responses and be really honest!

Tick one box for each statement, to show how confident you feel about your questioning skills		1 I'm really not confident	2 I'm not that confident	3 I'm quite confident	4 I'm really confident
I understand what is meant by a 'philosophical' question. <i>Comments</i> _____					
In P4C sessions I can work well with others to come up with questions that are interesting for the class to discuss. <i>Comments</i> _____					
I can come up with questions, which are interesting to discuss on my own. <i>Comments</i> _____					
Since I started doing P4C, I have learned a lot about different types of questions. <i>Comments</i> _____					
P4C has made me better at understanding questions when doing class work or in tests <i>Comments</i> _____					
P4C is helping me to be better at asking questions at school. <i>Comments</i> _____					

Other things I would like to say about how my questioning skills have developed in P4C:

Evaluating philosophy for children using Sue Atkinson's *The Blobtree*

The Blobtree that was developed by Sue Atkinson is an imaginative and useful way for learner's self-appraisal and or group appraisal (Murriss, 1997). Ordinarily, the blobtree is used after a community of inquiry session. Here learners or participants are asked to 'place' themselves somewhere in the tree, in the event that there is no 'blob' or where those available cannot adequately represent the desired blob the learner/participant can draw their own 'blob'. Most importantly, philosophy for children teachers/facilitators can use it for imaginative monitoring of changes over time of either individual learners, or group performance.



The Blobtree by Sue Atkinson 1988 (see, Murriss, 1997, p. 211)

Evaluating with Blobs

Resources	Copies of a Blobtree (www.blobtree.com)
Organisation	Nothing specific, but you can put the blob on an OHT/data projector. It makes life easier to number the various Blobs, so they are easy to identify and talked about.
Procedure	After a lesson give out a copy of the sheet or project a copy for all to see using a projector.
Stage 1	Ask learners with which Blob(s) they most identified with during the lesson. They can mark or colour-in their Blobs. Give them plenty of individual thinking time.
Stage 2	Let learners share their reflections in threes or fours (larger group sharing is good but can take longer). Feedback to the whole group – a fellow member speaks on another's behalf.
Finally	Identify where various people are on the sheet and where they would like to be as a means to progress together and to develop rules.
Variation	Enlarge one copy and get each person to colour in or mark their character so that you can see how the whole group fits together

PART 2: THE PRACTICAL ASPECTS

Workshop bullet notes



Participants attending a p4cAfrophilia workshop at Sebakwe primary school

Aims of the workshop

The main aim of the workshop and the whole study is to explore how the establishment of communities of inquiry (CoI) at Kaguvi (Sebakwe Annex) Primary through the introduction of a Philosophy for Children Afrophilia curriculum formative intervention could contribute to curriculum changes that are oriented towards development of critical reflexive thinking skills amongst learners.

The workshop sessions are also aimed to provide new learning spaces and an opportunity to contribute and learn from one another.



Kaguvi primary school teachers and the author attending a p4cAfrophilia workshops
picture credit—Tarisai (grade 6 learner)

Objectives

The main objectives of the workshop are as follows:

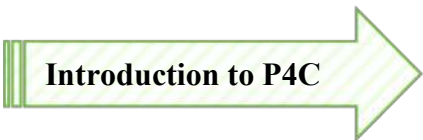
- To introduce participants to the Philosophy for Children domain.
- To familiarize participants with the Socratic tradition in education.
- To introduce participants to the Community of Inquiry pedagogy.
- To allow participants to experience a Philosophy for Children inquiry.
- To provide opportunities for participants to reflect individually and in group discussion on the use of the Philosophy for Children method in relation to their own context and experiences.
- To familiarize participants with knowledge of what is meant by Afrophilia Curriculum Intervention.
- To identify teachable Afrophilia objectives, artefacts, stories and other tools that could potentially correlate with the formal school curriculum objectives.
- To develop tools, artefacts, stories and/or and approaches to be used in the Philosophy for Children Afrophilia pedagogical process, which will lead to lesson

observation.



What is P4C?

- John Dewey's pragmatism is the forerunner to the Philosophy for Children Program
- Philosophy for Children was developed by Professor Matthew Lipman and his associates in the 1970s as an educational approach centred on nurturing philosophical enquiry in children
- Matthew Lipman's vision was to encourage young children
 - To learn the art of reasoning
 - To reason and to be reasoned with
 - To be critical of their own thinking
 - To construct arguments and collaborate with others
 - To take decisions autonomously
 - To respect each other's opinions
 - To think well and participate equally in their communities as responsible citizens
 - To learn the skills necessary to develop their thinking towards the big issues that relate directly to their past, present and their future
 - To understand that at times there is more than one answer



Introduction to P4C

- Encourages the development of:
 - reasonableness
 - practical wisdom
 - and good judgement
- by emphasizing the importance of:
 - questioning
 - collaborative inquiry
 - and dialogue

NB *Philosophy for Children can be used in all phases of (in) formal education to all age groups and in all subjects*

A P4C Afrophilia curriculum intervention

- There are three essential elements of its practice
 - The choice of materials
 - The community of inquiry/padare
 - The role of the facilitator
- And it is anchored on the principles enshrined in Unhu/Ubuntu:
 - interdependence; dignity; self-respect
 - respect for others; co-operation
 - forgiveness; sharing and equality

Core Concepts of P4C

- Asking questions
- Giving reasons
- Responsive listening
- Building on ideas
- The 4C's – Critical, Creative, Caring and Collaborative thinking
- Concepts analysis
- Philosophical inquiry and Citizenship

Historical roots of P4C

- Philosophy
- Socrates – born 469 BC
- Start from the point of knowing nothing and
- Build an argument based on reasoning through agreement and disagreement
- Combining the aspiration of justice with the aspiration of critical thinking

What is Socratic Teaching?

- Socrates saw an intellectual and moral vacuum in the society in which he lived
- Socrates did not believe that he knew the measure of all things
- He was a philosopher i.e.,
- ‘One who loves wisdom’
- Established a new moral intellectual discipline founded on reason and the method of inquiry

Socrates believed that education should be

- Activity of the mind
- Dependent on critical thinking
- Has a rational and moral purpose
- Engages and develops the learner as an individual
- And as a member of a learning community

The Socratic method of teaching

- Is through dialogical inquiry facilitated by questioning
- The teacher is the midwife who assists pupils ‘to give birth to their own ideas’
- The aim of education is to uncover, through discussion, what our personal understanding and knowledge is in order to discover the truth



Socratic legacy

- Why?
- Being able to stand back from conventional, received opinion or opinion from authority, or uncritically accepted opinion and asking:



Asking Questions

Studies of interaction in the classroom over the last fifty years have consistently shown that it is teacher-talk that dominates the classroom and that in much of this talk there is a lack of open questioning.

Such studies show that often in teacher-led discussions closed questions predominate, children only make brief responses, teacher-talk rarely challenged children's thinking and that pupil-pupil discussion (rather than gossip) was rare.

