

Newspapers in Education programmes and South African youth: a
survey of the relationship between South African school-goers and
newspapers in Esikhawini, Kwazulu-Natal.

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by

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Abstract

This study examines the relationship which scholars have with newspapers against the background of a Newspapers in Education (NIE) programme in two black South African primary schools. Considering the presence of newspapers in the class as a medium of instruction, a number of factors are found to influence the relationship which scholars have with newspapers. These factors are: scholars' access to newspapers; the nature of lessons using the newspaper; the character of the newspaper used in NIE and the context of education at the particular schools, including the attitudes and organisational abilities of both teachers and the principal.

A description and analysis of this relationship is conducted in terms of the knowledge, attitudes and behaviour which scholars had in relation to newspapers. This research is qualitative, undertaken from a constructivist-interpretative approach, and is set within international and South African contexts. The findings are relevant to understanding NIE programmes' interface with scholars' educational performance and with newspaper marketing objectives, as well as to the theorisation of NIE practices.

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Chapter One

Introduction and Overview

This detailed study of two standard five classes in two co-educational primary schools in Esikhawini, Kwazulu-Natal, examines the relationship which scholars have to newspapers¹. It suggests that this link, while largely ignored in Newspaper in Education (NIE) research², is integral to the chain which links newspapers to young people via teachers. For this study illustrates that while the NIE players have established links between newspapers and teachers, and teachers and young people, the NIE approach needs to place more attention on the nature of the link between young people and newspapers. The purpose of the study is to examine this relationship against the background of a NIE programme in two schools, Injabuloyesizwe and Esikhawini Higher Primary Schools.

NIE is the broad term given to a range of activities which use the newspaper in an educational context. By "educational", I am referring to formal, non-formal and informal education. Formal education refers to curriculum-based education obtained in the formal school setting. In terms of NIE, this would involve the use of the newspaper in this formal setting. Informal education is also curriculum-based but does not occur in a formal setting. Newspaper supplements which contain curriculum-based material would be one example of NIE as it relates to informal education. Non-formal education is non-curricular education. In terms of NIE, this may take the form of a newspaper supplement which contains more life-skills based information. The latter two forms are mentioned in this study, but the focus of this study is NIE in the formal educational context.

The term "Newspapers in Education" implies involvement of both the newspaper industry and the education sector and as will become evident, these two sectors have different motives for getting involved in NIE. Generally, however, increasing concerns about aliteracy (this term refers to those who can read but do

¹ Note that I am referring to newspapers as an institution and not merely the newspapers the scholars may read.

² References to NIE research are to be found in Chapter Three.

not) and illiteracy [Ringler and Rhodes 1990: 2] and the newspaper industry's increasing concern about declining readership have contributed to the survival of NIE.

A recent survey conducted by Harvard and the University of Cape Town indicated that 80 per cent of black South Africans and 40 per cent of white South Africans cannot read or compute at a standard 5 level [Mail and Guardian, September 1995]. Educational reform in SA is under way in the form of newer and more futuristic alternatives. The pedagogy of NIE is consistent with a policy document on "Norms and standards for teacher education in South Africa" released in 1996 by the National Education Department. This document stresses a move away from the "transmission model of teaching where facts are paramount, to a process or skills-based approach where the teacher acts as a facilitator in the classroom" [Primie News, Issue 4, May 1996: 3]. The emphasis is pupil-centred where students have the freedom to choose their topics of exploration in this discovery learning approach. Teachers are also "encouraged to educate for critical, responsible and useful citizenship and are expected to promote community involvement, tolerance in a multi-cultural society and values as encompassed in the Human Rights Manifesto" [ibid].

The concept of Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP) (referred to in relation to the work of Ajzen and Fishbein [1980]) is useful in defining the term "relationship". In terms of KAP, "relationship" includes the knowledge scholars have of newspapers, their attitudes towards newspapers and how their knowledge and attitudes are manifested in their practice of newspaper use. As a precondition of knowledge, scholars' access to newspapers within and beyond the classroom requires investigation. The effect, if any, which the character and frequency of access may have on scholars' understanding of the newspaper's contents, structure and format and their resultant behaviour is also explored.

In accordance with the concept of KAP, "relationship" also encompasses scholars' likes and dislikes about the newspaper, whether it is relevant to their lives, whether they see themselves as an audience of a newspaper and what role they see this medium playing in society. In looking at whether the newspaper is relevant to

these scholars, it is salient to look at the types of information which interest them, and the extent to which the newspaper is relevant given their relationship with television. Radio is not considered, although a wholly comprehensive study would locate relationships to newspapers within the full panorama of media relationships engaged in by scholars. Whether scholars enjoy using newspapers in their classroom is also salient because it indicates that the newspaper contains some elements which scholars believe are pertinent to them.

The scholars' relationships to newspapers are relevant to the body of empirical writing linked to NIE³. NIE is based on a number of assumptions, including the idea that television-generation youths have little interest in newspapers and further that they enjoy and understand NIE programmes [Stein 1990: 18; Homolac 1990:8]. While there is much research which explores the educational benefit of NIE for scholars' academic performance, very little international or local research exists which addresses scholars' relationships to newspapers against this background (see Chapter Three). And yet I argue that this relationship is critical to the newspaper industry which has invested many resources in NIE with the long-term objective of cultivating a younger audience who will become adult newspaper readers. Worried publishers agree that the demise of the reading habit is threatening the survival of the newspaper industry [The Star's Literacy Unit 1990: 18]. In South Africa, the 1995 All Media and Product Survey (AMPS) readership figures indicate clearly the decline in readers in the last five years and the difficulty in building black readership [Mail and Guardian, October 13 - 19 1995: B8; Sunday Times 10 September 1995: 2]. Furthermore, sales of newspapers fell over the 1994 - 1995 year by more than half a million copies a week [Sunday Times 6 August 1995: 22]. And while international research suggests that young people involved in NIE schemes become adult newspaper readers [Grusin and Stone 1992], there is no local research which supports this. As will become evident in Chapter Four, rising costs and the lack of evaluation of NIE schemes in general have

³ For the purposes of this study, I shall refer to this writing as NIE theory, although it does not (yet) constitute theory in the formalised sense of purely abstract interrelated concepts.

led many of those from the South African newspaper industry to question how long these programmes will be allowed to survive, given the lack of evidence of the benefits of such programmes for newspapers. While there is a body of commercial readership research which touches on the relationship between young people and newspapers, this is not to my knowledge specifically about young people's relationships to newspapers against the background of NIE (See Chapter Three).

Understanding these relationships is also critical to the educational sector. Once educators understand more about how scholars relate to newspapers, they are in a better position to use newspapers to devise lesson plans and educational materials around these interests. The educators involved in NIE see this link as critical too as is evident in Chapter Four. Thus, this research has an intellectual and practical value - both of which are important to various interest groups involved in NIE programmes.

Methodologically, the orientation of this research is interpretative; following Silverman (1970), I am asking the question, "What is going on here?", with the intention being to reject prescription in favour of analysis. The study seeks to describe and understand the scholars' relationship to newspapers against the background of NIE in terms of these scholars' interpretation of the situation. But analytically, the study addresses the task of placing the perceptions of scholars within a wider social context and does not rest solely upon the interpretation of scholars' utterances. Furthermore, this study found useful the constructivist perspective which assumes a subjectivist epistemology (knower and subject create understandings through interacting and shaping one another) and a interpretive, naturalistic set of methods to explore the relationship which scholars have to newspapers. The concept of perceptual reality, that is, that reality can have different interpretations depending upon particular vantage points also provided insight into this research.

Inevitably in an exercise of this nature, my portrayal of the scholars' relationships to newspapers will reflect a number of methodological impediments. Much of the analysis is handled through categories which rigidify, simplify and reify the actual interpretations, perspectives and meanings held by the scholars. What is

offered here is an account derived from the experiences of a single researcher doing cross-cultural research with all the associated problems (See Chapter Two).

As a participant observer, I began my study at the two schools in February 1996 at the beginning of the first school term, starting with a one-month period of general observation and familiarisation to locate myself within the particular context in order to be able to start identifying relevant factors for research and to enable the scholars to see me as less of an outsider. I attended either or both of the schools daily until the end of the second school term at the end of June and returned briefly at the beginning of the third term to collect some quantitative information which I thought might be necessary and to attend the graduation ceremony of those teachers who had received NIE-training that year.

This thesis is divided into nine chapters, including this introductory chapter. Chapter Two provides greater detail of the two schools and the context of the study while discussing the scope and methods used in this thesis. Chapter Three contextualises this study by examining NIE internationally and providing some detail of the types of research which relate to the focus of this study. Chapter Four explores the status of NIE in South Africa, focusing on the types of programmes which exist and some of the concerns expressed by the newspaper and educational sectors. Chapters Five and Seven detail the two sets of scholars' access to newspapers at home and at school and the impediments to this access. Chapters Six and Eight provide further detail of the relationship which these two sets of scholars have with newspapers. Finally, Chapter Nine reviews the major issues raised in the study, considers the relevance of this case-study to the theoretical understanding of NIE and then explores the implications thereof for educationalists, the newspaper industry and academic research.

Chapter Two

Scope and Methodology

1. Introduction

This chapter provides details of the circumstances surrounding the study which may have impacted on it, a brief description of the methodological paradigm which underpins the research, the qualitative research methods used, and associated problems. The description of the township attempts to illustrate that the findings of this study must be seen within the context of the area with its proximity to a major industrial harbour, corresponding employment opportunities, and major transport routes. The chapter also describes the conditions at the two schools in as much as these affect the running of the schools and, indirectly, how the scholars relate to the newspapers they use in class.

2. Contextual study

To locate my research within a body of prior work and contextualisation, I conducted a review of NIE internationally and in South Africa. Spelt out in Chapters Three and Four, this entailed literature surveys and interviews with NIE actors both in the country and abroad. Standard literature searches plus structured questions were put to individuals in direct interviews or via the e-mail. Many of the methodological issues discussed in relation to my fieldwork in Esikhawini later in this chapter, also informed my contextual research.

3. Researcher-status considerations

In undertaking participant observation at the schools I was aware of certain circumstances which were insurmountable. The first of these is that I was a female researcher from a particular race, class, age, cultural, linguistic, educational and ethnic background researching subjects who differed in most of these aspects. I was aware that my being an outsider would influence my research and as much as possible attempted to take note of instances where this occurred [cf p14]. At the same time, I agreed with Beattie (1964), Merton (1972) and Simmel (1950) who felt

that there were also advantages in studying a community as an outsider. Being an outsider in the social setting gave me scope to stand back and abstract material from the detailed observations.

As regards language, Deutscher [1968] addressed the difficult task of asking questions cross-culturally in order to emphasise and clarify some of the problematics of language. Relying on interpreters can add a layer of meaning, biases and interpretations that may lead to misunderstanding. I deal with this later in this chapter (cf p 18).

Buckingham et al's [1990] research on conducting classroom research on media education highlighted some of the complexities involved in studying young people, particularly in identifying what scholars have learnt and are interested in. These authors state that *how* scholars know something, is as important as *what* they know. They especially caution the researcher about the way questions and age/authority differences can lead young people to give certain answers.

I realised that all this would impact upon the situation researched in terms of

- how I experienced a world quite different from my own and
- in terms of the role in which those under study cast me and behaved accordingly.

Given then that I may make assumptions related to my personal biography, I have tried to be consciously reflective on my particular status in the field and attempt to make these assumptions explicit. I was aware that either under-identification (ethnocentrism) or over-identification of the researcher with the cultural values that characterise a group or situation can influence the study, thus it was essential that I examined my values and those of the context.

At the same time, given the interpretative-constructivist framework which guided this research, using myself as the primary data gathering instrument was particularly useful. I knew little about the study site, its occupants or what might emerge from the questions asked. This meant that I had to adapt to environmental and personal cues which emerged or developed from the site and its occupants. As the primary data gathering instrument, I was capable of processing data as soon as it became available, adapting the focus of the study accordingly, identifying and taking into account some of the resulting biases from value-laden research. I also

developed tacit knowledge which is useful in qualitative research [cf pp 9, 25]. Given that context and interaction is critical in determining meaning (cf pp 8-12,15,22), the above was all salient.

4. Theoretical underpinnings

The insights of the constructivist and interpretative perspectives were useful as these allow for a much more varied portrayal of scholars' constructions about their relationships to newspapers to emerge than the positivist, post-positivist, critical (Marxist, emancipatory) or feminist-poststructural approaches¹. This epistemological position asserts that subject and inquirer mutually shape one another. I was aware that my subjects and I shaped one another's behaviour and responses in face-to-face situations and my data reflects this to some extent. I found it useful to exploit the opportunities that arose from this interaction and mutual shaping as it helped to focus the study². Initial conversations with scholars yielded some factors which affected their relationship with the newspaper and these were then worked into more detailed questions. In essence, these responses to initial questions shaped future interviews. And yet, as will be discussed in ensuing chapters, some questions I asked influenced the subjects as these questions made them think about issues which had never occurred to them before. Thus my subjects and I shaped each other, the data gathering process and the meaning ascribed to the data.

In keeping with the interpretative approach, reality cannot be known fully, but only appreciated from particular vantage points or perceptions and it is the researcher's obligation to lay bare these perceptions. This ontological position asserts that no one person can know all of reality at any point in time and that each person will thus have a different view of reality. Thus there are multiple perceptions of

¹ The constructivist-interpretative approach is consistent with Denzin and Lincoln's interpretation of qualitative research as a commitment to the interpretative understanding of human experience [1994: 3]. Lincoln and Guba [1985] provide further details of the epistemological, ontological and methodological premises of this approach.

² Lincoln and Guba [1985: 101-107] provide convincing reasons why it is preferable to capitalise on this interactivity rather than to exclude it, even if exclusion was possible.

reality as there are infinite interpretations based on different people's various experiences and influences [Lincoln and Guba 1985: 84]³. I attempt to portray as coherently as possible the many interpretations of reality encountered. As an interpretation of reality is constructed by people in a particular context and at a particular time, I am aware that my observations are inevitably time- and context-dependent and my explanation takes this into account.

I was also aware that this study was value-determined in the following ways [Lincoln & Guba 1985: 183-185]:

- the choice of the problem, and the framing and focusing of the problem. The particular problem chosen for study excludes others and the values associated with these.
- the choice of the paradigms that guide the investigation into the problem. To choose one over the other is to indicate my affiliations with particular paradigms over others.
- the choice of existing literature (in this case international research on NIE) to guide the collection and analysis of data and the interpretation of findings. The available existing literature highlighted different problems and guided the collection and analysis of data and the meaning ascribed to the data.

As the descriptions and interpretations of my findings take into account local conditions, any generalisations I have made must be seen in terms of Cronbach's "working hypothesis" [in Lincoln & Guba 1985: 123] and not viewed as an universalisable conclusion. Whether a working hypothesis is applicable in another context depends on the degree to which the "sending" and "receiving" contexts are congruent [ibid: 124]⁴. As I cannot know all the contexts to which someone may wish to transfer my findings, I have tried to provide sufficient information about the context in which this inquiry was carried out so that anyone interested in

³ Positivists contend that there is a single reality which can be investigated, internalised and made known.

⁴ Thus transferability refers to the extent to which this research is transferable to other studies as well as the application of other studies to this research. This must be borne in mind in Chapter Three when NIE research is reviewed.

transferability has a base of information appropriate to make the judgment.

5. The context

As I contend that human subjects take their meaning from their context as well as from their interactions with one another⁵, it was important to study them in their natural setting. As Christians and Carey [1981: 350] comment, "a description is meaningful to the degree we can grasp the various arenas in which things stand." It is for this reason that a profile of the study area and some background information on the scholars' is provided.

Injabuloyesizwe Primary School is built on tribal trust land surrounding the township, while the other school, Esikhawini HP Primary School is situated in the middle of the formal township of Esikhawini near the largest of two supermarkets and the taxi rank. Both form part of the Mehlwesizwe circuit, one of two circuits in the Empangeni-Richard's Bay area. These schools are two of 10 black primary schools in the area where teachers have received NIE training in the past year. The more rural nature of the area around Injabuloyesizwe Primary School is characterised by the lack of tarred roads and shops and the small plots of land where sugar cane, blue gums and vegetables are grown. In 1996, electricity and potable water were being installed in this area. Public transport is irregular and residents of this area are five kilometres away from the taxi rank in the middle of the formal township and the shops which sell newspapers. As most of these breadwinners use taxis or buses to get to and from work, newspapers tend to be bought from either of the two shops near the taxi and bus ranks, or from shops near their place of work.

Injabuloyesizwe Primary School was built at the expense of the community in the area. In 1990 the first three classrooms of the present day school were begun. Today there are 10 classrooms and a school hall. Mrs Cebekhulu, the school principal, Mrs Mthimkhulu, the standard five teacher and vice-principal and two other teachers have been with the school since it began. Today there are 478 pupils from pre-school level to standard five. The school also accommodates 81 standard

⁵ By this I do not imply that these two categories are mutually exclusive.

six and seven scholars who are waiting for a new high school to be built. Class sizes average at 40 pupils. With 13 primary teachers employed at the school, there are 36 pupils per teacher in the primary section.