(Robert Fisher 2006 'Talking to Think' in D. Jones & P. Hodson (eds)
Unlocking Speaking and Listening London: David Fulton)



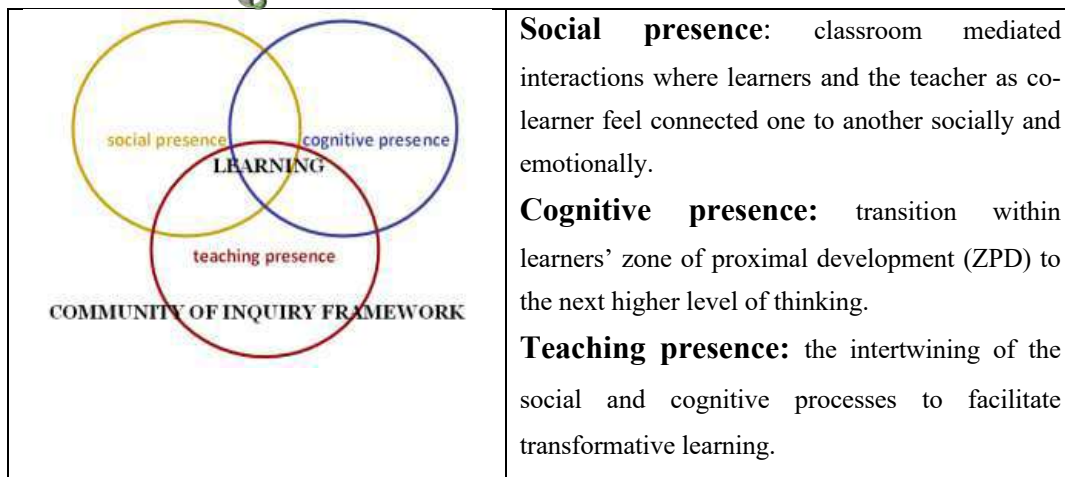
Giving Reasons

- There are many reasons why people make decisions
 - The choices they make are not always simple to explain
 - Choices made on our own moral codes or ethical codes of the society
 - Important for young people to understand why they think what they think

Responsive Listening

- Listening for a reason e.g. to find ways to move the thinking on
 - Learning to understand what others think or believe
 - Reflecting on what we are saying
 - Allowing for clarification and consistency of our ideas
 - Empathetic listening- acknowledging our feelings and those of others

Community of Inquiry



Historical Roots of Philosophical Inquiry

Inquiry

- Charles Sanders Pierce (1839-1914)
 - His argument is that we are participants and not spectators in knowledge making
 - Knowledge is not a body of certainties but body of explanations
- John Dewey (1859-1952)

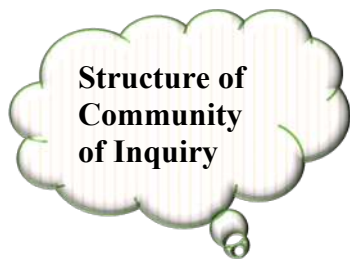
- o Believed in the application of cooperative intelligence
- o Schools should be participatory communities where young people can develop as citizens

What is a Community of Inquiry?

- Why do we call it a Community?
 - o What is meant by ‘community?’
 - o Cooperation, care, respect and safety
- o Why Inquiry?
 - o A search for understanding, meaning, truth and values supported by good reasons.
 - o Remember what Charles Peirce said:
 - o Being participants not spectators in knowledge making
 - o And John Dewey:
 - o Application of cooperative intelligence in learning as problem solving



- Offers a wide range of rich and complex materials to instigate inquiry
- Makes it clear that all ideas are valued and will be heard
- Invites children to think about what they find puzzling, interesting or troubling
- Makes young people's questioning the agenda for discussion
- Focuses on questions that involve judgement- the teacher is not the ultimate authority
- Introduces a process through which questions can be explored
- Deepens the search for meaning and deepens thinking
- Removes the barriers of reading and writing



- Present the stimulus
- Must be open ended
- High level of ambiguity
- Not present a single theme or moral
- Excite and engage children's imagination
- Allow 5 to 10 minutes of thinking time
- Collect questions
- Analyze and select questions
- Dialogue
- Closure and evaluation

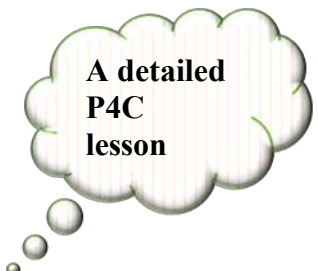
**Be involved
in the
inquiry**

Remember that as the facilitator, you are leading a group of inexperienced learners who will require your guidance from time to time. The fact that you must follow the inquiry where it leads does not imply that you must not be fully involved in the inquiry process as the facilitator.



A community of inquiry in session with grade 3 & 4 learners.

NB: The inquiry community is a democratic learner-led process. It is a place where people feel valued by one another and where they feel safe expressing their opinions and sharing their experiences.



**A detailed
P4C
lesson**

NB: The questions suggested in the next lesson plan are not meant to be inclusive, they are possibilities for questions that can inspire philosophical exchanges, based on the questions that can come from learners when discussing the story. The list of possible discussion questions are meant to provide ideas for teachers working with this booklet, to help generate classroom philosophical conversations, but should not replace asking the learners what questions the story raise for them and ensuring that the discussions emerge from the learners' questions.



Ngano! Ngano! Ngano! Paivapo! Tsuro naGudo

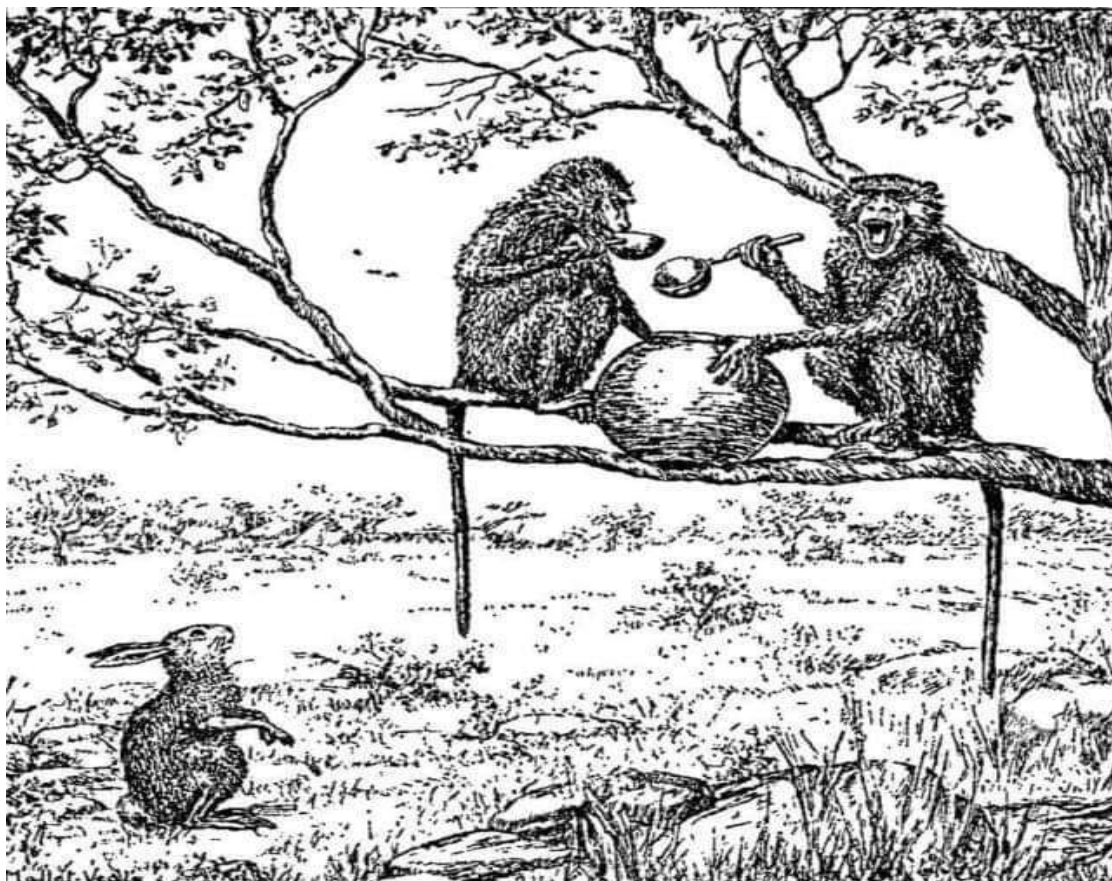
Tsuro threw a party to commemorate his bountiful harvest. He invited his neighbours, family, and close friend Gudo. The party had a lot of delicious food. Tsuro's invited guests had the option of eating either barbecued or boiled meat. There were a variety of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages available. Everyone who heard about Tsuro's celebration party wanted to go because Nyachide, Tsuro's wife, was well known for brewing tasty beer. On the day of the party, Gudo decided to go around mid-morning. He invited his wife, children, and cousins because he expected a great feast at his friend's party.