In contrast, Esikhawini HP School is in the formal township surrounded by neatly laid out brick homes and tarred roads with closer access to the shops where newspapers are sold. The school (5 km away from Injabuloyesizwe School) is much older and bigger than Injabuloyesizwe. It was built in 1970 with the formal township and no new buildings have been added in the interim years to accommodate the growing number of scholars enrolling at the school. Enrolment stands at 1 398. Although there are 29 teachers at the school, many are subject not class teachers. Thus while the pupil teacher ratio is 48 : 1, most classes consist of 70 - 80 scholars per class. These kinds of numbers in each class do put pressure on the teacher, especially in a programme like NIE and will be discussed in Chapter Seven.

Esikhawini is a formal settlement enclave surrounded by tribal trust lands. It is not isolated, despite its rural setting. Blue gum plantations owned by Sappi and Mondi hide the township from the nearby N2 national road between Durban and Maputo. Taxis and buses ferry inhabitants of this dormitory residential area to and from their places of work in the two boom towns, Richard's Bay and Empangeni which lie 20 km away from Esikhawini in opposite directions.

Bryan Grobler, senior town planner for Richard's Bay, stated that a 1991 HSRC survey estimated the population for the township at 30 000 people [Interview, 6 June 1996]. More recent private studies undertaken by the Richard's Bay town planning division which incorporates Esikhawini in its borough, have found the figure closer to 40 000 - 45 000 people. This figure, however, only refers to the formal township where Esikhawini HP School is situated. It does not include the informal settlements surrounding the township where Injabuloyesizwe School is to be found. The town planning division estimates this area to be the home of another 40 000 - 45 000 people.

The proximity of Esikhawini to the two boom towns, major access roads and the fact that scholars indicated that many of their parents have regular access to the two nearby towns through their work, means that access to print media is not as

limited as in some isolated rural areas. The two supermarkets in Esikhawini which sell newspapers are near the taxi rank which scholars' relatives use daily to get to work. There is no public library in the township, thus scholars cannot read newspapers there, but there are school libraries (these are discussed in Chapters Five and Seven), some of which do carry print mass media as well as books.

The above comments indicate that scholars are not living in an isolated community which has no access to newspapers and thus, that there is the possibility for these scholars to access newspapers outside the classroom. Whether these scholars do so, how they access them and the extent to which their access to newspapers is curtailed by factors beyond their control is discussed in subsequent chapters.

6. Methodology and related problems

This study uses Nelson et al's [1992:4] interpretation of qualitative research which they describe as "committed to the naturalistic perspective and to the interpretative understanding of the human experience". Naturalism is central to the methodology of this study and is defined by Willems [Willems and Rausch 1969: 46] as the set of activities a researcher engages in while conducting research and where no or at least minimal manipulation on the part of the inquirer is implied and no or at least minimal *a priori* units are imposed on the outcome.

Before this study began, certain preliminary steps were taken. These included making initial contact with the study area and subjects, gaining entry and negotiating consent. While all schools in the black small towns and rural areas have broadly the same access to resources, variation occurs due to prevailing political conditions and exceptional teachers, especially principals. As I knew little about the schools in Esikhawini, I decided to use two schools as opposed to one in order to discover if my sample schools had any characteristics which would lead me to suspect that they differ much from the average. Except for the fact that they had NIE-trained teachers, the schools in this study did not exhibit any exceptional characteristics which would lead me to believe they were not average.

Access to Injabuloyesizwe and Esikhawini Schools was gained via the Media

in Education (MIE) Trust who had recently started training teachers in NIE in Esikhawini. The willingness of these schools to co-operate with me, convenience and ease of access influenced the choice of the location. Furthermore, as Esikhawini was one of two rural areas where the MIE Trust had recently started NIE training, it was interested in assisting anyone doing evaluation in the area. Upon my request, the MIE Trust organised for me to meet the standard five NIE-trained teacher from Injabuloyesizwe. She recommended the other school to me.

The schools were chosen as they are both primary schools, both have teachers who have completed and are currently completing a NIE training course and both were sufficiently close to one another to allow me to visit them both daily if I so desired⁶. Various gatekeepers were identified and approached to ask for access to the schools. A meeting with the circuit inspector responsible for the two schools was held at which time the purpose of the study was pointed out; possible fears were allayed and the inspector was made to feel comfortable that neither he nor the schools under his jurisdiction were facing any risks as a result of the study.

Deciding how to present oneself as a researcher is also an activity which needs to be addressed before the study begins [Denzin & Lincoln 1994: 367]. I did not hide the true nature of my identity. I shared my background with scholars, teachers and principals alike, declaring myself a student and attempting to illustrate as simply as possible the purpose of my presence at the schools. I presented myself very much as someone who believed I had much to learn from the scholars and teachers and while teachers soon treated me in this way, the scholars were initially a little more suspicious of my motives for being at their school⁷. As it was impossible to be regarded as a member of the scholars' group, because of the age gap, I tried to

⁶ Initially, I divided my day between the two schools, spending one morning at one school and the afternoon at the other school and then reversing the order the following day. At first teachers at Esikhawini HP used this knowledge to plan their NIE lessons and I observed about two NIE lessons a week during the first two weeks. I then became less systematic in my arrival at the two schools and soon teachers at Esikhawini HP returned to their normal mode of teaching.

⁷ Initially, some of them thought I was a school inspector.

present myself as a possible friend to both scholars and teachers⁸. I was partially successful in this as scholars were keen to share their interests with me at break time, but perhaps because of my age, I was regarded as a teacher, albeit an approachable one⁹. Teachers were more willing to consider me a member of their group. The appropriate dress code thus seemed to be one of a student with a limited budget. It cannot be said that I "dressed down", but I was conscious of not appearing to alienate myself from my subjects by dressing in a manner which would be seen as far beyond their means.

6.1 Choosing the sample

The subjects chosen for study were selected for a number of criteria established by myself. Termed judgment sampling [Burgess 1984:55], these criteria included their sex, scholarly status, their standard five status and the fact that they were the class of a NIE-trained teacher to name a few. In total, five teachers from each of the two schools received NIE training. As to choosing which class to use, both classes had to be taught by teachers who had received training in NIE. The oldest possible class, that is a standard five class, was chosen for a number of reasons. The MIE Trust were training senior primary teachers in NIE in the area and thus standard five was the highest possible standard available for me to research. With standard five scholars, I hoped that language problems could be minimised in that scholars' English levels would be sufficiently advanced for me to communicate directly with them. This proved only partially the case, and the services of a translator had to be engaged. I assumed that the older the scholar, the more likely they would be to pick up a newspaper. I also felt it necessary to reduce the age gap between myself and the scholars in order to build as positive a relationship with them as possible so that they would feel comfortable talking to me. At Injabuloyesizwe, there was only one

⁸ Burgess [1984: 91] contends, however, that in cross-cultural research, the individual may become a friend, but a friend who is always an outsider.

⁹ This is not unusual for as Hargreaves [1967:201] remarks: "Any adult (who is not dressed as a workman) appearing in school must in their eyes (the pupils) have some strong connection with the teaching profession."

standard five class. At Esikhawini HP, there were two standard five teachers trained in NIE but only one was willing to be part of my study. I did visit other classes at both schools, but my interviews were restricted to the two standard five classes. While I used the entire class of 42 scholars at Injabuloyesizwe School, time constraints prevented me from doing the same with the 80 scholars at Esikhawini HP. Thus I randomly chose 38 scholars from the latter school but did try to get an equal spread of male and female scholars in order to see if gender influenced their relationship with newspapers.

6.2 The use of multiple methods and emergent design

The use of multiple methods was an attempt to obtain an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question, in line with my adherence to the ontology of the interpretative approach. Further, the combination of multiple methods, empirical materials and perspectives in a single study adds rigour, breadth and depth to any investigation [Flick 1992: 194]. The multiple methods encompassed observation, unstructured interviews and conversations and are discussed in the next sections.

In addition, although I had conducted literature searches of international NIE research, I found no research which was similar to mine either internationally or in South Africa and thus entered the field with some questions but was unsure where they might lead. This uncertainty demanded a more open-ended approach. As I contend that meaning is derived from context as well as the interaction between subjects and researcher, it was necessary to adapt the research design continuously. As the study progressed and relevant factors emerged, I was able to focus the inquiry more. Thus the research design evolved through continuous data analysis. My diary contained daily observations and thoughts which I reworked into categories, as they emerged, if I thought they were pertinent. School holidays and weekends proved particularly useful in obtaining a distance from the study site in order to reflect on what was occurring in the field, meet with peers directly involved in the study, conduct literature searches and determine subsequent steps.

6.3 Participant observation

Observation played a key role and was valuable for the purpose of verifying what transpired in interviews and discussions. As my approach puts human interpretation at the core, observation is critical to determining the meaning of those interpretations. The Chicago School of inquiry clearly highlighted that "social feelings (attitudes and sentiments) and lifestyle are most fully expressed in actual situations and must be recovered unobtrusively through participant observation, from personal documents and open-ended interviewing" [Christians & Carey 1981: 349].

Adler and Adler [1994: 379] indicate that there is a trend for participant observers to adopt membership roles and thus be more involved with their subjects. The peripheral membership role entails that an insider's view is vital to forming an accurate appraisal of human group life, so the researcher should observe and interact closely enough with members to establish an insider's identity without participating in those activities constituting the core of group membership.

This probably describes the role which I had. It was impossible to be a member of the group of scholars as obvious insurmountable race, language, age, ethnic and educational differences existed. Neither did I wish to be considered a teacher, although the extent to which I was successful is unknown¹⁰.

Denzin and Lincoln [1994: 354] describe qualitative observation as occurring in a natural setting and following the natural stream of everyday life. I was aware that observation can be problematic because it invades private places such as a classroom. In this study, observation took various forms. Initially, observation was unstructured to allow me to immerse myself in the context, to develop some sense of what was relevant and to develop tacit knowledge. Unstructured observation also took place at break time in order that I could gain tacit knowledge and obtain a sense of the context. Initially many scholars would gather around me and watch my

¹⁰ The active membership role describes researchers who become involved in the setting's central activities, assuming responsibilities that advance the group, but without fully committing to member's values and goals. Researchers in the complete membership role are those who study scenes where they are already members or those who become converted to genuine membership during the course of their research.

reactions. Within two months, the standard five scholars were, on the whole, ignoring me at break time. When the teacher was teaching, I sat in the classroom observing scholars and teachers. I never tried to sit in the same place, but chose to sit with different scholars. When scholars were left to do their own work either in groups or individually, I walked around observing them at times or tried to do the same activity¹¹.

One limitation of my presence in class was that initially scholars were distracted and would often look my way instead of concentrating on the lesson. This changed, yet some shy scholars were still distracted by my presence at the end of the study. The core issues observed were:

- the behaviour and attitude of scholars towards newspapers
- how the teacher used the newspaper in class
- positive and negative areas in teaching with the newspaper

Time constraints limited observation to the school environment. The scholars' home environment was not observed, thus much of the information regarding their relationship with the newspaper at home was gleaned from cross-checked interviews and discussions.

One of the problems of studying an entity in its natural setting is that the researcher is a disturbing element. To eliminate this, the researcher must be seen as a part of the context. Prolonged engagement and persistent observation in the field are two ways in which I tried to become less of a disturbance (cf pp 23-25)¹².

¹¹ Spindler did the same and remarks: "Though it may seem incongruous to think of a middle-aged 200-pound male anthropologist being a participant-observer in third- and fourth-grade classes, this was the case. I sat at a desk in the back of the room and did the same things the children did insofar as my ethnographic recording activities permitted. The children accepted me and my role much more quickly than did the teachers, but both seemed to adapt to the incongruities after a period of several weeks. I can think of no other way that I would have come to an understanding of what the third and fourth grade in the Schonhausen Grundschule were like." [1974: 385].

¹² Corsaro (1980) strongly recommends "prior ethnography", namely becoming a participant observer for a lengthy period of time before the study is actually undertaken. He contends that it helps to diminish the obtrusiveness of the researcher but also provides invaluable orientational information (for example, hints as to possible sources of information, possible informants, possible problems, etc.) which will increase both the effectiveness and the efficiency of the formal work. Time and resources did not, however,

5.4 Interview formats and the nature of the relationship between interviewer and interviewee

In an interview, "both parties behave as though they are of equal status for its duration, whether or not this is actually so", which means that interviewing is not always a neutral tool [Benney and Hughes 1956: 142]. An interview can be influenced by the personal characteristics of the interviewer, including race, class, language, gender and ethnicity. Furthermore, the interviewer creates the reality of the interview situation in a number of ways, including actions, body language, and the way in which he or she conducts the interview. I was aware I had to be sensitive to these issues.

I thus began each interview by introducing my translator to scholars. He was a teacher at Injabuloyesizwe. He was young and well-liked by scholars as he was approachable. He "played the fool" for them quite easily both in and out of class. He was especially good at making them feel comfortable, often telling a few humorous anecdotes. I was aware of the dangers of a translator and chose Mr Dumsani because he did not come across as an authoritarian figure who might intimidate scholars. His appearance and manner made him seem not much older than the scholars and they enjoyed his classes. For my purposes, his English was also particularly good, so his translation of scholars' utterances was not always simplistically translated due to a lack of sufficient vocabulary. I was aware that he might try to give me the answers he thought I sought, but I continually stressed that all the scholars' answers were important to my study, even if they seemed odd. I was aware of the difficulties of using a translator but since my Zulu was poor and the scholars' level of English incapable of addressing the more difficult questions, a translator was necessary.

Mr Dumsani took his task seriously enough to offer some commentary after each interview voluntarily which was welcome and often confirmed my impressions of what particular scholars had said. He also provided insight into the culture of my subjects. On one particular occasion, he explained scholars' interest in reading about

permit prior ethnography in my study, although the initial phase of my research covered this ground (see p24).

vehicle accidents as related to *Ubuntu*, a shared sense of humanity which makes them interested in any news which might affect their community. In a subsequent informal discussion with scholars when Mr Dumsani was not around, I asked more detailed questions about their interest in this news item and his interpretation proved accurate.

The scholars were also told beforehand of the purpose of the interview, that they were not expected to answer questions which they did not want to answer and that they should be as honest as possible. Mr Dumsani and I were conscious of not sitting together or in opposition to the scholars. Mr Dumsani, who might be teaching later that day, would take off his tie and open his shirt buttons to look less official. As much as possible, an effort was made to make the scholars feel comfortable and secure within the interview situation.

Buckingham et al's [1990: 24] research with scholars on media education highlight possible methodological problem areas of which I had to be aware. They contend that asking scholars to identify why they like or dislike something is asking them to account for their pleasure in rational terms which is a difficult activity, even for adults. The unfamiliarity of the interview can make scholars reticent. Buckingham et al also point out that scholars are clever enough to know when they are being lead to answer a question in a particular way and will play this game quite willingly.

I used the semi-structured and unstructured interview format which contrasts with the structured interview which uses a predetermined set of questions administered in the same way to each respondent. Kvale pointed out that the semi-structured qualitative research interview does not imply that it lacks focus [from a workshop with qualitative research interviewer, Steinar Kvale from Aarhus University, Denmark at Rhodes University, 28 August 1995]. He stressed the need for the interview to be focused on certain themes, yet it is neither strictly structured with standardised questions nor entirely non-directive. This study used semi-structured face-to-face group interviewing.

Interviews were conducted during school time either in an empty classroom or on the playground, whichever was quieter. As Harcourt and Hartland note in

their NIE study [1992: 22], the fact that the research was conducted in an educational environment may have had some influence on the responses to questions. Perhaps the home environment may have been more suitable for interviewing as it was less formal, but I discovered early in the study that some scholars did not want me to see their homes¹³. Thus interviewing was done at school fitting in with the schedule so as not to cause too much disruption.

As Fontana and Frey [1994:364] comment, the group interview format provides another level of data gathering or a perspective on the research problem not available through individual interviews. I found semi-structured group interviews conducive to this study. Individual interviewing was tried but was not successful. It was daunting to young people who had never been interviewed before. They seemed to gain comfort from having other members of their group around them. After the first interview, the size of the group interviews was limited to four scholars. This was a sufficient number to ensure comfort and prevent the interview from becoming drawn out. It meant that scholars did not get bored as they waited for their classmates to answer a question.

The interview was semi-structured in that it was an informal guided interview where only some of the questions were predetermined and where new questions or lines of questioning arose during the interview. The interview began by asking scholars questions which I had already asked in informal conversation. This helped to relax respondents as they did not feel threatened that I was about to ask questions which they could not answer. This was also useful for verification purposes as it either reinforced or contradicted earlier findings. For instance, I discovered that some scholars who had said on a previous occasion that they read a particular newspaper, now mentioned not reading a newspaper or reading a different one. In this situation, I would question these scholars about this discrepancy. If scholars asked me a question, I also tried to answer it so that they would not feel that this was a totally one-sided interview. Thus in this situation I

¹³ When I offered scholars a lift home, some scholars asked to be dropped off some way away from their homes. I never discovered why these scholars did this but decided to respect their privacy and not intrude in a domain which was obviously very private to them.

tried to be flexible, empathic, persuasive and a good listener. Scholars' expressions and body language in interviews also helped me discover if a particular question was unsettling and added meaning to what they were saying about a particular issue.

I also used the unstructured interview format which Fontana and Frey [1994:365] define as the format where "both questions and answers are provided by the respondent although it does become more structured as the design emerges." This format was particularly useful at the beginning of the study as it allowed me to understand the behaviour of the respondents without imposing any *a priori* categories that might limit the study. Questions did become more specific as the interview moved along and as salient points emerged. The unstructured interview was suited to the situation where I did not know what I did not know.

I also had to be a good manager in order to prevent one person from dominating the group and to encourage recalcitrant respondents to participate. I posed the questions to each respondent to ensure the fullest possible coverage of the topic. I also did not allow the interviews to be too long¹⁴ and tried to ensure that the respondents did not deviate too much from the topic.

I found the group interview format flexible and very data-rich because it allowed for stimulating debate around an issue which not only provided useful information but indicated through observation that certain scholars had strong opinions about a certain issue (see Sections Four in Chapters 6 and 8). This allowed me to formulate new questions on the spot to discuss these strong opinions. There were two instances however where emerging group culture interfered with individual expression. These interviews were abandoned and the subjects were interviewed with other scholars. This was also not successful in the case of three girls who were painfully shy. It was difficult to extract information from them either through conversation or informal individual or group interviews. The teacher never asked these girls questions in class because she said it was so difficult to get them to

¹⁴ I found that after 45 minutes to one hour, scholars were tired and started looking around. I stopped interviews at this point and returned to interview them later.

answer.

As Kvale pointed out [ibid], I too found that the process of being interviewed produced new insights and awareness in both my subjects and myself [cf pp99, 101] and thus during the course of an interview, descriptions and meanings about a theme would change. The interview was a process of reflection for both interviewer and interviewee and was particularly evident in the discussions about the role of the press in society.

6.5 Unstructured conversations and discussions

I also used unstructured conversation, that is listening to others without taking notes or trying to direct the conversation to establish rapport and gather tacit knowledge of the people and culture. Conversation with scholars and teachers revealed experiences, hobbies, frustrations, ambitions and family obligations. As meaning is derived from both the context and subjects mutual shaping with one another and the researcher, a deliberate effort was made to get to know the people who were interviewed on a personal level. English being a second language for the scholars did lead to much misunderstanding among them in response to questions asked in this language and thus did inhibit complex conversation.

6.6 Other

As mentioned above, various literary sources were used. These are contained in the bibliography. E-mail also allowed for contact between various international NIE players and myself in South Africa.

7. Analysis of data

Faced with the variety of data gathered from interviews, observations, documents, non-verbal clues and other qualitative and quantitative methods, I had to analyse this data. The constant comparative method advocated by Glaser and Strauss [1967] where events are constantly compared with previous events, allowing for new relationships to be discovered was used. Essentially, this method involves identifying incidents and comparing them to each category. Incidents are units of

information which I thought contributed some understanding of the study's focus. These incidents took the form of either sentences or paragraphs which contained something which I thought was relevant. These incidents were then arranged under categories, which may be names for things and semantic relationships. In terms of categorising, the essential aim is to bring together into provisional categories those incidents that apparently relate to the same content and to devise rules that describe category properties and justify the inclusion or exclusion of each incident. These incidents were then logged on to my computer under category headings and constantly compared to see if they did not fit into other categories. When I felt that I had exhausted my sources, saturated the categories, that regularities had emerged and that the new information which was emerging was not relevant to my focus, I stopped analysing data. These categories also served as a way of presenting information once analysed (cf Chapters 5,6,7,8).

8. Checks and balances

As I mention at the beginning of the chapter, I am aware that there are difficulties in using the human being as the primary data-gathering instrument and in deriving the data from the interaction of investigator with respondents and context. The multi-method approach also seemed to imply that I could do as I wished to obtain data. This section addresses these issues in order to demonstrate the credibility of this inquiry.

There are certain operational techniques which I used to establish credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. What follows is a brief description of the techniques applied in this study. There were four major activities that were used to make it more likely that credible findings and interpretations would be produced.

8.1 Prolonged engagement

Prolonged engagement refers to the investment of sufficient time to achieve certain purposes. At the start of the study, for approximately a month, I attended classes every day in an attempt to become familiar with the context, its subjects and their

culture. During this time, I limited my activities to observing proceedings in and out of the classroom. No interviewing took place at all and discussion was limited to informal chitchat over tea with the teachers or conversation with the scholars at break time, the purpose of which was to learn more about the subjects, their backgrounds, ambitions and perspectives on life. This process continued throughout the duration of the study. Building trust, an essential part of qualitative research since meaning is derived as much from the interaction of researcher and respondent as it is from the particular context, was a continuous process and requires time.

The subjects had to become familiar with my presence in a domain (the classroom) which is essentially quite private. Prolonged engagement was a means of allaying both teacher and scholars fears that I might be pretending to be something which I was not or that I might be a threat to the teachers and scholars. During the first month, I did not make notes in my field diary as some scholars seemed to equate this with being an inspector.

Prolonged engagement helped to eliminate to some extent the "disturbing observer" element from the scene. I noted that after the first month, I was a familiar, non-threatening presence in the classroom. Teachers and scholars continued with their lessons with only the occasional glance to where I sat. Scholars no longer hid their work behind their hands when I walked by, and they began to answer informal questions instead of merely giggling. I was invited to participate in activities unrelated to school by the teachers which I took to indicate their acceptance of me. While scholars never invited me into their homes, after the first month, many of the girls ran out to meet me in the morning and carried my bag into the classroom. I noted that few teachers received this treatment. Trying to build trust is an on-going activity from the start of a study and is tenuous and easily destroyed. Prolonged engagement did assist in reducing some illusions which scholars may have had regarding one from a different cultural and racial background to them as well as my assumptions regarding the study site.

As a researcher doing cross-cultural research from a particular framework that specified a set of questions which were then examined in specific ways, I was not entering the site in a mindless manner and I needed sufficient time to overcome

any *a priori* formulations and discover what was really happening. Coming from an academic background, I assumed that teachers would be eager to abandon a pedagogy which they had used their entire life to adopt a new pedagogy which I saw as having far more potential than theirs. Only through time in the field did I discover that some teachers felt that their old pedagogy was non-threatening and familiar and they were not eager to abandon it in favour of a pedagogy which might put them at risk.

8.2 Persistent observation

Persistent observation is another method for establishing a study's credibility. As Lincoln and Guba [1985: 304] comment, "if prolonged engagement provides scope, persistent observation provides depth." Through persistent observation, I tentatively identified salient factors and then explored these through various methods. As I had little knowledge of what I might come to expect in the field, persistent observation proved invaluable. When a relevant factor was identified I followed up with semi-structured and unstructured interviewing.

8.3 Triangulation of methods

Triangulation or the use of multiple and different sources, methods, investigators and theories, also increases credibility. By using multiple sources, I verified my findings with other persons, in this case scholars, teachers and other professionals involved in NIE. Besides the interview and participant observation, I also administered a questionnaire and gave a lesson on the newspaper once to each set of scholars. These different methods were used in tandem so that the imperfections of one method were cancelled out by the strengths of another. An initial short questionnaire was administered towards the beginning of the study asking scholars about their media habits and home environment. The answers were studied and verified during unstructured and semi-structured interviews throughout. Their media literacy was tested by supervising the making of a newspaper and by observations in class of lessons planned by the teacher.

Lincoln and Guba [1985: 307] mention the use of different investigators for

triangulation purposes. I was the sole investigator in this study but I did use the services of informants on an informal basis to verify my findings. The translator's opinion of the progress of interviews was enlightening and helpful and a teacher at each of the two schools verified certain factors which I had identified as salient. These informants were not consciously chosen, but emerged as the study got under way and proved useful in identifying what teachers really felt about NIE. I was aware of the problems involved with informants. They did have their own agendas. One teacher wanted me to understand why he was not using NIE although he had tried and kept reminding me of this throughout the study, perhaps to exonerate himself. The other teacher who used NIE frequently felt strongly about the benefits of this programme and reminded me of this continuously, perhaps to appear in a favourable light. But these were not problematic as I took this into account. These teachers were also very popular with their colleagues, so in cases where it might look as if they were putting their colleagues in a bad light, I knew it was not for some vindictive reason. These informants were useful in reducing some of the misconceptions introduced by respondents who wanted to please me¹⁵. Also helpful in triangulation was published material on studies in other contexts, although a sensitivity to the limits of transferability and the determinancy of context was required in order to avoid eclectic or illegitimate comparisons.

8.4 Peer debriefing

Peer debriefing involves exposing oneself to a peer in a manner paralleling an analytic session and being the recipient of "searching questions by experienced protagonists doing their best to play devil's advocate" [Lincoln and Guba 1985: 308]. I was in contact with my supervisors and members from the Media in Education Trust during the inquiry and their insights proved very useful. I also discussed the study with members of the newspaper industry, some whose scepticism regarding the usefulness of the study helped to define the project more closely (cf pp 58-70).

¹⁵ In one particular case, Mrs Mthimkhulu substantiated my suspicions that some scholars were telling me that they had newspapers at home when in fact they did not.

9. Conclusion

This chapter has sought to highlight some of the assumptions I made based on the constructivist-interpretative paradigm, provide some detail on how the research was conducted and indicate the nature of the relationship which I had with my subjects. It also demonstrates the way in which the research and its analysis were informed by a body of theory drawn from many others in the field.

Chapter Three

Newspapers in Education: the international scene

1. Introduction

Newspapers in Education (NIE) is an international phenomenon with many different dimensions to it. To understand the dimension this thesis focuses upon, namely young people's relationship with the newspaper, it is valuable to locate it within the NIE complexity. As this chapter shows, this dimension is arguably at the heart of the enterprise when viewed from the vantage point of the newspaper industry. This chapter begins with a brief discussion of the origins of NIE, the current status of NIE internationally, the motivations for these programmes, new developments which may have implications for the future status of NIE and a discussion of the research which exists which studies scholars' attitudes towards newspapers¹.

2. The origins of NIE

Using the newspaper as an educational resource is not a novel idea. The earliest known acknowledgment of this idea appears in an article in the June 8, 1795 issue of the Portland (Maine) Eastern Herald in the United States of America (USA). The formal organisation of the newspaper industry behind this concept, however, started in the twentieth century in the USA. During the Great Depression, a few high school teachers requested whether they could use the *New York Times* as a substitute for textbooks. Iphigene Ochs Sulzberger, head of the community affairs department at the paper and wife of the publisher, agreed and from the 1930s to mid-1950s, the *New York Times* sponsored a major initiative promoting the use of purchased newspapers as educational tools in the classroom. Supporting the *Times'* services to schools, Sulzberger wrote:

The *New York Times* has for many years been deeply and actively interested in the field of education. This interest has been due to the conviction that only *an informed and intelligent public can maintain our forum of free democracy*. The *New York Times* presents daily to its readers as full and unbiased a coverage of the

¹ Since the USA and the United Kingdom have the largest number of NIE programmes, much of the existing material on NIE comes from these two countries.

news as its great staff can gather but it is the teachers who must train the minds of the *young readers to understand and evaluate what they find in the news columns*. [Sulzberger, 1950: Preface]

To this end, the *Times* provided newspapers, teacher guides and other curriculum resources to colleges and schools throughout the New York metropolitan area, New England and the northeastern metropolitan areas from New Jersey to Washington, DC and northern Virginia. A few other newspapers at the time also provided teacher training, teaching guides and free newspapers.

The above quote by Sulzberger highlights two objectives still present in the USA's NIE programmes, namely to create citizens capable of upholding USA democracy and also to create an understanding within young people of how to understand and evaluate the news messages they read. Homolac [1990:8], however, cites another concern which has become the primary objective in most countries' NIE programmes:

The numbers that newspapers are more concerned about is not paid circulation, but readership. Newspaper readership ensures our existence. Without it, there would be no need for newspapers.

In fact the two concepts have an important connection. For the newspaper industry, readership is the means towards the end of circulation. Most NIE programmes among the more than 700 sponsored in the USA ascribe equal importance or more to the circulation gain. This should not be viewed as a negative feature. Circulation gain equates well with the educational goal of empowering readers to obtain and use information from newspapers in order to participate successfully in democratic society.

Concerned with the possibility that the increasing importance of television in the lives of young people and the lack of interest in reading could negatively affect current and future newspaper readership, CK Jefferson, circulation director at the *Des Moines Register and Tribune*, suggested to the International Circulation Managers Association (ICMA) Board that a youth reading attitude study be conducted in 1955. This survey found that 30 - 40 per cent of 5 500 Des Moines high school scholars did

no reading outside the classroom - and that those who did read, spent only a third as much time reading as they spent watching television. These results prompted Jefferson to urge major professional associations in both the educational and newspaper spheres to support the start of the Newspaper in the Classroom (NIC) programme in 1956.

The ICMA sponsored the development of the NIC programme by funding annual university workshops for teachers on classroom use of newspapers. The programme trained about 100 teachers a year and placed as much emphasis on teaching media literacy and philosophy as it did on methods for using newspapers to teach the school curriculum. In 1958, the American Newspaper Publishers Association (ANPA) assumed responsibility for national sponsorship of the NIC programme from the ICMA with the primary aims of developing within young people

- "a continuing desire and ability to read a newspaper critically and reflectively,
- a concern for public issues and a motivation to involve themselves in our self-governing process and,
- an understanding of the role of a free press in our society."

[Sullivan, no date: 3].

This statement of purpose was adopted by the majority of NIE managers in 1976 and as Sullivan [ibid: 3] says "these goals stated by newspapers coincide nicely with present educational concerns about literacy, basic competencies for graduating high school students and the need for better citizenship education."

The 1960s and 1970s saw the growth of the NIC programme among local newspapers in the USA and among other countries. Denmark, Sweden and Finland were the first European countries to begin their own programmes in the 1960s. The educational use of newspapers has broadened since then to include use in the curriculum from kindergarten through to high school as well as outside the classroom in tutoring situations such as adult education, mental institutions and prisons to name a few. Subsequently in 1976, ANPA changed the name of the programme to Newspapers in Education (NIE) in recognition of the diverse possibilities for the educational use of newspapers [ibid]. The historical background

of NIE is relevant to this study as it serves to locate this study within the broader framework of NIE, highlights the motives for starting NIE in the USA and indicates that NIE is viewed as a long-term initiative by both educators and the newspaper industry and is not merely a fad. In fact, some of those involved in NIE contend that the history of NIE lends credibility and supports the educational soundness of using the newspaper in the classroom. As Sullivan is quoted in *Presstime* [February 1989: 13]: "Top-level educators see the long-standing historical precedent of using newspapers in teaching as a key reason to give NIE a try, if they have not already done so." Since it is not viewed as a fad, the relationship which scholars' have to newspapers is relevant to the newspaper industry who, as Steen [1991] comments, are the major investors of NIE programmes in the hopes of nurturing future newspaper readers.

3. The current status of NIE internationally

It is evident by studying the various NIE programmes in different countries, that there are a variety of ways in which NIE programmes are initiated and function. It is this flexibility which allows countries and/or individual newspapers to adapt NIE programmes to suit the specific needs or circumstances within these countries. This will become particularly relevant when the NIE programmes in South Africa are discussed in the following chapter. While it is not the purpose of this study to provide details of all these international programmes, it is relevant to this study to consider some of the motives for different NIE programmes.

3.1 Motives for starting NIE programmes

Motives for NIE programmes are varied, but Botha states that newspapers' self-interest features more prominently than education in the aims of the projects [Education Foundation 1995: 5]. The initiators of NIE programmes in New Zealand, Canada, Australia, Norway Germany, Denmark, Switzerland, Jamaica, Japan, the United Kingdom and USA indicated in a 1991 survey that the primary aim of their NIE programme was to promote and develop newspaper reading habits among the youth in order to counter trends which indicate that young people have lost interest

in newspapers, and thus ensure the future of newspapers [Steen 1991]. This is, however, a long-term goal and many countries and/or individual newspapers have other goals including improving competence at writing and civic awareness (Argentina, Jamaica), improving media knowledge and media literacy (USA, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Sweden), improving literacy and increasing circulation (Canada, USA, Australia, Trinidad and Tobago). Promoting the newspaper as an educational tool was often the motive for starting NIE programmes when the initiating agency were educators. This was the case in Sweden, Finland, Denmark, The Netherlands, Chile and France [Steen 1991].

Some of these aims alter with changing circumstances and needs. Argentina's NIE programmes were initiated to create new younger readers as well as a social responsibility initiative to help eliminate illiteracy and provide additional teaching aids. In 1990, however, a NIE programme was devised to teach scholars about democratic principles as a study indicated that most scholars did not have any understanding of democracy or the rights which they could exercise as citizens of that country [Morduchowicz 1994: 316]. In 1995, Sweden ran a national NIE programme to educate scholars about children's rights which are protected under a United Nations convention to coincide with the United Nations 50th anniversary [Subenko 1995].

The primary objective for starting NIE programmes varies so greatly from nation to nation and from newspaper to newspaper that the differing objectives of various interest groups can sometimes interfere with NIE programmes. As Homolac [1990: 8,10] discovered, the importance of increasing readership (and thence circulation) for newspapers can lead to tension between this motive and the educational motive. He interviewed NIE co-ordinators on the use of a NIE programme to encourage newspaper reading at home between parent and child. He states that 100 per cent of those interviewed stated that parental involvement in the instruction of their children at home through the use of the newspaper was essential to help offset the educational problems in the classroom. Yet these respondents said it was a low priority in their programmes because it did not have a direct effect on their NIE circulation numbers. Respondents said that their time and effort should be

directed to efforts that would have a direct effect on their increase in circulation.