As they approached Tsuro's homestead, they discovered the meadow that surrounded Tsuro's house completely burned. Gudo and his family proceeded to the entrance point, where they encountered a guard who was checking to see who was coming to join the party. Gudo and his family were directed to go wash their hands because they had been tainted by the burn scares from the meadow. Gudo and his family run to the river to wash their hands, and on their way back, they pass through the burned meadow again, and the guard directs them to wash their

hands once more. Gudo and his family returned at after midday only to discover that all the food and beverages had been consumed. Gudo and his family returned home after noticing this, saddened, and pained that his friend had not reserved anything for them.

Gudo devised a plan after nursing his pain and anger for some time. He slaughtered a big cow and instructed his wife to brew a considerable volume of tasty beer. Then he invited his neighbours, relatives, and Tsuru, his only friend. When Tsuru learned about the party, he didn't waste any time and went with his family to support their friend. When they arrived at Gudo's homestead, the party was already in full swing, with tables set on top of the large shade trees that surrounded Gudo's kitchen. Gudo and his family and relatives were already drinking and having fun; they invited Tsuru to climb and join them, but Tsuru couldn't because he couldn't climb a tree; they continued to eat and drink while Tsuru looked from under the tree. Tsuru and his family arrived home after the sun had gone down. Tsuru and Gudo's feud began here and continues to this day.

The End!



Pictographic illustration of the Tsuru naGudo fable

Lesson plan: energizer activity- keep the question going

Topic/ Question

Friendship and Betrayal/ Can we be friends and disloyal to each other?

Age Group

Third grade and up

Time

About thirty- forty minutes

Goals

Explore issues about friendship, cooperation, trust, and betrayal
Create the necessity for cooperative conversation between individuals or small groups
Have fun doing philosophy with a game that teaches learners to construct questions.

Materials

Index cards
Pictographic illustration of the Tsuru naGudo fable
Pieces of paper and pens or pencils for each student to write with

Description

Allow learners to listen to the Tsuru naGudo fable recited to them by one of them, an invited guest, or the facilitator. Then, have the learners discuss the characters in the fable, with each learner explaining what they think of the characters.

Main Activity

- Following the small group discussion, inform the students that you would like to consider the following question as a large group: Can we be friends while being disloyal to each other?
- Have the learners contribute answers to this question based on the characters in the fable.
- After discussing the characters in the fable, give each learner one index card. Instruct the learners to write down one quality of good friendship that comes to mind.

- When a general list has been established, move to more specific questions on the nature of a good friendship:
- Be sure to give the learners about a minute to think of their answers in silence before asking for hands.
- Be prepared to admit that several of the traits on the list are related. Using different coloured markers to connect different traits that are related to one another could be beneficial. For example, students may identify "trust" as the underlying reason for a positive relationship.
- If learners disagree, ask them to respond specifically to one another, providing reasons for their positions.

Possible questions

Question 1: Which of the following qualities/aspects, based on the fable and those on the list, do you believe are the most important to a good friendship? Why? The aim is to focus the discussion on what is required for a good friendship and what is sufficient.

Question 2: Which of the following qualities/aspects from the fable and on the list would be the most detrimental if it were missing? Why?

Question 3: Which trait would you leave out if you could have a friend who possessed all of the listed characteristics except one? or, if they could have the traits of the fable's characters, which would you leave out?

Concluding Activity

- Ask the students to go over the previous list of traits and identify one trait that they believe is a strength and one trait that they believe is a weakness for them. Allow them to write down their responses but inform them that this can be as personal/private as the learners' desire.
- Learners should highlight any characteristics that they believe are necessary and circle any that they believe are sufficient. Inquire whether any of your learners identified a

sufficient condition as a strength. As a shortcoming? Inquire whether any learners identified a necessary condition as a strength. As a shortcoming? It is not necessary for your learners to share their thoughts aloud but writing them down would be beneficial (you could even assign a more in-depth journal entry answering/reflecting on these and similar questions).



Practical Box: A song for the environment		
 Chihera, one of the participants playing a mbira instrument as she chants a song for the learners	Nyika yazara utsvina Nzizi hadzichina utsanana Piles of junk in the street People just walking with bare feet Todiniko baba vangu Todiniko nenyika yedu Tichengetedze nature yedu Hahahaa hahahaaa hahahaaaaa How I wish my child could see Fields so green, trees so tall To protect our nature To protect our environment Environment is the key Repeat!	Possible question for discussion Why do people say nature is our heritage? What makes our nature so attractive? Why do people want a clean environment when they depend on processed things that cause so much junk? Is a clean environment real/possible? What defines the beauty of nature?

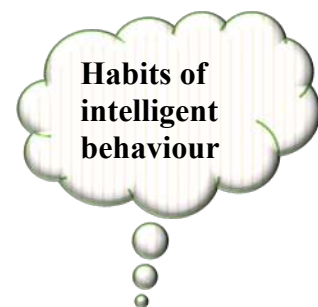
N.B. It is advised that learners formulate their own questions and vote for the most appropriate question.

Activity

With other teachers at your school, take the opportunity to design your own P4C lesson plan using the song and the possible questions suggested in the practical box above.



- Africans have a strong cultural history of, and proclivity to join with or relate to other persons and to participate in the life formed together as is also reflected in the *Unhu/Ubuntu* concept.
- Compatible with African cultural histories of inquiry -padare a Shona term for a meeting place where ideas are generated and exchanged.
- A common thread evident in the two is that while learners/participants co-engage in learning that encourages critical reflexive thinking, 'egalitarian relations' are also built.
- Padare involves a process of peer support and mentoring aimed at achieving effect positive change in learning situations.