3.2 The various forms of NIE

While it is almost impossible to characterise every form of NIE, George Kelly, former NIE manager for The Newspaper Society of London [Interview: 25 Sept 1995], characterises NIE activity material in Britain as comprising any of four forms or combinations of each. The first type of NIE activity is the use of newspapers to teach the traditional school subjects. Newspapers are supplied to schools (often old copies and free of charge) and supplemented with teacher workshops and guides. The second approach uses the newspaper as part of a media education and literacy project. This might involve not only supplying newspapers to scholars but visiting speakers and visits to a publishing plant. Some newspapers like the *Hull Daily Mail* and *The Sunderland Echo* in the United Kingdom have their own classroom at the newspaper and provide scholars with materials on the nature of newspapers.

The third area involves newspapers supporting the production of school supplements or pages within their own publication. Some NIE programmes in an effort to get scholars excited about newspapers not only allow scholars to create their own newspapers but allow scholars to work on local newspapers². In this manner, pupils gain experience in all aspects of newspaper publishing from selling advertising to writing in a particular style, for a particular purpose and for a particular target audience.

The fourth approach is to use local newspapers as a targeted learning resource where newspapers publish supplements for the benefit of teachers, parents and scholars who may use them as a learning resource at home or school. These may take the form of supplements closely linked to the curriculum or youth supplements such as the free quarterly *Youth Express* published by the *Daily Express* and the weekly *Young Telegraph* published in the *Daily Telegraph* in the United Kingdom

² For instance, in the United Kingdom, scholars write for and get vocational experience at the *Express and Echo*, Exeter and *Lincolnshire Echo*, Lincolnshire. Inter-continental links have also been established - in Gloucester, scholars produced a newspaper which was printed in a French newspaper and the French scholars did the reverse.

which focus more on life skills and information which would interest young people.

As mentioned above, the approaches which individual newspapers and/or national newspaper associations may use depend largely on the motives for their NIE programme. Some programmes which are closely linked to the curriculum utilise the fourth category exclusively in the form of supplements relating specifically to a subject such as maths. This will become particularly evident when the South African situation is studied. In countries such as Argentina, Norway, Sweden, Denmark and Finland, a strong emphasis is placed on providing scholars with an understanding of the role of the press in their society (media education) and their important role for democracy and press freedom [Morsy 1980]. In this circumstance, the second and fourth categories may apply. For example, in the second category, scholars may be asked to study the entire newspaper as is with the focus being to study issues of press freedom for later discussion in class. In the fourth, a special supplement may be produced which deals with issues of press freedom.

Then there are programmes which focus on teaching media literacy [Kelly, 25 Sept 1995]. This may encompass three categories as scholars move from an examination of the format, content and purpose of a newspaper, to using a supplement stressing media literacy to producing their own newspaper. Depending upon the motive of a specific NIE programme, one or more of these methods may be used. A number of newspapers, research and marketing groups specialising in NIE have developed both video and print material on media literacy for teachers to use in their classrooms³.

Slowly NIE has become entrenched within many countries. Initially, in those countries where NIE was initiated by the newspaper industry, NIE programmes were run out of newspaper circulation or promotion departments (perhaps

³ These include the Design An Ad campaign which encourages young people to design adverts for companies who pay for the placement of these adverts in local newspapers; the *San Francisco Examiner* and *San Francisco Chronicle's* NIE programme which includes guides on how to teach about the purpose of newspapers, news characteristics, freedom of the press issues, the newspaper as watchdog, advertising as well as a guide on how to produce a newspaper and a guide to help scholars to analyse media messages.

inadvertently indicating what the newspaper saw as its motive for NIE).

These programmes were often one of the many other responsibilities which managers of these departments undertook daily. In the last 25 years, however, many newspapers in Britain and the USA have begun to employ a specific person, either a former educator or journalist, to promote and administer the programme [Sullivan, no date : 4]. At first, most local programmes gave away newspapers, but slowly subsidised newspaper purchase arrangements with schools began due to the rising cost of newsprint, the acceptance by educators of the newspaper as a text worth paying for and in the USA specifically, the potential for increased Audit Bureau of Circulation counts. In the USA, state and local school systems began to authorise the purchasing of newspapers with regular textbook funds. School administrations assumed more responsibility for supporting NIE teacher training and curriculum development. In Florida, a NIE co-ordinator was employed by the state board of education - while several local school systems within the state had similar arrangements. The state of Washington developed a comprehensive curriculum using newspapers for all grades with the assistance of local newspapers.

The last 25 years have seen many newspapers sponsor their own programmes. In the mid 1970s, more than 350 newspapers in the USA had their own NIE programme. By 1994 this figure had more than doubled [NAA 1994: 26]. This major investment by both the newspaper industry and educators indicates the relevance of studying the links between scholars and the newspaper. The investment also explains why newspaper editors are showing an increased interest in young people's newspaper reading habits and preferences. As Sullivan states:

Indications are that in the future, newspapers will contain much more material aimed at entertaining and educating school-age readers. This new appeal to young people on the part of newspapers may, in fact, become an important mainstay of the Newspaper in Education programme. The content will be useful in school or at home and could do a great deal to further the NIE objective of encouraging future readers to get to know the newspaper now. [Sullivan, n.d.: 4].

It is this concern with developing young newspaper readers that has resulted in national newspaper associations playing a leading role in the promotion of NIE. In

many countries, individual newspapers run autonomous programmes but national newspaper associations offer a range of support services which include bringing together NIE projects for meetings and conferences, publishing programme implementation guidelines to get new projects started, conducting or funding research, co-ordinating projects around certain events of national interest such as national elections (Finland 1991), or the Winter Olympics (Canada 1992), organising annual NIE days or weeks, publishing NIE newsletters, offering a consultancy service, organising competitions and providing training seminars aimed at teachers and newspaper people specifically, as well as a range of resource and informational material to assist all those involved in NIE [Education Foundation 1995: 5].

3.3 Problems and concerns with NIE initiatives

As mentioned earlier, tensions exist between the educationalists' motives and the motives of the newspaper industry (cf p32). Some of these concerns were highlighted in a report by *The Star's* Literacy Unit which was compiled in 1990 after visiting the USA and talking to newspapers involved in NIE. As regards circulation, the fact that many NIE sections in the USA are attached to circulation departments is also sometimes problematic from the point of view of educationalists as these NIE staff often become sales representatives who are encouraged to get schools to order newspapers. Despite these NIE staff earning revenue for the newspaper, they are often under pressure because circulation managers stress the need for immediate results and are not interested in an instinctive belief that all will come right in the next decade [Howcroft 1990: 38]. Furthermore, although NIE departments show increased newspaper sales, "there is little direct evidence yet that existing programmes offset the drop in newspaper sales caused by television viewing to any significant extent" [ibid: 37].

Space economics is another concern. In times when newspapers are struggling to survive and advertising is not coming in and circulation is down, the papers are getting leaner. Consequently, some newspapers can ill afford to run NIE programmes which take the form of dedicated pages for young people [ibid: 37].

Another concern highlighted by the above report and with direct relevance to

this study is the fact that some editorial departments at newspapers wanted to know why they should use news and editorial space for a topic that readers may not find interesting. This highlights the need for studies such as this one. Linked to the above concern is the need for follow-up, also relevant to this study. Some newspapers expressed concern that little was known about the effect of NIE on young peoples' behaviour and attitudes [ibid: 41]. In the following chapter, it will become evident that these concerns are not limited to the USA.

4. More recent developments

NIE has gained momentum in an effort to combat the negative influence of television, and more recently the Internet and CD-Rom, on young peoples' newspaper reading habits. Some newspapers, aware of the popularity of the new electronic media which are part of the curriculum in some USA schools, have devised NIE programmes which make use of electronic media. While not a newspaper on newsprint, these electronic media programmes are regarded as an extension of NIE. The Canadian Newspaper Publisher's Association' Inside News is such an electronic NIE media literacy project [Wilson 1994: 2].

Despite the concerns mentioned above, other movements have developed recently which indicate that NIE is perceived by the newspaper industry as vital to the future of many newspapers. In the USA in December 1995, the Newspaper Association of America Foundation's Board of Trustees selected youth readership as the new strategic focus for the Foundation and declared NIE as central to encouraging young people to read and understand the media [NAA: 1995]. In 1996 in the United Kingdom, the second largest NIE country in terms of project numbers and investment, the British Newspaper Society's NIE department closed. This move, however, is not necessarily viewed by those in NIE as detrimental to it. Ownership patterns have changed dramatically with the result that 80 per cent of British newspapers are owned by 11 major groups. The funding formula for the Newspaper Society meant that these groups were paying most of the bills. Thus a review of Newspaper Society activities was held and the NIE department closed down as most of these groups have a NIE function and did not want to pay twice, preferring to

operate their own NIE programmes tailored to their communities rather than a national co-ordinated NIE programme [E-mail, Keith Harcourt, November 1996].

In recognition of the importance of NIE to the newspaper industry which the International Federation of Newspaper Publishers (FIEJ) (now called the World Association of Newspapers) described as "a task of world-wide importance for the future of newspapers" at its 38th world conference in Tokyo, FIEJ established a NIE committee within the organisation in 1991.

The above exposition tracing the international status of NIE indicates the major investment of both the educational sector and the newspaper industry in NIE. Despite this long history and major investment, the present review of the literature indicates that independent research (i.e. research conducted by those not directly involved in NIE) which investigates the relationship which scholars have to newspapers in or out of their classrooms is scarce. Yet this element of research is central to the long-term objective of ensuring future newspaper readers, which as the above evidence has illustrated is at the heart of most NIE programmes. Sullivan does, however, acknowledge the importance of this element of research when she states that:

In the long run an assessment of the past, present and future of the NIE programme means little without considering the young people the programme is trying to reach. The judgment will rest with them - in their willingness in the future to read (newspapers or anything else), to keep themselves informed and to be actively involved in their communities.

[Sullivan, n.d: 4]

Many newspapers are unwilling to wait until young people become adults to observe what effect, if any, a NIE programme has had on scholars and their relationship to newspapers. Research is currently underway in the United Kingdom with the purpose of attempting to answer some questions regarding how scholars relate to newspapers, but unfortunately will not be available in time for inclusion in this study. A large newspaper group, Northcliffe Newspapers, has commissioned an independent research organisation to prove whether NIE "can give a suitable return for our (i.e. Northcliffe Newspapers) investment" [Walker 1995: 3].

5. International research on the relationship between newspapers and scholars

This section looks at research into various aspects of scholars' relationship to the newspaper. Some of this research was conducted with NIE in mind while some of it is of a more general nature. International NIE research may be categorised into two groups, namely research which:

- investigates whether NIE programmes have an impact on scholars' academic performances and
- research which explores the relationship between NIE programmes and scholars' attitudes and beliefs towards the press and society in general.

Much research has been done on the former in attempts to prove that NIE is an effective tool in the teaching and learning process. This research will not be discussed at length as it is only tangentially relevant to this study. Less well established is the body of research documenting the relationship between NIE programmes and scholars' attitudes, interactions, behaviour and beliefs towards the press [De Roche 1992: 9]. Considering the concern that newspapers have for their future and that the motive for most NIE programmes is to secure future readers, this element of research is vital because documentation suggests that scholars do not read newspapers because they find the latter are boring, written for older people and simply not relevant to their lives [Walters 1991: 13; Fitzgerald, 1993: 13]. I was able to find some research, however, which documented some aspects of scholars' relationships to the newspaper. Although much of this research did not have the same focus as my study, it did provide some pointers which helped me guide my research. Bearing in mind the limits of transferability, often such data (especially in the absence of contextual detail) is of value for contrastive rather than comparative purposes. This issue is taken up again in Chapter Nine, the conclusion to this thesis.

A 1980 Newspaper Advertising Bureau (NAB) national survey of scholars aged 6 - 17 years old found that those who had used newspapers in school had enjoyed the experience, had less trouble reading the newspaper and had a greater enjoyment of and esteem for newspapers [NAB 1980]. These scholars were more likely to read newspapers on their own and would read "hard news" as well as features that appealed to youngsters in general. These scholars also displayed a

greater knowledge of and interest in public figures and issues and newsworthy topics. More scholars liked using the newspaper at school than those who disliked it and those who used it had more positive attitudes towards newspapers and were more likely to read it on their own.

This survey was limited, however, because while it illustrated that there were items of interest in both the hard news and youth-focus sections of the newspaper which interested scholars and that they esteemed and enjoyed newspapers, this survey did not provide details of the types of hard news or youth-focus material scholars liked to read nor did this survey provide an explanation as to why scholars enjoyed and esteemed the newspaper. Furthermore, the researchers acknowledged that it was not possible to delineate the precise nature of the newspaper activities to which the respondents had been exposed. I was unable to obtain information regarding the data collection for this study, so it is also unclear how the results were obtained. This survey is pertinent to the focus of my study, however, because it indicates that scholars found that there were items of interest to them in the newspaper and that they enjoyed using the newspaper in class.

A 1982 NAB study focused on the impact of different amounts of NIE usage in a given school year on *inter alia* children's newspaper readership and attitudes. In two different USA cities, it monitored three groups of scholars: those who used newspapers two to three times a week all year, those who used the newspaper every day for two weeks and those who had some occasional exposure to newspapers but not systematically under a NIE programme. Changes among groups were expected during the year because as children grow older, they become interested in a wider world and in different parts of the newspaper [NAB: 1978]. Differences between the three matched groups in each city, however, were attributed to the difference in NIE exposure each group received. Scholars answered a questionnaire with 74 items relating to newspaper reading habits and attitudes, and to items of a political and social interest and awareness nature before and after the study. Those who had used newspapers consistently showed a more pronounced improvement in all categories: namely, news media habits, the range of newspaper items they read, their attitudes toward newspapers and newspaper reading, their interest in news and public issues

and their knowledge of social and political affairs [NAB 1982: 3].

The primary school scholars were more enthusiastic initially than older high school scholars about the idea of using newspapers in school. These younger scholars agreed more readily with the statement that newspapers tell them things they want to know and this is explained in terms of the fact that for younger children reading the newspaper is a novelty and implies entry into the grown-up world [NAB 1982:4]. The high school scholars recognised the need to read newspapers (two thirds expected to read newspapers regularly when they were adults) and 8 out of 10 enjoyed reading the newspaper. Yet their lack of enthusiasm when questioned about the ability of newspapers to tell them things they want to know, suggested that they do not perceive newspapers as relevant to their special interests [NAB 1982: 5]⁴.

On freedom of the press issues, the younger scholars felt that newspapers or magazines should not be allowed to criticise an important person in government. By the end of the year, however, the belief in freedom of the press had increased from 26 per cent to 45 per cent among those who used newspapers all year. This is not to say that newspaper use *per se* will necessarily enhance scholars' perceptions of the value of a free press but rather that it provides an opportunity for this to happen [NAB 1982: 5]. Discussions regarding the freedom of the press were conducted in more of the classes which used the newspaper heavily and positive changes occurred only among scholars exposed to such discussions. This indicates the desirability not only of encouraging the use of newspapers in school but also of providing assistance to teachers in developing curriculum concepts and guidelines. Among the older scholars, the number of scholars who used the newspaper all year and who felt that newspapers tell them things they want to know doubled by the

⁴ The scholars' responses to these questions may indicate that they felt they should respond positively to the questions of whether it is necessary to read the newspaper and whether they enjoy reading the newspaper. The lack of enthusiasm when confronted with the question of whether newspapers tell them things they want to know might indicate that they found this question more difficult to answer for whatever reason. This may indicate the problems of asking young people complex questions which can be viewed by them as requiring a socially desirable answer.

end of the year and they emerged with a greater interest in foreign news than the others.

This study illustrated differences from one age level to the next in media habits and attitudes as well as interest, awareness and knowledge of political and social issues and events. The study also indicated that scholars who use newspapers with greater continuity showed more positive changes in questions relating specifically to newspapers and in their interest and knowledge of social and political issues. The study did not, however, provide any details as to the type of NIE activity which brought about these results nor did it provide the finer details as to how media habits and attitudes had changed. This study served to illuminate various considerations which must be taken into account in assessing the impact of NIE. These include the teacher's critical role in determining how the newspaper is actually used by the scholars, that it is difficult to measure the impact of NIE on young people because of the developmental changes which take place at various stages and that it is difficult to control for other influences which may be at work. When the scholars of Esikhawini are discussed in Chapters 5,6,7 and 8, the similarities with this study will be evident.

Grusin and Stone [1992] highlighted some problems with the 1982 NAB study. In their study which focused on whether NIE programmes foster future newspaper readers, these researchers contended that the NAB study asked overly broad questions which could not distinguish between a formal and structured NIE experience and other incidental uses of newspapers in school. In contrast to the NAB study, Grusin and Stone's research indicated that the quality of a NIE programme is a more important key to assessing the impact of NIE on scholars than the quantity of NIE exposure by itself. Yet they found that a quality NIE programme and continuous exposure to the programme, however, are the most successful combination in securing future newspaper readers via NIE. These researchers stated that while it was impossible to differentiate completely between different NIE experiences, they were able to conclude from discussions with respondents that respondents viewed a superior quality NIE programme as including discussions about parts of the newspaper and how a story is written. Programme quality scores

were higher when the whole newspaper was used. Respondents who recalled using the whole newspaper were more generous in their ratings of NIE programme quality than those whose NIE experience focused on only one section [Grusin and Stone 1992: 20].

As regards whether newspapers are relevant to young people, Edfelt [1990: 38] also found in his study of scholars who were being taught how to read using a newspaper instead of a textbook, that scholars across all age groups who regularly received newspapers in class found articles in each of the newspapers specifically interesting to them each day. At the end of the experiment, many had scrapbooks filled with clippings they wanted to read but had not had time to do so. This indicates that there were items in newspapers which were relevant to scholars, but again, he provides no details regarding the type of items these scholars found interesting and yet this information could be considered relevant to his research purpose.

Brooks and Kropp's research [1994] did, however, provide more detail as to what is relevant to scholars in the newspaper. The researchers tested whether school age children could be persuaded to become news consumers when presented with an electronic version of the newspaper rather than the traditional printed page. This study is relevant to the issue of scholar's relationships to newspapers because it highlighted the news categories which interested scholars in elementary, junior high and senior high school. The researchers were able to measure the number of screen accesses to various news categories, thus highlighting what was important to these young readers. Software logged the access and duration of each scholars movement from page to page within the newspaper. Through this manner of data collecting, the researchers were able to determine with a "high degree of reliability what portions of the newspaper were of most interest to scholars" [Brooks and Kropp 194: 2]. Brooks and Kropp did concede that this approach required some compromises such as the fact that they were unable to collect specific demographic data of the scholars and thus could not compare access patterns between the sexes or races due to the lack of individual user log-on profiles. But since data could be separated by school, it was possible to measure differences in the interest levels of news categories

among scholars in elementary, junior high and senior high schools. The number of accesses to the front page of the electronic newspaper were discounted because it was the starting page of the programme. Unusually long accesses were also discarded to compensate for the fact that scholars may have left their computer. The data was collected from 14 schools over three semesters. Each school was supplied with a daily digital version of the *Columbia Missourian* downloaded every day onto the schools' computers due to prohibitive costs of Internet access for most schools. Ten per cent of the electronic newspaper consisted of work from school scholars themselves. Focus groups of scholars and teachers supplemented the statistical data. Brooks and Kropp found that overall, the top five news categories most accessed by scholars were in decreasing order: entertainment, student work, news, horoscopes and sport news. The data also revealed that changes in content lead to changes in what scholars accessed and also the overall popularity of the medium. As the research team added student-produced material, the interest in the electronic newspaper increased. The study concludes that it is likely that scholars preferred computer-delivered news because it is colourful and in a graphically-oriented format.

While this research concerned the electronic newspaper as opposed to a print version, this study is relevant to my study because it highlights what items scholars found relevant in the newspaper and that the format, design and presentation of information can have a positive or adverse affect on how the scholars relate to the newspaper.

In 1994 in another survey to find out what young people think about the newspaper, approximately 300 young people in the 15-16 age group took part in panel discussions lasting two to five hours long organised by the Norwegian and Swedish NIE organisations. Although the authors state that this cannot be viewed as research in the strictest sense, the methods employed did reveal the attitudes, opinions and desires of the younger generation as regards the press [Raundalen and Steen 1994: 2]. Some of the objectives of the survey relevant to my study include:

- to find out how young people see their age group depicted in the press, and
- to discover the opinions of young people regarding the look of a newspaper.

Since newspapers were asked to select young people in co-operation with the local schools, the researchers acknowledge that the criteria involved in choosing the scholars were unknown.

The researchers were interested in discovering what young people felt about news headlines, front page spreads and general coverage of international news. As the researchers felt that news coverage is strongly dominated by world problems such as war, poverty, conflict, violence, threats to the environment and AIDs to name a few, the researchers were interested in how young people respond to these categories. The young people surveyed stated that they either closed their minds to such news pretending that it did not exist or resigned themselves to the fact that the world could not be saved. The researchers noted however that some young women, however, still displayed beliefs in ideals, thoughts, people, movements and politics and that in contrast to national newspapers, the local newspaper, according to most of these young people, served as a guarantee that their normal everyday life will continue despite the fact that there is chaos in the rest of the world. These scholars indicated that they felt a sense of helplessness regarding their ability to affect a positive change in the world. The researchers conclude that the mass media has weakened scholars' readiness to face the future [Raundelen and Steen, 1994: 6]. Although the local press did fare better in young people's estimation, the research found there was clearly a desire for articles which could reinforce their readiness to face the future. These included articles outlining prospects for careers and employment during the next decade.

Most respondents were highly critical of the types of news printed for and about their generation. Regarding the latter, they saw newspapers' portrayal of them as negative, distorted and superficial. In the scholars' estimation, the only positive events which newspapers cover about youth were sport (and then not enough coverage) young people's money making efforts for good causes. They stated that as only the very negative and very positive were reported, they were left with the feeling that their daily lives are not valued highly. Thus they would like to see more articles on their school environment and general leisure-time activities. Their ranking of the subjects they would like newspapers to write about showed a clear

preference for articles about young people, work and leisure followed by pop music and sport. At the bottom of the list was international politics, domestic politics, TV and films/cinema and video. This survey confirms that young people would like a wider focus on their own generation group and more information about their future possibilities.

In 1982, 1985, 1988 and 1991, the Finnish Newspaper Publishers Association conducted research into attitudes of young people between the ages of 12 - 20 towards newspapers. While the 1991 survey noted a definite decline in reading over the last three years, the study noted that young people in all four studies showed a constant interest in information on radio and television programmes, comic strips, entertainment, advertisements for films, local news and events, sports news and Finnish news and events [Finnish Newspaper Publishers Association n.d: 3].

Another independent survey conducted in Finland among 13 - 34 year old Finns in 1993 found similar results [Finnish Newspaper Publishers Association 1993]. Eighty-two young people from all over Finland were involved in group discussions and personal interviews. The study found that newspapers serve young readers best in reporting on local events and news. Scholars used the newspaper as a service unit to check TV programmes, read about special offers, follow local news events, sports results and news on various personalities. The value of sports pages in the development of newspaper reading is significant as many young people said that they had started their newspaper reading habit by first reading the sports news from their paper. In other words, the sports news in a way encouraged young people, especially males, to read newspapers.

As a source of national or international politics, the newspaper is less effective than other mass media. Newspapers were, however, read to obtain in-depth and/or background information on news items. Some young people also expect their newspapers to provide new perspectives and opinions. National news interests young people when the story has been adapted to explain what the news means to their particular local context.

Thus, the role of newspapers was primarily one of a provider of local news. Invariably the "main news" had been heard elsewhere since the electronic media

produce news so quickly. These discussions were held in urban areas and these young people indicated that they were not interested in news about the surrounding province and looked for stories concerning their home town, its life and development. This illustrates clearly that context is critical for as shall be seen my scholars showed more interest in rural than urban news.

In terms of the newspaper's appearance, these young people criticised the quality of newspaper photographs and the linking of photographs to the stories themselves. This study indicated that while newspapers reflect the adult world, these young people wanted to stay abreast of the times. How they did this, however, depended on their personal interests [Finnish Newspaper Publishers Association 1993: 3].

In a 1989 NAB study, it was noted that reading habits of teenagers differ significantly from those typically associated with adults in that they are much more selective readers. Only 20 per cent of teenagers say they read or look at every page of a daily compared with 61 per cent of adults. The items of high interest were comics, sports and entertainment, general news, television and radio listings. The more targeted classified, editorial, business/finance, food and home sections were only of interest to one third or fewer of the teens. Clear gender differences were noted. Male teenagers showed particular interest in comics and sports whereas females showed more diffuse interests and reading patterns. Generally the main attractions for females were comics, entertainment, general news, television and radio listings and sports. One of the problems with this kind of research is that scholars are asked to rank lists of news items provided by researchers according to Likert scale which propels scholars to a) mention an item of interest which may not have occurred to them and b) propel them to rank an item which may not interest them. My research through general questions tried to find out what interested or did not interest scholars in the newspaper rather than provide a pre-determined list and ask scholars whether these issues interested them.

Scholars in a 1992 United Kingdom study [Harcourt and Hartland 1992] were also provided with a list of items which appear in newspaper and asked to rank how much they enjoyed reading these items. This occurred when scholars were asked to

choose from a pre-determined list of items those they would include when making a newspaper for young people. This could possibly have prompted them to include items which they might not have mentioned under different circumstances. The group discussions in this study did, however, have more open-ended questions which would not delimit scholars' responses.

The study found that many young people between 8-9 and 12-13 years old wanted youth-focus pages written for them in a language they understood and felt that local newspapers did not cater for young people [1992: 37-40]. Most of 16-17 year olds preferred to get news from the newspaper as it allowed them to read the news when they wanted to and released them from the constraints of television news times [1992: 16].

This study also suggests that the example which parents set their children can influence the latter to view newspapers as relevant to them [1992: 20]. The study found that the difference in interest in news is age and not gender-related. Twelve-to-13-year-olds preferred light-hearted news categories while 16-17 year olds were more interested in the serious news categories.

More than 50 per cent of respondents said they were interested in reading about young people, local events, news, sports, cartoons, film reviews and television listings. The 12-13 year old category read world news but only if background information to the stories was provided. They were also particularly concerned with issue-related news such as drugs, smoking and child abuse.

These scholars also felt that local newspapers did not cater for young people. Asked to list what they would include in a newspaper for young people, they mentioned local news, environmental issues, competitions, cartoons, jokes, a problem page, sport, news on young people and television, music and film reviews [1992: 49].

The study also noted a wide and varied experience of NIE across the sample but limited use in each school. The inherent versatility of NIE in connection with a wide range of school subjects was evident, yet "its actual use within a school was limited by the initiative, awareness and imagination of the individual teachers" because of the limited recognition and understanding of the overall concept and core

values of NIE among children and teachers [1992: 44]. This is particularly relevant in my study as will be seen (cf pp85-88, 124-127).

6. Conclusion

This chapter has sought to locate this study within the broader framework of NIE internationally. By reviewing the origins of NIE, motives for NIE and resources (both time and money) spent on entrenching NIE in different countries in a variety of approaches, this chapter has shown that NIE is viewed by both the newspaper industry and educators as a long-term investment with benefits to both sectors.

As this chapter has illustrated, very little independent research exists which documents the relationship which scholars have to newspapers. Yet when viewed especially from the vantage point of the newspaper industry, but also from that of educationalists interested in NIE, this relationship is central to the NIE enterprise. The research which does review scholars' attitudes towards newspapers, often does not provide the finer details as to what is relevant or why, with the exception of the Raundelen and Steen, Brooks and Kropp, Harcourt and Hartland, 1989 NAB study and the Finnish studies. In the case of all, except the Harcourt and Hartland study, these studies were not associated with a NIE programme, but were more readership studies. Most studies also do not detail the types of NIE activity which led to the study's results. This information is important if NIE is to be evaluated in terms of its impact on scholars' attitudes towards newspapers.

This chapter has illustrated that it is hard to characterise countries' NIE programmes - there are mixed models everywhere. It is against this background that this thesis seeks to investigate the situation in South Africa to see if similar or new emerging motives for NIE exist in the South African context and to what extent these motives have affected the relationship which scholars have to the newspaper in the school environment.

Chapter Four

Newspapers in Education in South Africa

1. Introduction

Having clarified the way in which NIE functions internationally, this chapter looks at the situation in South Africa in order to place this study in context. This chapter outlines the origins of NIE in South Africa, the current status of NIE in South Africa, the motivations for NIE programmes and the concerns and problems encountered with these initiatives, before concluding with some remarks on how the industry views the future of NIE initiatives in this country¹. As this chapter unfolds, it will become evident that the relationship of scholars to newspapers is central to the newspapers' motivations for NIE programmes and central to the concerns raised about these programmes.

2. The origins of NIE in South Africa

Shortly after the Soweto uprising of 1976 and amidst growing dissatisfaction with black education, Soweto parents approached *The Star* asking for assistance with their children's education. In response, *The Star* undertook local and international research. Locally, a media education consultant conducted workshops with teachers and principals in township schools in order for *The Star* to gain insight into the educational needs of these schools. At the same time a study was made regarding the requirements of the various South African syllabi with lists of special requests submitted by teachers in order to develop a NIE curriculum plan. A tour and study of NIE programmes in the USA was undertaken. In 1978 *The Star's* NIE department was established. It was thus a carefully planned grassroots-linked initiative incorporating ideas used successfully by international NIE educators.

The chief objective was to encourage "literacy and the love of reading" [*The*

¹ Very little documentation exists which traces the development of NIE in South Africa. Much of the information in this chapter is based, therefore, on interviews I conducted with players in the field of NIE; on information from *The Star's* NIE programme; on research undertaken by various newspapers' research departments and on a 1992 study by Wilna Botha on the role of the media in education in South Africa.

Star 's Literacy Unit 1990: 17]. To this end, *The Star*'s NIE department conducted workshops, lectures and seminars on using newspapers in class and compiled educational aids in the use of the newspaper for learning. But as cited elsewhere in this chapter (cf p 54), there were also additional requirements for the African context, namely the need for inexpensive reading material, textbooks and pictorial educational aids. Thus *The Star* decided on a dual assignment. It offered specially developed material daily in the main body of newspaper at junior and senior levels as well as a NIE programme. The NIE department at *The Star* provided a comprehensive NIE programme with a variety of services which included:

- *Topic Today* articles covering themes linked to the syllabus (yet not meant to be a textbook in newsprint) which could be pasted in special *Topic Today* project books sold by the promotions department,
- a teacher's handbook on how to use the newspaper in class,
- activity cards with activities for younger pupils to complete using the newspaper. These cards were developed to gather information on special topics or contemporary problems. They were aimed at assisting pupils to think critically while reading the newspaper, to form opinions and to develop an awareness about the area in which the child lives,
- a full-time lecturer demonstrating the use of the newspaper in the classroom at various schools on the Reef,
- school tours of the newspaper. Each child received a newspaper project kit comprising useful notes, pictures and the history of the newspaper,
- *Up-to-Date*, a tabloid for teachers sent to schools free containing hints, views, reviews and a calendar of NIE events and adverts about NIE resources.

In addition, the NIE department also produced enrichment material for second language learners, an Afrikaans translation of *Topic Today*, African language phonic friezes, historic front pages of newspapers for display in school libraries and pictorial education charts for teachers to use in classrooms. The above indicates that the programme was comprehensive involving three of the four forms of activity material which Kelly (cf p33) uses to define NIE. The production of a newspaper by scholars is the only form of activity material not present above. The training courses

were developed according to feedback from teachers who indicated their needs, which highlights that this initiative was very much driven by the community and thus viewed as useful to the community. This was evident when teachers requested *Topic Today* calendars which told teachers what *The Star's* NIE team were planning so that they could prepare their lessons to coincide. This system was not entirely successful as it was difficult to synchronise articles to any one of the many syllabi. Furthermore with the help of corporate sponsors and publishers who waived copyright in order to have their educational material brought to the public's attention, more material was made possible at less expense [*The Star's* Literacy Unit 1990: 22].

But it was in spite of the comprehensive and organised nature of the NIE programme that it was shelved in 1984. While this was partly due to the fact that workshops had to be stopped as violence and unrest in townships became overwhelming, the operating costs and the recession also played a key role. It was felt that *Topic Today's* columns usurped space that could otherwise be earning revenue. This point of view was not unique to *The Star*. As will become evident later (cf p 60) and as was hinted at in the previous chapter when Homolac stated that a circulation drive amongst some newspapers prevented a NIE programme from taking off (cf p32), newspapers are prepared to view NIE as part of their social responsibility up to a point, but essentially are businesses and thus profit-driven. The costs of NIE programmes are often a factor which can lead to the demise of a NIE programme or the unwillingness of newspapers to be involved in NIE, especially if the programme cannot show positive results for the newspaper.

The Star's programme was revived in 1989 with the same motive of increasing literacy but with a different emphasis and audience. *The Star's* editor at the time, Harvey Tyson, believed that the greatest demand for newspapers in the future would come from people who would be reading newspapers as a self-educating tool. An independent research project on black readers' views by Mass Media Research in 1990 confirmed Tyson's views. *The Star* thus featured subjects of special interest such as health, technical education, career advice and legal issues with the emphasis on providing information and improving literacy skills and general

knowledge.

The previous chapter indicated that there are a variety of approaches to NIE based on different motivations for NIE. It was also noted that it is this flexibility which allows countries and/or individual newspapers to adapt NIE programmes to suit the specific needs or circumstances within these countries. As the above has illustrated, this was and still is particularly relevant in NIE programmes in South Africa. *The Star's* programme offered a variety of services to see to the special needs of the African context. The above exposition of the origins of NIE in South Africa illustrates that *The Star* identified a niche-market and seized the opportunity to develop readers in this manner. Started as a grassroots initiative, the NIE programme aimed to encourage literacy and a love of reading, a motive which satisfied the Soweto community and served the long-term interest of creating future readers of the newspaper. As mentioned above, however, the costs of such programmes are often weighed against the benefits and found to be lacking if no adequate research points to the contrary. It is interesting to note that *The Star* has changed the form of its NIE programme again. The long-term goal of creating future readers still exists but with the new system whereby companies adopt a school by paying for the subscription of newspapers to these schools, the motivation of increased circulation has become part of the motives for *The Star's* NIE programme. The possibility exists that pressure to show some results lead to this situation. While this is the case internationally as indicated in the previous chapter, further research would have to be done to establish whether this was the case in South Africa.