Philosophy for Children can enhance communicative skills as well develop habits of intelligent behavior,

- The habits of intelligent behavior include being:
 - Curious—through asking deep and interesting questions
 - Collaborative— through engaging in thoughtful discussion
 - Critical – through giving reasons and evidence
 - Creative— through generating and building on ideas
 - Caring— through developing awareness of self and care of others

**The Four
C's of P4C
Thinking**

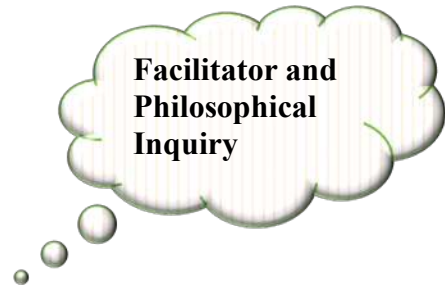
What is philosophical Thinking?

- Has cognitive as well as meta-cognitive content
- Cognitive
 - The exploration of the most basic ideas and problems of life e.g. whom am I?
How should I live my life?
 - The big questions
- Meta-cognitive
 - ‘The process of improving ones thinking and reasoning so that one has a better understanding of oneself as a thinker and better tools with which to examine whatever is under review’ (Fischer 19998, pg. 1)
- “Philosophical questions have at their heart those concepts that are central, common and contestable. They are questions that are answered through reasoning, rather than through empirical inquiry” (Haynes, 2002 p.g. 94)

**Introduction to
Philosophical
Conversation**

In identifying concepts in such stories, we bear in mind that the concepts we are looking for share the certain characteristics, they are:

- o Common
- o Central
- o Contestable
- o Connected to experience

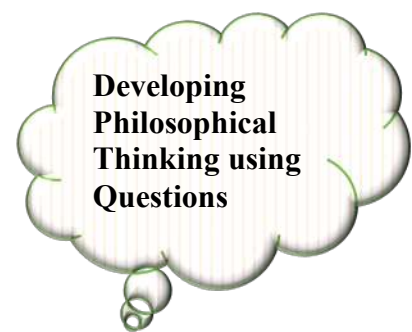


- The facilitator needs to be able to:
 - Create a space to be able to engage emotionally and intellectually
 - Ask open ended questions where appropriate
 - Guide the participants in their exploration of the idea
- The participants need to be able to seek answers to the questions they ask by:
 - Listening to each other's point of view
 - Thinking out loud and
 - Building on each other's ideas



- To try and get the most from each of the stages of a Community of Inquiry
- To distinguish between 'philosophical dialogue' and 'interesting chat' i.e.
 - A search for truth and understanding
 - A degree of structure and rigour to work well

- The types of wonder that leads to some sort of progression



There are ten key elements the teacher can introduce to elicit a considered response

- ***Questioning*** (What don't we understand here? What questions do we have about this?)
- ***Hypotheses*** (Does anyone have any alternative suggestions or explanations?)
- ***Reasons*** (What reasons are there for doing that? What evidence is there for believing this?)
- ***Examples*** (Can anyone think of an example of this? Can someone think of a counter-example?)
- ***Distinctions*** (Can we make a distinction here? Can anyone give a definition?)
- ***Connections*** (Is anyone able to build on that idea? or Can someone link that with another idea?)
- ***Implications*** (What assumptions lie behind this? What consequences does it lead to?)
- ***Intentions*** (Is that what was really meant? Is that what we're really saying?)
- ***Criteria*** (What makes that an example of X? What are the things that really count here?)
- ***Consistency*** (Does that conclusion follow? Are these principles/beliefs consistent?)

(www.Sapere.org.uk)

The facilitator ought to build a caring relationship with the learners



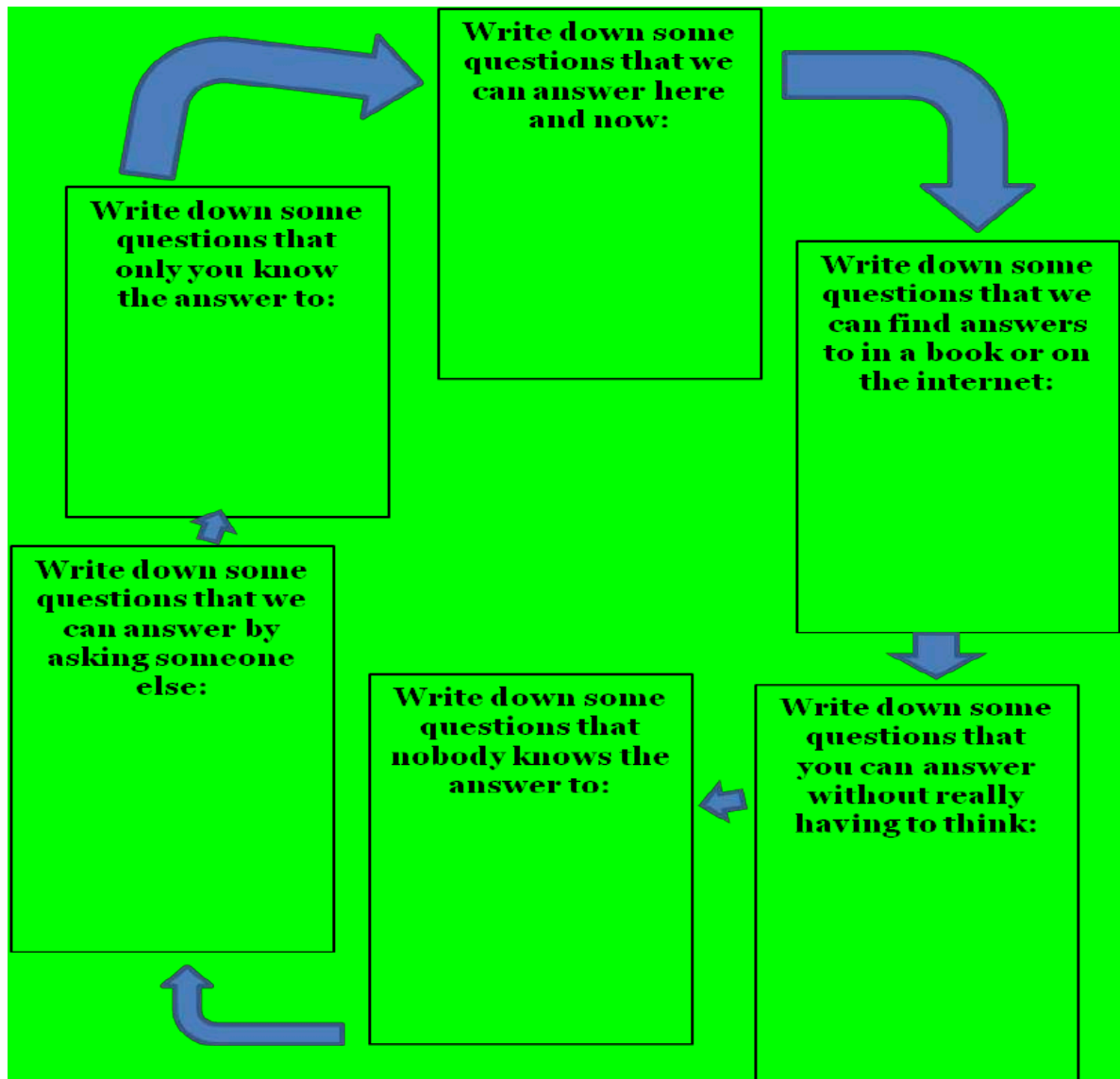
Remember to show learners that you care because learners often remember most about how the teacher made them feel as they learned the subject. Ordinarily, learners who have a caring relationship with the facilitator become more academically successful and show greater “pro-social” (kind, helpful) behaviour. Facilitators of the Afrophilic philosophy for children

program are therefore encouraged to consider the following practical tips for building a caring relationship with learners:

- **Get to know your learners and the lives they live;** this help the facilitator to develop a deep awareness of learners' challenges and needs and are better able to help them. It also helps with ideas for making the curriculum more relevant to the learners' lives.
- **Actively listen to learners;** listening to learners helps you gain an understanding of the meaning behind what students are saying and allows you to check in with them to make sure they've understood properly.
- **Ask learners for feedback;** by considering their feedback, you are showing learners that you value their opinions and experiences. This creates a classroom culture where learners feel safe to ask questions and take chances, which will help them become successful with their schoolwork.
- **Reflect on your own experience with care;** P4C facilitators are fallible, henceforth, reflecting on how you were cared for or not cared for as a child will give you insight into the kind of care you might be extending to your learners, and allow you to adjust your care to fit their needs.