The adoption of other recent NIE initiatives in South Africa in the last two to three years are the result of efforts by two educational NGOs, the Education Foundation Trust² and SACHED Trust, but more recently the MIE Trust and the print industry's Print Media Association. The MIE Trust works in partnership with

² It was as a result of the 1993 Botha report into the role of the mass media in education that the Print Media in Education unit of the Education Foundation Trust was established. In 1996 this unit became known as the Media in Education (MIE) Trust when it gained autonomy from the Education Foundation and thus this thesis will use the term MIE Trust from now on when referring to this organisation.

provincial government, teachers and other educators, the print media industry, donors and contributors to supply newspapers, magazines and educational supplements to urban and rural schools, teacher training colleges and other learning centres in an attempt to improve access to resources, help transform classroom practice and instil critical thinking. Other services offered by the MIE Trust include pre- and in-service teacher training; the production of teacher and learner guides and activity books on how to use newspapers and magazines for teaching the curriculum as well as teaching newspaper literacy; a consultancy service to provincial government, educators and the print industry; testing and evaluation in pilot projects and links to other media. The Trust trained the teachers in this study.

Initially the MIE Trust adapted ideas and material from other countries but soon developed material based on the ideas and experience of local teachers. The MIE Trust cites the reasons for the overwhelming demand for NIE by South African educators as a result of the shortage of educational materials in most schools, the frustration with outdated and redundant curricula and textbooks, the struggle by progressive educators to replace the transmission teaching and rote learning approaches common in most schools with an interactive, critical approach and the need for new approaches to help teachers cope with classes of pupils from different educational, language, socio-economic and cultural backgrounds. These are the particular needs of the South African context and the variety of approaches to NIE allow for these needs to be catered for and are thus particularly attractive to many educators faced with the above problems [Education Foundation n.d].

The creation of a Print Media in Education Manager post at the Print Media Association in 1994 also facilitated the establishment of other NIE initiatives and was an attempt to indicate that the press stood united in supporting NIE. Until that time, NIE exercises had been sporadic and the purpose of this post was, therefore, to offer advice to new and existing NIE programmes and facilitate co-operation and communication between different newspapers involved in NIE. It is with the assistance of these two organisations that NIE was popularised in South Africa.

3. The current status of NIE in South Africa

It is difficult to gauge exactly how many newspapers are involved in NIE initiatives, because many newspapers are not familiar with the term NIE and what it entails and accordingly do not define their programmes as NIE. Yet, interviews with the *Daily News*, the MIE Trust, *Beeld*, Times Media Limited, *City Press*, *Rapport*, *The Star*, and Caxton Limited and an assessment of their publications indicates that there are a number of programmes whose approaches consist of one or a combination of four NIE material activities mentioned by Kelly in Chapter Three (cf p33). There is the approach favoured by *Beeld*, the *Daily News* and the MIE Trust which uses the entire newspaper in the classroom supplemented with teacher training and teacher guides illustrating how to use the newspaper to teach the curriculum³. Then there are a large proportion of newspapers which publish educational supplements. Some of them such as *The Star*, *Pretoria News*, *Diamond Fields Advertiser*, *City Press*, *Daily Dispatch*, *Evening Post*, *The Sowetan* and *Beeld* publish curriculum-based supplements targeted at high school pupils. Many of these supplements are in essence textbooks written on newsprint as they contain educational material written in a style and format which resembles that of textbooks. There are also educational supplements such as *Learn*, *Sixes and Sevens*, the *Rapport* supplement and careers supplements which contain more life-skills and general knowledge content. The design of these depends upon the purpose but in general does not resemble a textbook. There are also youth-oriented pages within newspapers, especially the Caxton newspapers, which include articles, photographs, competitions, birthday club lists and other related information for and about young people.

Some newspapers, such as Caxton's *Newcastle Advertiser* and *South Coast Sun*, and other institutions such as Rhodes University's Department of Journalism and Media Studies and the Institute for the Advancement of Journalism are involved in the production of scholar newspapers. These newspapers or institutions support the

³ *The Star's* programme was similar last year, but the withdrawal of the MIE Trust from Gauteng meant that *The Star* lost the trainer from the MIE Trust who trained teachers for the newspaper. It has been unable to return to this approach to NIE because of the costs involved in employing a NIE trainer.

production of school newspapers or pages within their own publications or independently of newspapers.

Another approach uses the newspaper to teach media education and media literacy. This might involve visiting journalists coming to schools to talk about journalism or scholars visiting the newspaper. As mentioned earlier some newspapers employ a variety of these approaches. Although Caxton and some other newspapers use the latter two approaches frequently, these newspapers were not aware that the latter two approaches may be regarded as NIE and as such, these attempts have been sporadic and unco-ordinated. These concerns are considered later on in this chapter.

Most of the above initiatives are targeted at school-going youth, but there are also adult media education projects. *Learn with Echo* is one such supplement which teaches basic literacy and life skills through the newspaper, *Witness Echo*. Magazines such as *YOU* and *Bona* also publish educational material which is referred to as Magazines in Education. Then there are also some South African newspapers which have initiated multi-media links with an educational agenda⁴.

4. Motives for NIE in South Africa

There are many motives for getting involved with NIE and these depend largely on the interest groups involved in NIE. From the newspaper perspective, there are a number of motives for starting NIE programmes and these usually determine the NIE approach which newspapers adopt. Yet as mentioned above, in South Africa most newspapers saw NIE as consisting of only two of Kelly's approaches, namely using the whole newspaper as a teaching resource supplemented with workshops

⁴At the time of writing, these initiatives include the Africa Growth Network/*Sunday Times*' PowerMatric which provides distance learning via a satellite network to students situated in make-shift classrooms around the country. This supported by print material published by the *Sunday Times*. There is also the link between television and print media with initiatives like the William Smith/*The Sowetan* school programme and the Soul City multimedia project around primary health care. The latter project has linked up with radio and print media. The MIE Trust is one of many supporters who prints educational material related to the Soul City television programme in their *Learn* supplement every week. The SABC and Department of Education have also collaborated to produce a new educational series using print and television but this project has been put on hold due to lack of funding.

and teacher guides and/or producing educational supplements. Botha provides a possible explanation for this trend by stating that in most other countries, learner-centred approaches and well-resourced classrooms are the norm and NIE has been primarily a market development exercise driven by the newspaper industry [Education Foundation n.d.]. Botha contends, however, that in South Africa it was the enthusiasm of educators and learners for NIE that convinced the newspaper industry of its potential. Some newspapers interviewed for this study indicated that they were unaware of the approach which involved scholars producing newspapers within an existing newspaper or independently of it or that teaching scholars media literacy and/or media education was part of the NIE initiative.

While the motives of the South African newspapers surveyed for starting a NIE programme are now multi-focused, many agree that their initial motive for starting a NIE programme was due to the lack of learning materials available in schools. Some of these newspapers agree that this motive now has to be reviewed for a number of reasons which will be discussed in the following section. Most agree that now they are motivated by the need to create future readers. Peter van Laar, Research Manager at the *Daily News* provides more details on the motivations for the *Daily News's* involvement in NIE [Interview, 4 May 1995]:

Within an environment of low literacy and shrinking readership or maybe slightly growing readership but shrinking in terms of population growth, the loss of advertising revenue, something has to be done to gain young readers since the number of young readers are getting smaller and smaller all the time. Young people generally do not read newspapers and I think it is a trend which will continue, so on the one hand there is an education crisis and on the other hand, there is shrinking readership. The two marry very well.

The Star and *Beeld* have additional motives. As *The Star's* NIE co-ordinator Barbara McGorian says,

The idea is that we are creating future readers but at the same time, it is profitable (because newspapers are sold to schools) and successful. At the same time it is a community project to provide material to under-privileged schools. (Interview, 10 September 1996)

The issue of motives is discussed below when the concerns about NIE are raised.

5. Concerns and problems with NIE initiatives in South Africa

5.1 Lack of clarity regarding focus of NIE programmes on the part of the newspaper industry

As mentioned above, the motives for starting many NIE programmes in South Africa stressed the educational benefits of NIE and did not always clearly define the benefits of such a programme to the newspapers who began these programmes. The agendas of educators and that of newspapers were not clearly differentiated and this has affected the programmes of many newspapers. Furthermore, most newspapers were not aware that a NIE programme could consist of more than producing supplements or using the newspaper as a teaching tool. The newspaper industry people interviewed from *The Star*, *Rapport*, *Beeld*, Times Media Limited, *City Press* and Caxton Limited all agreed that the newspaper industry in South Africa has too vague an idea of what NIE entails or aims to achieve and thus many newspaper-driven NIE initiatives lack focus and careful planning. Jimmy Mould, General Manager for Times Media Limited (Gauteng), is of the opinion that many newspapers were too eager to grasp the concept initially, as part of a social responsibility drive to assist the educationally disadvantaged masses [Interview, 10 September 1996]. A few years into their programme, these newspapers are now wondering what the newspaper hoped to achieve from such a programme. Mould claims this is because these newspapers did not set out clear guidelines initially defining the objectives of NIE. He highlights that NIE can be about trying to create newspaper readers or trying to achieve literacy, that these are two very different agendas and that there are many ways of achieving these objectives and they need not complement each other⁵.

A few years into their NIE programme, some of these newspapers are reviewing their NIE programme as their long-term motive of creating readers assumes more importance faced with a world-wide trend of declining circulation. They are asking themselves whether their programme encourages young people to

⁵ For example, Powermatric has a purely educational agenda and is not about encouraging newspaper reading.

read the newspaper, whether it develops critical thinkers who value the newspaper in their daily lives and would possibly read the newspaper as adults and in some cases whether their version of NIE also achieves a short-term objective of increasing circulation. This is especially the case for those newspapers with supplements which resemble textbooks in newsprint.

City Press is one newspaper which is looking closely at its curriculum-linked supplement. The supplement was started in 1991 as a response to a shortage of school textbooks in DET schools but Freddie Steyn, General Manager for the newspaper, contends that perhaps it is time to review the objectives in terms of the benefits of such a programme to the newspaper:

If one wants to do any new NIE programme with schools, on the one hand you want to create readers, on the other hand building circulation through that. It is always: what is in it for the newspaper? It is fine to say that for *City Press* operating in the black market that we are doing it for our social conscience - it is not necessarily true. It is not necessary for us to have a social conscience.

(Interview, 9 September 1996)

Peter van Laar, Research Manager at the *Daily News* expresses a similar position. For the *Daily News*, their partnership with the MIE Trust is not without its difficulties. The MIE Trust supplies the teacher training and guides and the *Daily News* supplies the newspapers free to schools. Van Laar states that the fact that the MIE Trust liaises more closely with the schools is problematic to the newspaper because the MIE Trust's objective is educational upliftment and not selling newspapers [Interview, 4 May 1995]. Thus while the *Daily News* believes that the motives for its NIE programme are to develop readers and build circulation, these motives are not encouraged by the MIE Trust because it has an entirely different agenda.

The Caxton group, who publish largely free newspapers and thus do not have a circulation problem, also do not see themselves as immediately affected by readership decline. This they ascribe to the local community nature of many of their newspapers and the high proportion of local advertisements in their newspapers which they believe is of direct interest to local readers. In this context, the benefit to Caxton newspapers of a NIE programme is unclear. Many Caxton newspapers are

also unaware that their efforts to assist schools in producing their own newspapers is part of NIE and these initiatives while considered innovatory, have not been considered essential to the survival of these newspapers. Alice Vorster, Human Resource Development Manager for Caxton Limited, cites these as reasons why NIE efforts at Caxton have been sporadic, minimal and unstructured [Interview, 10 September 1996]. She states that a NIE programme for Caxton newspapers would have to be properly planned and structured, because the benefits of NIE to these newspapers are not immediately visible.

Beeld's Vosloo and Boshoff do not see their programme as lacking focus as they state that their motives are to build readers, circulation, provide teacher training, advance the Afrikaans language and develop informed readers who can read, listen and think critically and that these motives were clearly stated from the beginning [Interview, 11 September 1996]. They believe their programme is clearly targeted at achieving these aims. The NIE programmes of *Rapport* and *The Star* are motivated by the need to provide educational material to schools and while these programmes have other problems, they do not regard the lack of focus as one of them.

All those interviewed agreed that altruistic ideas about improving the lot of many disadvantaged people becomes a problem as soon as the NIE programme begins to cost too much and does not produce results which indicate the benefits of such a programme for the newspaper. These two issues, namely the costs of NIE programmes and management's need to see some results, go hand in hand with one another.

5.2 The running costs of NIE programmes

Some newspapers realise that if their aim of encouraging young people to read the newspaper was stated from the beginning, they could have opted for another programme which might have cost much less. While *City Press's Learning Press* was started for a purpose other than creating future readers, the costs have to be weighed against how effectively it is used. Steyn sees two routes for NIE:

If you look at NIE programmes, there are two routes: the expensive

and less expensive route. We (*City Press*) are on the former, a special, dedicated supplement costing in the region of R2 million per year and what do you get back? Fifty thousand pupils buying *City Press* for *Learning Press*? or even if it is a 100 000, it is a total overkill, considering that our print run is 300 000. The more inexpensive way, and in my opinion this is the way it is being done more or less world wide, is where you put your manuals together and you train the teachers to use the whole newspaper in a classroom situation. And perhaps from time to time, you will provide additional space for more information if it is needed.

[Interview, 9 September 1996]

TML's Mould also points out that the cost of newsprint can affect the production of a NIE supplement and that sponsorship is necessary to alleviate this burden. The *Daily News's* Van Laar and *The Star's* McGorian agree that sponsorship is vital to a NIE programme, especially a costly one involving the production of supplements. McGorian accepts that if all the sponsors withdrew their sponsorship, the programme would end. Van Laar states that his newspaper is committed to supplying the infrastructure (i.e. distribution and printing facilities), but once it is expected to invest money in such a programme, the newspaper is more reluctant to get involved. He suggests that since newspapers are already struggling, if a vested interest was willing to make a monetary contribution and ask the newspaper to match it, this might be considered. But as the situation stands now, he believes sponsorship is vital to the survival of a NIE programme.

McGorian and Van Laar also highlight the tensions which exist between management and NIE persons over the costs of the programme versus the benefits of such programme for the newspaper. McGorian believes this is a real problem but states that her programme has been accepted by management because it sells more newspapers. *The Star's* programme involves companies sponsoring the subscription of 15 newspapers per day to different schools five days a week for a year. Funding for the running of the programme up to now has been minimal. McGorian is responsible for all fundraising and is expected to be a field worker. She states that this is almost impossible to do both and while she believes that her type of project requires a field worker to be more effective, this is impossible as there is no funding available for such a person.

The Caxton group and *Rapport* are affected by costs as they relate to space in their newspapers. Caxton newspapers make money through selling space in the newspaper for advertising. Vorster states that some of Caxton's newspapers run as leanly as 30 per cent editorial and 70 per cent advertising. Thus there is very little space editorially to run anything, even a NIE programme, otherwise the newspapers are losing revenue. As Vorster says: "Space to us is money because our newspapers are free."

Louw van der Merwe, Assistant General Manager for *Rapport*, says his NIE programme is also affected by the costs of space [Interview, 11 September 1996]. His programme was reduced from four to two pages of theme-based material suitable for school projects because of the costs involved. He states:

Two full page adverts cost about R45 000 in our (Sunday) magazine whereas the two pages devoted to the theme-based material for schools does not earn money and the benefits thereof to the newspaper are unknown.

Johan Vosloo of *Beeld* stated that in the future those newspapers which carry NIE materials in their newspaper might be faced with high-cost NIE programmes because as newspapers get thinner, there will be less space which will be more expensive [Interview, 11 September 1996]. NIE programmes that use the entire newspaper as a learning resource have fewer costs. He stated that from an economical point of view, *Beeld's* NIE programme was much more affordable than trying to develop certain subject-based material.

The lack of adequate and secure funding makes it difficult for projects to plan ahead, do research, evaluate or expand their activities. This is a major concern for both NGOs and newspapers involved in NIE initiatives, according to the newspaper industry members interviewed and Wilna Botha, director of the MIE Trust⁶.

⁶ The MIE Trust has recently received funding from USAID on the basis that the Trust trains in the next few years a larger number of teachers than it does at present. The Trust also has to move to other provinces and train teachers. The requirement, however, may spread their training capacity too thinly. On the other hand, funding for projects like NIE is becoming less and less and so NGO's such as this one are faced with a dilemma: either accept the funding conditions and do the best they can or close down the operation.

5.3 Lack of evaluation and research

Linked to the above concern about the cost of NIE programmes and lack of focus regarding NIE is the need for evaluation. As TML's Mould states:

We've assumed a great deal that a NIE programme is important and yet no one has ever had any real authoritative playback.

(Interview, 10 September 1996)

Vosloo of *Beeld* points out the danger of this lack of research:

From the newspapers' point of view, if this NIE project is not able to prove that it works then probably management will reconsider the involvement and financial support, so there will have to be a continuous effort to prove that there is worth in it.

(Interview, 11 September 1996)

From the educational point of view, Botha [1993: 8] highlights that it is this inability to prove the effectiveness of educational media projects that has made it difficult for many NIE projects to acquire funding. All those interviewed agreed that evaluation of NIE programmes in terms of the benefits they had for the newspaper industry and for the recipients of the programme is a much unstudied area. At the same time, most NIE programmes are run on very tight budgets and both McGorian and Van der Merwe state that there is no money for evaluation.

At present although *The Star*, *Beeld* and *Daily News* have held focus groups with principals and/or teachers and sent out questionnaires to teachers to discover how they use the newspaper, and most of the responses have been exceptionally positive, these newspapers feel this is inadequate proof of the success of such a programme. Botha's research [1993] concurs, saying that while some projects claim success in terms of demand or positive attitudes, not one project has actually assessed its impact on learning levels. As Botha [1993:9] contends,

Although anecdotal evidence suggests that projects are indeed worthwhile, the lack of solid objectivity erodes rather than inspires confidence.

There has been some attempt to evaluate NIE programmes. The 1993 Botha report was the first attempt to collect and synthesize information about the various educational media initiatives in South Africa. The 1993 Dilley report assessed the

NIE educational material available in South Africa for SACHED Trust and the Argus Group and discovered *inter alia* that distribution of these materials was a problem, language levels were sometimes too high, evaluation of the materials was mostly lacking, funding of such initiatives was problematic and that little research had been conducted as to the target audience, usage patterns and impact on the audience of such initiatives. In terms of the benefits to newspapers, very little research does exist and the little that does is not always freely available. This research is often undertaken by the research departments of various newspaper groups and is considered confidential. *The Star* has engaged some journalism students from the Pretoria Technikon to commence research on *The Star's* supplement. This independent evaluation is expected at the beginning of 1997.

Van Laar of the *Daily News* and *City Press's* Steyn both stress the need for evaluation in order to establish whether projects justify the costs involved. As Steyn comments:

Initially it was not difficult to print *Learning Press* because in 1991 we had a print order of 160 000. The past few years have seen the circulation double, not through *Learning Press*, but with marketing. Now the average print order is 330 000 and this not only costs the company large amounts of money but raises the question of whether learners use the 330 000 *Learning Presses* which appear into *City Press*. I don't know how many people find *Learning Press* useful, it is very difficult to do market research.

(Interview, 9 September 1996)

Steyn concedes that *City Press* has used various methods to do this evaluation with limited success and are now doing market research in conjunction with Via Afrika to plan a course of action for *Learning Press*. He acknowledges that over the school holiday period there is a decline in the sales of *City Press*, but believes it cannot be attributed to the fact that *Learning Press* is not published during holidays.

Rapport's Van der Merwe says that while they know their NIE programme has some value the lack of scientific research has wider effects. When asked how the programme was marketed, Van der Merwe stated that no marketing was done because this would be too expensive and he could not see why the programme should be marketed when there is no research to indicate how it is used. *Rapport* has

done some initial research. In a pilot project they gave some high schools in Pretoria free newspapers for six weeks to see if they were used. In a follow-up they discovered that the newspaper was not used much in the classroom but more in school media centres, so two newspapers are sent to media centres per week. Subsequent research into the use of these newspapers has not been done.

The Star's McGorian cites the lack of commitment from the newspapers themselves and from business in general as one of the concerns of NIE in South Africa. She goes on to explain how the lack of research is partly due to the lack of commitment from the newspaper industry:

I don't think any newspaper is really committed to NIE. NIE should survive but it will depend on who's running the company at the time whether it will survive or not. Nobody really sees the importance of it, because nobody has proved the importance of it. Nobody has really gone and said NIE is essential in schools.
[Interview, 10 September 1996]

5.4 Poor execution because no follow-through

TML's Mould contends that the lack of clarity regarding the purpose of some newspapers' NIE programmes has resulted in poor execution and no follow-through by newspapers on their programme. All those involved in media in education projects in South Africa agreed that the interface between the recipient of NIE programmes and the newspaper is largely unexplored. This perception was also evident in Botha [1993: 8] who highlighted the need for closer links with learners in order to determine needs, make materials accessible, ensure their effective use and assess their impact. Van Laar highlights the concerns of most newspapers:

There is one weakness in the chain - how does the child relate to the newspaper? The MIE Trust is focusing on the teacher, relying on teachers to reach the child, but what we want is that the child will see NIE as being fun, something which is useful to them, something that they are open and interactive with - is that happening? Or do they see it as a chore - saying Oh no! It's NIE day again!
(Interview, 4 May 1995)

Vorster of Caxton also believes that the biggest need is to establish a link between the end-users (i.e. child and teacher) and the newspaper. At present she believes "there is too much one-way traffic at the moment." Mould believes that some

newspapers spend money on supplements and yet expect teachers to use them without any other support from the newspaper. *Rapport's* Van der Merwe admits that *Rapport* has no idea how many scholars use the material they publish weekly. As mentioned above, Steyn of *City Press* also acknowledges that his newspaper is unsure of how many scholars use the *Learning Press* supplement. *Beeld* sees the establishment of this link as critical to their programme and perhaps the weakest point in their focused NIE programme.

Many projects admit finding it difficult to establish these links. Mould provides an explanation as to why this is the case:

The idea is good but execution is poor because of the enormity of the task. Three or four people cannot be expected to drive the whole thing.

(Interview, 10 September 1996)

All those interviewed agreed that it was an enormous task to run an effective NIE programme, especially for those national newspapers (see below). For *Rapport* and Caxton, NIE is part of the responsibilities of a person employed in another capacity at these newspapers. The *Daily News*, *The Star* and *Beeld* are the only newspapers interviewed who have full time NIE co-ordinators. These people are often responsible for so many tasks that they seldom get to make the connection with the actual users of their programme. This is not to say that these newspapers are unaware that this step is crucial but at the moment it is impossible given their limited resources to do much about it. McGorian also comments that this lack of follow-through is due to a lack of funding. She admits that she is unsure whether *The Star*, *Pretoria News* or *Diamond Field's Advertiser* are being used "properly" in school. She sees the role of field worker as determining how the newspaper is being used in school, but as yet there is no money for the employment of such a person.

The situation among NGOs involved in NIE is similar. As Helene Perold of Sached Trust is quoted in Botha [1993: 8]:

It is fairly easy to be professional in the delivery of materials, but difficult to assess that they are used in such a way that they will make a difference. This is the biggest trick.

5.5 Other tensions within newspaper over NIE

Some persons employed by newspapers to run a NIE programme are experiencing tension between themselves and management and editorial. It is the perception of Dr Geoff Mathews, NIE manager at the Print Media Association, that some persons at newspapers who are involved in NIE from the educational side do not get the full support of all those at the newspaper. McGorian comments that while *The Star's* NIE programme has been accepted by management, it has not been accepted by the editorial staff on the newspaper. This is due to the fact that NIE is not seen as fitting into *The Star's* market, the AB income group. Hence the supplement is inserted in the classified section. She says:

Whereas *The Sowetan* has the full support of the entire team, for us it is detracted value. (Interview, 10 September 1996)

While *Beeld* does not have the same problem as *The Star* as its audience is more close-knit and it does not produce a supplement, the *Beeld* NIE team also believe it is important to them to establish closer ties with the editorial department to get their full support. *Rapport* confirmed that management and editorial are lukewarm about the present NIE project, believing the two pages could be put to better use.

5.6 Lack of co-ordination and sharing of resources

One of the major problems hindering the ability of NIE projects to make a discernible difference in South Africa outlined in Botha [1993: 8] is the lack of co-ordination and sharing of resources. For some newspapers such as *The Star*, *The Sowetan* and the *Daily News*, competition between these newspapers for a share of the reader's market makes them reluctant to share resources or divulge marketing strategies, where the latter exist. The MIE Trust's supplement *Sixes and Sevens* appears in *The Sowetan* and the *Daily News*. Previously neither of these newspapers were in competition with one another. The recent expansion of *The Sowetan* in the Kwazulu-Natal market has, however, resulted in some level of competition between it and the *Daily News*. Many newspapers see NIE as a means of ensuring that their newspaper is the one used by scholars in the classroom and hopefully will encourage scholars to buy that particular newspaper as adults. McGorian substantiates this with her comment on the implications of competition between

newspapers. She comments,

Yes, I would not give away how I do things. That proves the point that it (i.e. NIE) is not a community project, that it's a business project. If it was a community project, it would not matter if they (i.e. scholars) read a newspaper other than *The Star* or *Pretoria News*.

(Interview, 10 September 1996)

The MIE Trust has achieved the sharing of resources to some extent. The *Learn* supplement is published in the *Daily News* in Durban and the *Evening Post* in the Eastern Cape because neither newspaper is in competition with each other. *Star Studies*, which used to appear in *The Star* now appears in the Eastern Cape's *Daily Dispatch*.

5.7 Distribution problems

Dilley [1993: 109-110], Botha [1993:10] and Van Laar [Interview, 4 May 1995] state that newspaper distribution is problematic, especially into urban and peri-urban black townships and rural areas where NIE programmes can do much good. The 1995 All Media Products Survey (AMPS) figures confirm that newspapers are the least likely medium to reach target groups in black rural and urban communities. About 62 per cent of blacks over the age of 16 listen to radio, about 40 per cent watch television, 26 per cent read magazines while about 14 per cent read black weeklies and 10 per cent read English dailies. Botha [1993: 10] mentions that some people who have been involved in attempts to distribute independent newspapers informally into black areas preferred not to discuss the failure of these attempts. The *Daily News*'s Van Laar admits that they culled their NIE programme in areas where the distribution network was not working. He concedes that this culling tended to be in the rural areas where NIE is seen as being able to make the greatest impact. According to Scott [1992: 26] the poor monitoring and management of these distribution networks makes it almost inevitable that they are corrupt and a failure. Ivan Harris, NIE co-ordinator at the *Daily News*, confirms this opinion. When asked why "returns" of the *Daily News* could not be sent with "back" copies to the project in Esikhawini, he replies that these "returns" could not be monitored and were thus open to corruption should they be included in the monitored 100 issues of *Daily*

News which went to Esikhawini every week [Interview, June 1996].

5.8 Language problems

The issue of language was not perceived by *City Press* or *The Star* newspapers who produced curriculum-linked supplements as a problem because since much of their material was science, maths or accounting-based, language was immaterial. For *Beeld*, language was not an issue as they did not use a supplement but the entire newspaper and felt that teachers were in a position to assist if necessary.

Yet Botha [1993: 10] does highlight that this area cannot be neglected and indicates some of the concerns of those who produce educational material for disadvantaged learners. Elda Lyster of Natal University's Centre for Adult Education, states that as it is extremely difficult to convey interesting concepts in simple language, the language level of some educational material is too complex for the target audience [ibid]. Botha also contends that choosing the right language might also be the issue [1993: 10]. *Learn with Echo* started in English, but has become 50/50 English and Zulu on demand. Scott has found that even in relatively affluent townships, few people buy English-language newspapers or magazines. This concurs with the findings of this study (cf p77, 118). Scott states that people look at the photographs in English newspapers, while reading articles in Zulu newspapers. On the other hand primary school principals who attended a meeting hosted by Natal newspapers insisted that newspaper material had to be only in English because their scholars had difficulty with English [Botha 1993: 10]. As will be evident in Chapters Five and Seven, scholars also used English-language newspapers more frequently than Zulu-language ones and this prevented some of them from reading newspaper articles and thus from developing a fuller relationship with the newspaper⁷.

⁷ As will also become evident (cf pp110 -111, 139), there was also a mismatch between the white context of the newspapers the scholars were exposed to and these publications' urban bias on the one hand, and the rural black scholars on the other. Further research into this disjuncture may indicate its effect, if any, on NIE.

5.9 The variety of syllabi between provinces

The diversity of the different provincial syllabi makes it difficult for any one newspaper group to accommodate these different syllabi in a single NIE programme. This is the perception of TML's Mould who argues in consequence that this indicates that NIE should be more about inspiring people to read rather than an educational initiative. Both *City Press* and *Rapport* acknowledge that the variety of syllabi makes it difficult for a national newspaper to plan a single NIE programme. Until such time as South Africa has a standard school curriculum - an unlikely development given that schooling is a provincial affair - this is going to remain a constraint on the educational potential of any national or inter-provincial NIE initiatives.

5.10 The diversity of newspapers involved in NIE

As mentioned above, NIE poses some problems for the national newspapers. *City Press's* Steyn states that should the newspaper review its NIE programme and adopt a new approach, this approach would have to be one which was either limited to the Gauteng area or would have to be one which was applicable to the newspaper's entire target audience without much extra financial expense. The approach involving using the entire newspaper backed up with teacher training workshops, for instance, would mean that in all provinces, *City Press* would have to have trainers giving teacher workshops on how to use the entire newspaper or find an organisation which would be willing to do this job in each province. The costs involved in expanding such a single NIE programme nationally were considered prohibitive. Furthermore, the newspaper would have to ensure these programmes were managed efficiently in all provinces. Yet even a regional newspaper such as *Beeld* expresses concern that the expansion of its activities into the four northern provinces puts additional pressure on the NIE facilitator to manage the entire programme at the possible expense of ensuring the success of the programme within Gauteng.

For *The Star*, it is not the regional nature of the newspaper which is a cause for concern, but the fact that the audience of *The Star* is very different from audience of the supplement. As mentioned above, this is why the supplement is inserted in the

classified section where the editor believes it will be less intrusive to *The Star's* targeted audience. In a survey, *Rapport* found that parents did not want their children reading what parents considered the "immoral things" in the main body of this Sunday paper thus the NIE pages had to be placed in the magazine section.

6. Conclusion

The above concerns have made some newspapers reconsider their motives for their NIE programme. Van der Merwe believes that as soon as certain textbooks become available in schools, *Rapport's* NIE programme will have served its purpose. TML's Mould believes that the impact of NIE will only be measured once new teachers emerge from teacher training colleges armed with the knowledge of how to use the newspaper in class. He comments:

In-service training in colleges is a good thing because teachers realise it is not an add-on. That to me is a good way, to teach the teacher the value of the newspaper. That's a nice way of getting in from the top and going down. Whereas to go to a teacher who's been teaching for 20 years and say we want to change your whole way of thinking so use a newspaper in class from now on, I don't think you'll win that way.

(Interview, 10 September 1996)

City Press's Steyn believes the link with television might be the route to go in order to build circulation. But this highlights an agenda (i.e. to build circulation) which need not be part of NIE. It is with this in mind that *Beeld's* Vosloo believes that the multimedia initiatives in South Africa at the moment are not compatible with *Beeld's* NIE objectives. Vosloo believes that the newspaper's involvement in these multimedia initiatives would be:

in the line of text books in a supplement form and that is not NIE. I really don't believe you can develop readership by putting a supplement with text-oriented material within that and then think you are going to improve readership. Readership is to get the child to like this newspaper as it is - because it tells me a lot and I love it and there are certain things which I can relate to.

(Interview, 11 September 1996)

TML's Mould (whose publications are not yet involved in NIE) and Caxton's Vorster (whose newspapers' involvement in NIE is sporadic), are of the opinion that the NIE concept of training young people to produce their own newspapers is a positive

concept as it is possible to see the interaction between the newspaper and the child.

Mould contends that:

The NIE concept of getting children to know about the newspaper is a positive thing because you can see growth. You can see the interface between the newspaper and young people. As management I have a better feel that something is actually happening when you bring forty young people in a week to work on a newspaper. (Interview, 10 September 1996)

Harris of the *Daily News* stresses that it is not always possible to model NIE programmes on international NIE programmes. Although he states that the newspaper is inexpensive, to buy it every day does become expensive and for some people may mean the difference between buying a loaf of bread or not. In the light of this, he sees the most prohibitive factor of the *Daily News*'s NIE programme which provides 230 000 free newspapers including the *Learn* supplement every week to 400 schools as being the cost of such a programme. Wilna Botha, director of the MIE Trust, comments further on the issue of resources:

I get the feeling that the honeymoon period of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) is over. Natal Newspapers have indicated that they can't keep handing out at every crisis. Yet in both the Eastern Cape and Kwazulu-Natal, it comes out strongly that the education departments do not have the money to pay for what we do. Further, we haven't (until the recent assistance from USAID) followed up the links we've established in other provinces because of a lack of resources. [Interview August 1996].

The above comments again highlight the concerns which most newspapers and educators have about NIE. These newspapers are interested in building circulation as well as future newspaper readers and as such are interested in scholars' attitudes towards the newspapers used in NIE programmes. But, as shown, they lack research on the topic. Also as the above comment about in-service teacher training illustrates, they are concerned that teachers are currently not playing a sufficient role in fostering the scholars' relationship to newspapers. In the following chapters, it will become evident that these are valid concerns.

Chapter Five

The scholars of Injabuloyesizwe Primary School

1. Introduction

The focus in this chapter is on one school, Injabuloyesizwe Primary School, and the relationship of its scholars to the newspaper. A profile of the scholars at this school is necessary to provide some details of the sample. The chapter focuses on their access to various media before dealing with their exposure to NIE in the classroom and the factors which affect their relationship with newspapers in class.

2. A profile of the scholars

The 42 scholars from Injabuloyesizwe Primary School who form part of this study are all in one class in standard five. They all live on tribal trust lands around the school. Their ages range from 11 to 24-years-old, with the mean age of the class at 13.79 years old. Figure A provides a breakdown of the various ages in this class. The relevance of the ages of these scholars will become evident as this chapter progresses.

The sample is divided almost evenly along gender lines with 20 female scholars and 22 male scholars. No significant gender differences were found in the research, except in the arena of sport and fashion (cf p 82, 95, 102).