Group Activity Developing philosophical questions- the merry-go-round game

In groups of 3 set up six stations with a plain A3 chart at each station with the instructions written on top of them as below. Participants are expected to work round the merry-go-round specifying examples of questions. Afterwards, come together as a class and decide which questions might work well within a philosophical enquiry and why.



Analytical tool for mediating and critically observing p4c lessons

More detailed analytical tool for mediating and critically observing Philosophy for Children lessons. Note: *These also expand learning in the Zone of Proximal development and should be socio-culturally interpreted.*

What do you mean?

W

- What do you/they mean by ____?
- What is missing here?
- What have I forgotten to ask?
- What is going on here? What is the problem?

- What does this have to do with me?

R	Reasons • What reasons are there that support what he/she said? • Why do you say that? • Can you give a reason? Is it a good reason? • What makes a reason a good reason?

Assumptions

A	• What are we assuming (taking for granted as true)? • What other assumptions might we make? • How are our assumptions influencing what we are seeing / judging / thinking / saying?

I	Inferences; If...Then; Implications • What inferences have we made from what was said? • If what was said is true, then what? • What are the implications of what is proposed?

Truth

T	• Is what is being said true? • How do we know? • How could we find out?

E	Examples: Evidence • Can you think of an example to illustrate what you mean? • What evidence can we find to support the claim being made?

Counter-examples

C	• Can you think of a counter-example to the claim being made? • For example, suppose someone claims, "You have to be able to read to be successful." Is this true? Can we think of a counter-example, i.e., someone who cannot read yet is successful?



- www.mindboggles.org (South African Organization for Philosophy for Children)
- www.thinkingclassroom.co.uk
- www.teachingthinking.net (Robert Fisher)
- www.philosophy4children.co.uk
- www.thephilosophyman.com
- <http://sustainedsuccess.blogspot.com/2009/03/creating-questions.html>

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APPENDIX C

ETHICS APPROVAL

Bhurekeni John 16b9101

EDUCATION FACULTY ETHICS COMMITTEE (EFEC) ETHICS APPROVAL APPLICATION FOR MEd AND PhD THESES

IMPORTANT: The following form needs to be completed by the researcher and submitted with their research proposal to the Education Higher Degrees Committee. The details to which this form relates should also be evident in the text of the proposal. You must read the Faculty of Education Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research *prior* to completing this form.

Level of thesis (please tick)

MEd – half thesis	MEd – full thesis	PhD ☒

Funding (please tick)

Self-funded	Funded ☒ Please specify: RHODES UNIVERSITY ELRC BURSARY (FEES ONLY)

Ethics protocol code (please tick)

	YES	NO	N/A
Research ON children The research requires direct engagement with minors (as defined by the Health Act) This requires EFEC and RUESC approval		☒	

Therapeutic Research that includes interventions that may hold out the prospect of direct health related benefit for the participant.		✓	
Non-therapeutic Research that includes interventions that will not hold out the prospect of direct health related benefit for the participant but may produce results that contribute to generalizable knowledge. In the event that this research involves minors it requires ministerial approval		✓	

Research WITH children The research requires limited engagement with minors. This would include having minors as research participants but the research would not be about or on them. This only requires EFEC approval (unless the research is classified as high risk as per RU ethics handbook)	✓		

Research ABOUT children The research requires indirect engagement with minors. This would include reviewing information about minors from documents and school files.	✓		
This only requires EFEC approval (unless the research is classified as high risk as per RU ethics handbook)			

Research with adults The research requires engagement with humans other than minors, such as teachers, education officials This only requires EFEC approval (unless the research is classified as high risk as per RU ethics handbook)	✓		

TITLE OF RESEARCH: Exploring aspects of Community of Inquiry (COI) in Afrophilia learning processes for transformative education using a ‘Philosophy for Children’ approach: A Case of Sebakwe Resettlement Primary Schools in the Midlands Province of Zimbabwe.

DEPARTMENT: Education

DATE: 19 November 2017

RESEARCHER: John Bhurukeni

SUPERVISOR: Prof Heila Lotz-Sisitka

Considering that my method of enquiry is postcolonial and my research site is located in the peripheral zone (resettlement areas), I have to carefully consider the multiple ethical implications of my study and context that I work with and create space for better professional research relationships (see Smith, 1999). Drawing on the Declaration on Cultural and Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples (1993), and the Rhodes University Ethics Handbook³⁶, I pledge that my research will attend to the following principles:

Respect and dignity

I pledge that I will respect the participants and their dignity in carrying out this project. Participants' consent will be sought for in this proposed study and I will carefully attend to all cultural norms as well as self-respect in the proposed study. I shall personally deliver a written consent letter to the participants; this will give me the opportunity to verbally explain in detail the research aims and process as well as the participant's role during the research. Having worked with the elders in the Sebakwe community in different projects at various levels, I have come to realise that participant consent is an indication of trust and the underlying belief is that the trust will be reciprocated and this is what I shall aim to ensure throughout the stages of my research. I shall also respect participant's right to either remain anonymous or disclose their identities for the purpose of this research. I shall also ensure that I respect the participants' working time by making sure that all interviews are scheduled outside their normal working (teaching) hours. Within this formative intervention study my position was that of an insider during the focus group workshops, philosophy for children session observations and reflexive interviews as these were done with colleagues, parents and children I work with every day. This position shifts to that of an outsider as I critically reflected on the data as well as evaluating the adequacy and inadequacy of the programme. The pendulum shift was possible as I had developed analytical tools that allowed for rigour and distanciation from the data and process. My first position as a primary school teacher undertaking research in the area in which I teach with my colleagues and parents of the children I work with entails that I could be identified as someone who shares roles, identity, experiences with the participants (Asselin, 2003). This position could be seen as an edge of

the coin positioning as it has capacity to bring to light both limitations and benefits (Corbin-Dwyer and Buckle, 2009).

As noted in the proposal above, the ten Philosophy for Children lessons shall be video-recorded with permission, therefore to ensure respect and dignity of my research participants I will ensure that I request their permission to use the video data for the study only. I will also engage a professional person to assist with the video recordings and to assist with transcribing the recorded tapes to ensure high quality of material. I will invite participants to view the video data to ensure transparency. Zimbabwe is a multi-religious country therefore I pledge to respect and honour everyone's religious beliefs and denominational doctrines.

Transparency and honesty

My first step in ensuring transparency and honesty is to eloquently articulate my intentions, this entails making it clear to all the participants what my aims and goals are for the study, so that I do not give any false impressions or create any unrealistic expectations for individuals or for the project. By so doing I aim to stick to what McGarry, (2017, p. 4) referred to as creating, "reflexive, empathetic, imaginative and caring space". The envisioned vantage point of the process is that it is not exclusionary of the participants' expectations and ideas on moving the project forward. I am also obliged to ensure that the progress of the study will be open to all the participants. Also following Smith (2006) after each stage of data collection, I shall send feedback reports for verification and member checking. In this proposed study I stand both as an insider and as an outsider, hence I consider (Yin, 2009)'s idea of making the study value critical. In this case I will insist on participant objectivation that leads to methodological reflexivity (ibid 2009, O'Leary 2004). Furthermore, due to the demands of a postcolonial study focusing on curriculum intervention means of self-criticism and reflexivity will be central to my position as a researcher. Thus, not only will I endeavour to ensure transparency and honesty to the research participants but also to myself.

Accountability and responsibility

The decolonial ethics of responsibility entails giving a preference to the voices of "the peoples on the periphery," their proposals on "truth, justice, love, critique, community life, (Gutierrez-Rodriguez, pg 167). In this proposed study I am committing myself to truthfully report the research findings in a manner attuned to the context of the case study community. It will also be important for me to ensure fair representation by allowing multiple voices and perspectives to be heard during the research process. Earlier in this proposal I made reference

to the recommendation made by Nziramasanga (1999) and how the recommendations are the prime motivators of my study in the context of the Sebakwe community. Thus, my study emanates from the needs and concerns of community hence I shall not at any point turn the research findings for personal interest or for the benefit of the dominant group. Smith (1999) offers advice on the need to distribute the research findings in an appropriate and meaningful way. In this study I shall endeavour to make information available and accessible in non-technical language, thus information were necessary shall be packaged in indigenous languages and participants will also be invited to view the video material. I also understand that I have to be accountable for the safety of my research participants by ensuring anonymity were necessary, and that I also have to ensure the participants' right of ontological being, in this case I will not use dehumanising language or engage the participants in any manner that dehumanises them. I will also ask for critical feedback from participants throughout the process to aid reflexivity and transparency.

Integrity, academic professionalism and researcher positionality

Professionalism in research entails negotiating entry into the community where the research is to be carried out. In my case the procedure was to make formal approaches with the community elders, the Chief and the School heads before commencing the development of the research proposal. They have all given their permission for the research already and have indicated their interest in it. As indicated earlier in the proposal I am a full-time teacher and have stayed in the community for more than 11 years hence I regard my position to be that of an insider researcher. As an insider researcher therefore, I understand that there is need for constant reflexivity. This is so as being an insider and a social being entails that I may have other relations outside the context of this research. In this case Smith (1999) states that there is need for mediating the complexities of being an insider researcher by building support structures to ensure that relationships and issues, problems and strategies can be discussed and resolved. Thus, for this study I propose to select an elder to act as my guardian during the research process. Following Smith (1999)'s ideas on working as an insider researcher I shall also define clear research goals and lines of relating which are specific to that project and different from the everyday networks (ibid, 1999). "Social relations are negotiated here not only through the balancing of racialized and gendered boundaries, but also through the affective energies, sensations and intensities mediating this space of encounter" (Gutierrez-Rodriguez pg 148). Here, while I am obliged to meet the models provided for me by the Rhodes University, I also have to meet indigenous criteria which can judge research 'not useful', 'not indigenous', 'not friendly' (see Smith, 1999 & Declaration on Cultural and

Intellectual Property Rights of Indigenous Peoples 1993). Furthermore, to ensure integrity and academic professionalism I have to be honest in my contact with research participants throughout the study, as an act of honesty I have to start by spelling out the limitations of the study. Additionally, I also have to keep clear and careful records of all of the research proceedings and manage them carefully so that there is a transparent record of the research process available for scrutiny by participants or readers of the study.

Further, please provide the following specific details of the empirical research design:

1. How many participants will participate in this research?

I shall conduct Philosophy for Children sessions with 15 grade 3 learners enrolled at the school. There will be 6 community elders and 6 teachers from the Sebakwe cluster together with 3 other senior Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education officials working in the district and province. The 15 selected participants from the community and the education set up will take part in semi-structured interviews and workshops to be run during the course of this study (phase 2 and 4) and will be invited to participate in phase 3 workshops should they wish to. The 15 children will be involved in the workshops and in dialogues in the ten Philosophy for Children lesson activities. All in all, the study is comprised of 30 participants.

2. What are the selection criteria for selecting the participants?

The selection criteria of the key informants were based on their proficiency in one of the following languages: ChiShona, IsiNdebele and ChiTonga and their understanding of African cultural learning heritage as expressed in the Sebakwe community through these languages. More generally the community elderly people were perceived as potential repositories of indigenous knowledge with the potential of generating rich data on the research interest, I also selected senior teachers with more than 5 years teaching in the case study area for they are perceived to have a fuller understanding of the customs and cultural values of the people they work with. For the teaching staff the criteria were also not to select those in charge of grades preparing for national examinations in the fieldwork year. For the pupils involved the selection was motivated by them being in the grade that marks entry into the Zimbabwe junior primary level. Preliminary consent seeking from grades and parents, the grade three class got 100% consent from both the parents and the learners themselves. Furthermore, the class is representative of all the languages mentioned above. The other three participants

were chosen for them being well versed with the education system of Zimbabwe as they are in senior positions in the education system.

3 What is the rationale behind selecting this number of participants?

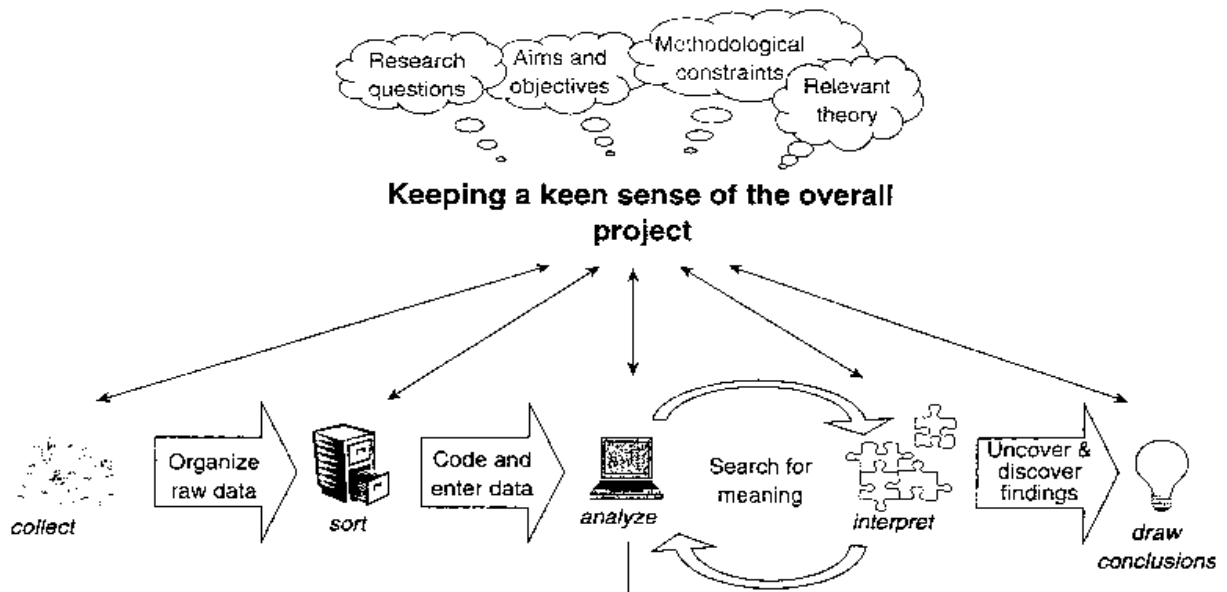
Apart from the considerations discussed above the smaller number of participants was selected as it is hoped these will be manageable during workshops. The grade 3 class is also relatively small to allow for efficient video recording during the lesson observations. The nature of the research and the method of sampling used in this study (purposive also known as convenience sampling) entails that I work with the number of participants whom I think will provide the best information. Guest, Bunce and Johnson (2006) are of the view that working with a minimum number of 12-15 participants for most qualitative interview studies works very well. Thus, I propose to work with a minimum number of participants who will give enough insight for the study. Also as highlighted above I am a full-time teacher and the research participants also have their responsibilities to carry out, hence there are time constraints in carrying out the data collection hence the number of participants selected will allow me to effectively manage time so as not to inconvenience the participants.

4 How will confidentiality and anonymity of the participants be ensured?

The issue of participant confidentiality and anonymity in research is so pertinent that it has to be ensured right from the start. I am aware that some of my respondents may be traceable by their position in the Sebakwe community or in the nation at large (i.e Provincial Education Director {PED}/ District Schools Inspector {DSI}), therefore I will ensure that what they say remains valuable, but their identity not revealed unless they are willing for it to be revealed. However, since some of the participants have already consented to participate in the study and have highlighted that they have no problems with their names appearing in the study report I will honour their wish. However, I am obligated not to use their names on matters that place them in bad light. I will also rely on Mbuya VaChihira my study guardian as discussed above to guide the data generation process. Drawing on Smith (1999) and Bassey (1999), I will ensure that the participants are well informed about their rights to withdraw from the study anytime they feel such an action is needed. Data shall be made available to the participants for verification.

5 How, and for how long will security of data be ensured?

I will ensure the security of the data by diarising and saving all collected information for a five-year period after the research is completed. This is in line with Bassey (1999)'s idea of formulating a "case record" of the research. Thus, using my 'case record' I shall group data according to the postcolonial discursive themes in unison with the key elements of critical research and then file them as hard copies in leaver arch files according to the labels of the themes. I will also capture the analysis of the ten lessons in the same way. In doing so I stand guided by Bricki and Green (2007)'s advice that a researcher should make copies of all the data and the master copy put away in a lockable filing cabinet. Here transportation of field generated data will be limited to a minimum. Thus, from workshop venue, interview venue transportation of both hardcopy documents and sound recorded data will be restricted to my private car. Another backup will be made electronically, I will create an archive file were all data should be code named and stored. These will also be backed up in my SkyDrive account. All data in the electronic archive folder will be secured by a password protection. The filling cabinet were all generated data will be kept shall be stored in my study room. I am the sole occupant of this room. On top of all this I seek to adopt O'Leary (2004)'s model of data management. Pivotal in this model is the notion of keeping the whole research project in mind throughout the research journey. This approach as depicted by the diagram below is critical as it will help me focus on the research aim and objective in all my interactions and readings during the course of the research. The computer that I will be using during the research process is my personal computer and is in my sole use, it is password protected at the login and individual file level. Data generated for this research shall be kept for more than 5 years. I have no intention of destroying the data even after the 5-year period.



Data management process flow diagram (Adapted from O’Leary, 2004, p. 184)

6. Please attach a copy of an example of the letter(s) of consent for the research participants.

7. Please attach a copy of the letter(s) of consent for the participating institution.

8. Please provide a copy of the permission letter to be sent to the gatekeeper seeking consent (e.g. from the EC Education Department).

9. Please provide copies of the following research instruments:

Appended are:

- **Semi-structured interview schedule (provisional)**
- Observations will be analysed using the tool in Appendix A. They will all take place in my classroom and will be video recorded.

All communications should be addressed to
"The Secretary for Primary and Secondary
Education"
Telephone: 732006
Telegraphic address: "EDUCATION"
Fax: 794505



Reference: C/426/3 Midlands
Ministry of Primary and
Secondary Education
P.O Box CY 121
Causeway
HARARE

09 May 2017

Bhurekheni John
Kaguvu Annex Primary School
P. O. Box 225
Kwekwe

**Re: PERMISSION TO CARRY OUT RESEARCH IN MIDLANDS PROVINCE:
KWEKWE DISTRICT: KAGUVI ANNEX PRIMARY SCHOOL:**

Reference is made to your application to carry out research at the above mentioned school in Midlands Province on the research title:

**"EXPLORING ASPECTS OF COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY IN AFROPHILIA
LEARNING PROCESS"**

Permission is hereby granted. However, you are required to liaise with the Provincial Education Director, Midlands Province, who is responsible for the schools which you want to involve in your research. You should ensure that your research work does not disrupt the normal operations of the school.

You are also required to provide a copy of your final report to the Secretary for Primary and Secondary Education on 30 April 2018.

MIN. OF PRY. & SEC. EDUCATION
PLANNING RESEARCH
AND DEVELOPMENT
09 MAY 2017
E. Chinyowa
E. Chinyowa
CAUSEWAY

E. Chinyowa
Acting Director: Planning, Research and Statistics
For: **SECRETARY FOR PRIMARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION**
cc: PED – Midlands Province

Consent letters to research participants NB the letters were for convenience translated to the vernacular language of the participants.



RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn

Consent letter to the Parent/Guardian

Dear Sir/ Madam

CONSENT TO ALLOW YOUR CHILD TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

I am writing to ask for your consent to allow your child's participation in some educational research which will take place in class during school hours.

I have been teaching at Kaguvi Sebakwe Annex Primary School for more than 10 years now and among the lessons I am teaching I intend to add ten 'Philosophical Enquiry' sessions. This is a specific form of lesson designed to develop critical thinking and explore personal values to develop 'critical reflexive thinking'.

I am undertaking a Doctorate of Philosophy Degree (PhD) with Rhodes University, and intend to make this work the subject of my research. I would like to conduct the main body of the research next term, which will involve lesson delivery, observations, and interview at the end of the process. Peer- and self-evaluation is part of the process of enquiry, where participants not only create and enquire into their own questions, but also into their own thinking, thus 'learning how they learn' in the process; recording some of these reflections will add data to the research.

The purpose of the research is to explore an alternative curriculum intervention that engages young people and contributes to their enjoyment of learning and development of critical reflexive thinking fashioned within the Afrophilia framework which potentially meets their local context. I am bound by the Rhodes University's 'Ethical issues in educational research' guidelines, and normally anonymity for both the institution and the participants is guaranteed.

However, Sebakwe Primary School is a sufficiently unique set-up that its name will be mentioned in my write-up. But no person's name will be used, or personal details revealed that would allow the identification of individuals. Copies of the dissertation, when complete, will be freely available.

I will be using a video recorder to capture the data, and to reflect on the lessons. The video data will not be used outside of this research project, it will only be used for the purposes of this research.

I hope that the above information gives you sufficient reassurance, and that you are willing to sign the form overleaf and return to me, at the school.

Yours sincerely,

Bhurekeni John

+263 777 130 878 bhurekenijohn@ymail.com

To Bhurekeni John, c/o Sebakwe Primary School

I (NAME AND SURNAME)

consent to my child (NAME AND AGE)

participating in the research outlined overleaf: ***‘Exploring aspects of community of inquiry in Afrophilia learning processes for transformative education, using a ‘Philosophy for Children’ approach***: A case of Sebakwe resettlement primary school, in the Midlands Province of Zimbabwe.

I understand that my child will be involved in ten lessons that explore approaches to developing critical thinking skills, and that the lessons will be video recorded.

I understand that the video material will not be used for any other purpose, except for the research.

Signed Parent/Guardian

Date/...../2017



RHODES UNIVERSITY
Where leaders learn

Informed Consent Form for Teachers and Parents

Address

Date

Dear Sir / Madam

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

Allow me to introduce myself as Bhurekeni John. I am a teacher at Kaguvi Sebakwe Annex Primary School. I am studying for my Doctorate in Philosophy Degree (PHD) with Rhodes University.

My study *explores for aspects of community of inquiry in Afrophilia learning processes for transformative education, using a 'Philosophy for Children' approach*: A case of Sebakwe resettlement primary school, in the Midlands Province of Zimbabwe.

With this letter, I seek your informed consent (permission) to interview and also involve you in focus group workshops as a way of developing the above mentioned curriculum activities based on local indigenous knowledge, stories and cultural artefacts. This will help me to develop ten lessons that I will teach to children to develop critical thinking skills. The workshops, lessons and interviews will provide the data on which I will base my analysis.

The analysis will provide insight into how new curriculum modules and approaches can be developed from African cultural knowledge and experience and also develop learners critical reflexive thinking skills.

Please note that you are under no obligation to allow me to interview you or to participate in the workshops. Interview and workshop participation is voluntary. Should you feel

uncomfortable with the interview you have the right to say so and to exit the interview or workshop at any time.

I commit myself to comply with the principles of confidentiality and non-disclosure. This entails that I will not disclose your name anywhere in this study.

I would therefore appreciate it if you can supply the details as indicated below, and sign this informed consent form and return it to me.

Yours sincerely,

Bhurekeni John

+263 777 130 878 bhurekenijohn@ymail.com

CONSENT FORM

To Bhurekeni John, c/o Sebakwe Primary School

I (NAME)

..... consent to participate in the research project outlined overleaf: *'Exploring aspects of community of inquiry in Afrophilia learning processes for transformative education, using a 'Philosophy for Children' approach: A case of Sebakwe resettlement primary school, in the Midlands Province of Zimbabwe'*.

I understand that my I will be involved in workshops to identify suitable African cultural heritage knowledge, stories, poems, songs and artefacts that can be used in ten lessons that explore approaches to developing critical thinking skills, and that I can observe these lessons, and that I will be interviewed after the process for reflection.

I understand that the workshops and the lessons will be video recorded.

I understand that the video material will not be used for any other purpose, except for the research.

Signed

Date /...../2017

DATA GENERATION: DETAIL OF INSTRUMENTS AND APPROACHES

WORKSHOP PLAN:

A one day workshop involving the 15 community participants, parents, education officials and teachers will be held to surface indigenous knowledge related to matters of interest and concern in the Sebakwe Community context. This will be captured as stories, poems, songs, or artefacts that could be used in the classroom as material for Philosophy of Children lessons.

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE (REFLECTIVE INTERVIEWS)

The interviews will probe the 15 community participants, parents, education officials and teachers experiences and reflections on (these are broad areas of questioning):

- The current school curriculum and their understanding of the current educational philosophy
- The educational policy that suggests that there is a need to base education on the Unhu/Ubuntu philosophy
- Their reflections on the workshop which surfaced local indigenous knowledge and artefacts for possible use in teaching lessons
- Their reflections on the lessons if they observed any (they will also be invited to view some of the video's of they were not able to attend the lessons).
- Their reflections on the study's purpose and intent
- Any other reflections on the curriculum intervention.

LESSON OBSERVATIONS

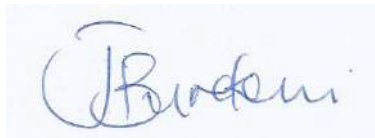
- Ten Afrophilia lessons will be taught drawing on the outcomes of the workshop. The content of the lessons will therefore still be decided based on these outcomes.

- However, I will use the pedagogical guidance provided by Philosophy of Children, and socio-cultural learning theory to teach the lessons in a dialogical manner that encourages children to seek meanings, reason, deliberate truth, interpret and evaluate evidence, and engage in counter- evidence and argumentation, and to relate the content to context.
- The lessons will be video-taped and will be transcribed for further analysis using the framework in Appendix A.
- I will also use the Community of Inquiry framework to describe, review and evaluate the lessons.

Ethics approval signed by:

Professor Heila Lotz-Sisitka (supervisor), 19 November 2017

John Bhurekeni (PhD scholar), 19 November 2017

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'J Bhurekeni', is shown on a light blue rectangular background.

APPENDIX D

ADDITIONAL PUBLICATION AND PRESENTATIONS EMANATING FROM THIS RESEARCH

- Bhurekeni, J. (2018). Epistemological access as an open question in the African renaissance agenda . In P. Chigora, R. R. Mahomva, & M. (. Lunga, Reinventions and Contestations of Thought-Power in Africa: Emerging Perspectives on Pan-Africanism (pp. 86-101). Bulawayo: LAN Readers. (Not included in the thesis)
- Bhurekeni, J. Finding the Logic of Connectivity between Sociocultural Learning Theory and Community of Inquiry in Philosophy for Children. Rhodes University/ Umea University PHD International Exchange Week. Rhodes University, Makhanda. South Africa. March 2019.
- Bhurekeni, J. A Sociocultural Philosophy for Children Intervention: Case of Sebakwe Primary Schools. Joining the academic conversation. Centre for Postgraduate Studies. Rhodes University, Makhanda. South Africa. August 2019.
- Bhurekeni, J. Decolonisation and improvement of learning opportunities in resettlement primary schools in Zimbabwe. Paper presented in November 2021, SPRAUTUMN Seminar
- Bhurekeni, J. Post wildlife sanctuary communities, competing values and ethical dilemmas: what philosophy for children (p4c) can do to give wildlife animals a second chance. Abstract accepted for presentation at the 2022 Plato Conference: Theme: Ethics in Schools, Communities, and the Public Sphere.
- Bhurekeni J. (Article ready for submission to a journal) The Black Heretic: How do chosen excerpts from Dambudzo Marechera's writings contribute to postcolonial Zimbabwe's theory and practice of philosophy for children

ⁱ ‘coloniality’ in this article represents the asymmetrical social, political, economic, epistemic and cultural legacies that continue to exist in postcolonial nations.

ⁱⁱ All interviews with parents and learners were conducted in Shona (one of the indigenous languages spoken in Sebakwe); two teachers opted to have their interviews in English while the interview with the inspector was conducted in English. The Author transcribed and translated all the interviews.