Figure A

Age	Number of Students
11 year olds	5
12 year olds	5
13 year olds	14
14 year olds	7
15 year olds	5
16 year olds	5
19 year olds	1
24 year olds	1

The mother tongue of all these scholars is Zulu. Although they receive class instruction in English, the teacher frequently translates the lesson into Zulu during class, because most scholars cannot respond to English questions. From my observations in the classroom and discussions with the scholars, it was evident that much of what the teacher says in English is not understood by the scholars. For research purposes, a translator was used for the in-depth interviews with scholars. The language issue is relevant because, as is apparent later (cf p 89), the use of English-language newspapers does affect the way in which scholars relate to newspapers in the classroom.

3. The media habits of the scholars at Injabuloyesizwe

3.1 General comments

Only three scholars said they have none of the three forms of mass media in their homes on a regular basis. These scholars could not answer most of the questions about any media, indicating their lack of exposure, beyond the formal NIE in the classroom. This section looks at the access and the implications of access to various media to the scholars' relationship to newspapers, as scholars access to different media may tinge this relationship (as is evident later in this chapter). Access is of course a prerequisite for forming a relationship with the newspaper.

3.2 Newspaper reading

Newspapers are the most prevalent form of the mass media found in the homes of the scholars. In this survey, 33 of the 42 scholars say they receive a newspaper in their homes regularly. In six of these homes, newspapers are the only form of mass media. In 15 scholars' homes, newspapers are present along with television and magazines. Eight homes have newspapers and television sets and in four homes, there are newspapers and magazines, but no television. These figures indicate that most scholars are accustomed to seeing newspapers in their homes on a regular basis.

None of these scholars buy a newspaper themselves. Scholars say relatives tend to buy newspapers from either of the two supermarkets in Esikhawini near the

taxi ranks which these breadwinners use to get to and from their place of employment, or from shops in Empangeni or Richard's Bay. Thus these scholars have greater opportunities to relate to newspapers than scholars who do not receive newspapers at home.

The frequency with which newspapers are brought home and looked at or read depends upon how often their relatives purchase the newspaper. Figure B indicates the frequency with which scholars say that they read newspapers at home.

Figure B

Number of scholars	Frequency of newspaper reading
18	Once a week
2	Twice a week
2	Once every two weeks
1	Once a month
10	Could not pin down frequency as it depends upon how often their relatives buy the newspaper

For half of these respondents, reading or looking at the newspaper is not one of their top priorities and they tend to browse through the newspaper when they have nothing better to do. This is not to say that newspapers are irrelevant to them. Further questioning indicated that television and the opportunity to play takes precedence over newspaper reading. Reading time of a single copy of a newspaper takes anything from five minutes to two days, but most respondents say they read or look at the newspaper for 10-15 minutes which correlates with later comments that they do not read the entire newspaper but focus on items of interest. The younger the respondent the longer he or she claims to spend with the newspaper which contrasts with international research which found that younger scholars are likely to read newspapers less frequently than older scholars¹. A possible explanation for this

¹A newspaper study commissioned by the *Toronto Star* in 1992, found that 12/13 year-olds read newspapers less than their 16/17 year-old counterparts [Terry 1993]. A 1992 study in the United Kingdom also noted that 16/17 year-old students read more than their 12/13 year-old counterparts [Harcourt and Hartland 1992].

disparity lies in the composition of the classroom in this study. As noted earlier, the average age of the scholars in the class is 13.79 years. According to teachers at this school, these younger scholars fare better academically than their older classmates, many of whom have failed a few standards and who, according to these teachers, find it hard to keep up with the pace at which the teacher works with her class. The older scholars interviewed in this survey were less fluent in English than their younger classmates and read much more slowly. It is possibly these factors which hamper their relationship with newspapers by turning the act of finding information which is interesting and relevant to them into an exercise which is tedious and laborious.

Figure C represents the newspapers which scholars have at home. The results were obtained from questions asked at the beginning, middle and end of the study period².

Figure C

Title of the newspaper	Number of scholars who read this newspaper
Regional newspapers	
Ilanga	28
UmAfrika	1
Mercury	1
Daily News	1
Local newspapers	
Zululand Observer	5
National newspapers	
City Press (weekly)	2
The Citizen	1

Figure C reflects the popularity of regional and local newspapers. *Ilanga*, a regional bi-weekly Zulu newspaper, is the most popular, followed by the *Zululand Observer*, a

² It is noted that the number of newspapers cited exceeds the number of scholars who said they have newspapers at home. The reason for this is that five scholars say their parents occasionally purchase an additional newspaper to the one which is normally brought home.

weekly English local newspaper published in Empangeni. While these newspapers might not be the choices of scholars had they bought a newspaper themselves, these scholars' views of the relevance of these newspapers to them is discussed in Chapter Six. *Ilanga* is especially relevant to them because it is written in their mother tongue, Zulu³. As mentioned earlier, these scholars find it hard to express themselves in English, a second language to all of them. Thus some of them do not understand much of what is written in an English-language newspaper and find the process of reading difficult. This affects their attitude towards newspapers and ultimately their relationship. Figure C also substantiates Scott's research [1992] that even in relatively affluent townships, few people buy English-language newspapers or magazines. The issue of language will be dealt with in greater detail when the relevance of newspapers to these scholars is discussed (cf p 89, 108).

The scholars also had access to newspapers from another source. As part of the NIE programme operating in Esikhawini, these scholars had access to the *Zululand Observer* and the *Daily News* in their classrooms on a weekly basis and more infrequently, *UmAfrika* and *Ilanga*. The latter two failed to arrive in Esikhawini after the first month and thus scholars were exposed primarily to the two English-language newspapers. This did have an effect on the way in which scholars related to newspapers (cf p 89, 108). The school library is not an alternative means of access to newspapers in this case as the library at Injabuloyesizwe does not contain print mass media. Further details of the scholars' newspaper use in class is discussed in section four. The above establishes that there was an opportunity for them to develop a relationship with the newspaper in their classroom.

More importantly, these scholars state that they do read newspapers which means that they do have a relationship to newspapers, even if newspaper reading is not a top priority. Furthermore, details of their access to different types of newspapers will define their relationship in a particular way. Scholars are limited in

³ The other regional Zulu newspaper, *UmAfrika*, is much less popular than its Zulu counterpart, *Ilanga*. No reason can be given for this as the relatives who bought newspapers were not questioned why they did not buy *UmAfrika* and scholars could not provide an answer as to why their relatives did not buy *UmAfrika*.

terms of their choice of newspaper because they do not have any control over the newspapers which are brought home or used at school and this does affect their relationship with newspapers. This will become evident later when it is shown that those scholars with more frequent access exhibited greater knowledge about the newspaper (cf p 83-84)⁴.

3.3 Other reading habits

Magazines are found predominantly in homes which either have televisions, newspapers or both but are not as popular as either. A possible explanation for this lower popularity may have to do with the fact that magazines cannot compete with the visual element of television nor the more competitive price of newspapers, though more research would be required here. Many of the scholars themselves believe, however, that magazines are expensive commodities. In contrast, scholars say that the price of a newspaper would not prevent them from buying one if they were earning money. This statement, however, must be seen in the light that these scholars are not currently buying the newspapers themselves. Figure D indicates the magazines which scholars most frequently read, yet the scholars also indicated that the presence of these magazines in their homes is sporadic.

Figure D

Title of magazine	Number of scholars who read the magazine
Bona	16
Pace	1
True Love	1
Soccer	4

The popularity of *Bona* may be as a result of the magazine being used along with newspapers in class as part of the NIE programme. From observations in class, most

⁴ If they were able to choose the newspaper they wished to look at or read, it might prove to be a different one to the ones mentioned here. There is no evidence to indicate whether this may be the case and research would be required to establish this.

scholars enjoy the colour photographs and the youth-focus of many of the articles.

There is no public library in Esikhawini itself and the school library consists of a few books locked away in cupboards at the back of each classroom. Teachers do not allow scholars to take these books home as the teachers fear the books will not be returned. There is no specified library class period and thus reading a book is done sporadically in class according to teachers' decisions. My questions relating to the scholars' media habits did not specifically ask scholars whether they read books at home, but focused more on what forms of communication were available at home. While scholars mentioned reading or looking at newspapers and magazines quite freely, no scholar in this study volunteered that he or she read a book at home. This line of questioning was not pursued as I believed that this might prompt some scholars into replying that they read books not because they did read them but because they felt they ought to. As mentioned in Chapter Three (cf p 47), I find closed questioning problematic in that it prompts respondents to reply to an issue to which they might not have thought of responding to and is contrary to my interpretation of qualitative research (cf p8, 12).

3.4 Television viewing

Twenty-eight of the 43 respondents said their family owned a television set. For three scholars, television is the sole form of mass media in their homes. Scholars' lists of their favourite television programmes suggest that they watch on average three to five hours of television a day. Their television viewing is erratic, however, as many say they do not have access to a printed television schedule. Scholars have memorised the viewing times of their favourite programmes. These favourites include Jam Alley (a music video programme), Woza Weekend (a local programme highlighting the sports to be played that weekend), Ubambo Lwami (a local drama), Ezodumo (a traditional music programme) and Zama Zama (a game show), Kideo (a children's programme) and the Days of our Lives and The Bold and the Beautiful (both soap operas).

All but three respondents say they usually watch the news once or twice a week. When asked what they had seen on the news recently, however, many could

not provide an answer which invalidates somewhat the claim that 25 respondents watch the news regularly. The visual element of television is particularly appealing. Eight scholars say they prefer to watch the news on television than read it in the newspaper, because the visuals show events unfolding and the visual component makes news more believable. The remaining scholars believe that newspapers and television supplement each other as there is news which appears on television which does not appear in the newspaper and vice versa. These scholars are in favour of gathering news from both media for reasons which will become evident in Chapter Six. Television is a medium which all scholars who have access, enjoy for its entertainment value and visual allure. They spend more hours watching television than they do reading newspapers or magazines. Television, however, does have its shortcomings to them and these are to the advantage of newspapers and scholars' relationship to the newspaper (see pp 95-108).

In summary, it is evident that scholars have access to different mass media, although newspapers are more prevalent than magazines in most scholars' homes and at school. In studying the relationship between scholars and the newspapers in this study, one needs to take into account not only the newspapers which the students encounter in their classroom as part of the NIE material which their teachers use, but also the newspapers they may have access to in their daily lives. Newspapers do, however, have to compete with the visual allure of television and the entertainment value of both magazines and television.

4 NIE in the classroom at Injabuloyesizwe Primary School

4.1 Organisation of NIE at the school

The standard five class who worked with newspapers in class were taught by three NIE-trained teachers. These were Jennifer Mthimkhulu who taught geography, Zulu and English, Nohlanhla Mdluli, the maths and history teacher and the principal, Thokozani Cebekhulu, who stepped in to teach when required. The other two NIE-trained teachers' classrooms were visited from time to time.

4.2 Scholars' exposure to NIE

On average, the newspaper is used in lessons once or twice a week, thus scholars in standard five are accustomed to using the medium regularly. This contrasts with the situation at Esikhawini HP (cf p 122). There are other lessons using the media but these use the *Bona* magazine. The frequency with which these scholars had access to these newspapers was again not determined by themselves but, in this instance, by the three teachers who had been trained in NIE methodology.

4.3 The nature of the NIE lessons

While this research does not intend to expound in detail on the nature of the lessons using the newspaper, it is necessary to explain how the lessons affected the way in which scholars related to newspapers. Mrs Mthimkhulu's lessons made use of both text and visual images frequently, although the latter predominated. Thus scholars were given the opportunity to familiarise themselves with both the textual and visual contents of the newspaper.

Although sporadic, these scholars did get to read a newspaper in class. This opportunity was usually associated with completing a lesson and not purely for the sake of reading a newspaper. For instance, scholars had to find articles about people who had broken the law which required them to read much of the newspaper. Scholars then had to paste these stories in their workbooks, select one of these stories, write down a fair way to deal with this person and inform the class of their decision. Their decision was then debated. The lesson was thus an exercise in more than merely reading. It also aimed at encouraging scholars' comprehension, thinking and debating skills. This is one example of the many original lessons which Mrs Mthimkhulu produced during the period of study. She frequently developed her own NIE lessons (independently of the MIE Teacher's guide). These lessons, as indicated by the above example, were not simplistic either, but involved scholars using a variety of their skills to complete the lesson.

About half the NIE lessons encouraged scholars to become familiar with the newspaper. In these lessons, scholars had to search the newspapers for particular items which were not immediately visible by quickly glancing through the

newspaper, but required some reading. They had ample time in which to do a NIE exercise. In the above exercise, the scholars spent one and a half hours on this task. Four to five scholars shared a newspaper per NIE exercise and frequently had the opportunity to browse through the newspaper while completing the exercise.

All except three lessons allowed the scholars to choose their own photograph, advert or newspaper article from the newspaper. Their choices often indicated what they found interesting in the newspaper. For instance, in an exercise where scholars had to cut out a newspaper photograph and discuss why they had chosen this photograph, many boys chose photographs of soccer stars, many girls chose photographs from the fashion pages and several chose adverts advertising household appliances, furniture and cars to complete the exercise⁵. Some of these interests are discussed in Chapter Six.

On three occasions, scholars were also given lessons on the structure, format and style of a newspaper. As mentioned earlier (cf p 33), a strand in NIE contends that this exercise, that is how stories are written and appear on the pages and how the newspaper is laid out, may help scholars to become familiar with the various components of the newspaper. Their relationship to the newspaper may be enhanced once they understand how the newspaper is produced. The failure to do any such activity would affect all their relationships with newspapers but especially those scholars who do not get the newspaper or those who get it very infrequently.

Yet this element of NIE was not fostered in the classrooms at Injabuloyesizwe, mostly due to the pressure on these teachers to complete the syllabus, the fact that they did not see this exercise as integral to the curriculum and because these teachers did not know much about the production process of a newspaper either. In this situation, they admitted they were ill-equipped to teach much about the newspaper with confidence. In the six months spent in the standard five classroom, this element of NIE was not stressed much.

On one occasion during the period under study, scholars made a newspaper

⁵ These exercises provided another opportunity for triangulation as it reinforced what I had observed in class when the scholars had been casually browsing through the newspaper and it reinforced the responses scholars gave me in interviews.

in a once-off exercise which I conducted. They had to write the stories, draw the pictures and adverts and give the paper a name. As much as possible, they were left to make their own decisions after a discussion which I led on the various components of newspapers and the various formats which a newspaper can take⁶. Again, this exercise was possible because scholars were given enough time to complete it. The scholars had to choose their own masthead, an editor and the topics for their own stories. As this only happened once in class, it is difficult to gauge what effect this had on their knowledge of how newspapers are produced.

At the beginning of the study, I tested their knowledge of the nature of the contents of the newspaper. This involved asking questions about *inter alia* the type of information contained in the newspaper and who decides what stories were going to appear in the newspaper. I then asked these questions again at the end of the study and noted an increased knowledge of the nature of the content of a newspaper. Whereas at the start of the study, only nine scholars knew what a headline was, by the end of the study 37 of the 41 scholars tested knew this term. Thirty of the 41 could find the weather page in the *Daily News* (Ilanga, which is the newspaper found in most scholars' homes, does not have a weather page). This indicates that in the six months of the study these scholars had become familiar with some aspects of the *Daily News's* contents. A quarter could find an advertisement for a job in the classified section compared to three scholars who knew where this was at the beginning of the year. Seventeen of 41 scholars could read a television schedule compared to the three scholars who could do so at the beginning of the year. At the end of the study, however, scholars still displayed little knowledge of the terms "caption", "masthead", "editor" and "horoscope".

These results were substantiated by the three lessons which Mrs Mthimkhulu also gave about the structure, format and contents of a newspaper during the study period. Scholars had to identify the type of contents found in a newspaper (i.e. the

⁶ This exercise on making a newspaper would probably not have occurred had I not been there. This is an instance where the mutual shaping which took place between myself and the subjects helped define my understanding of their understanding of the media and meaning was derived from this interaction (cf 8).

classifieds, horoscopes, film reviews) and find different items (i.e. a birth notice, find the date of the newspaper) in the newspaper. It became apparent that some scholars had learnt in the interim six months that the newspaper contained horoscopes and a classified section. Most scholars identified the term "headline" whereas at the beginning of the programme they had referred to it as a "topic". They had not remembered the term "editor".

These lessons indicated that scholars' knowledge of the contents of newspapers had improved throughout the study period, although not dramatically. Many more scholars could now identify certain elements which are contained in the newspaper. This is pertinent to scholars' relationship with the newspaper because the above findings suggest that regular access to newspapers in class allows the scholars to become familiar with its contents. This was substantiated by observations in class. Those scholars who indicated that they had newspapers at home displayed a greater knowledge of the contents of newspapers than those who did not receive newspapers at home. Those scholars who had indicated that they turned to the sports and employment sections in the newspapers did so with more ease than some scholars who did not get a newspaper at home.

There were three scholars whose reading behaviour indicated that they were not literate about how to read a newspaper. In keeping with the KAP model (cf p2), their lack of knowledge of newspapers and attitude towards this medium was reflected in their practice of reading the newspaper. These scholars remarked that they begin paging through the newspaper from the middle because they believe this is where important news is found. These scholars received a newspaper at home on average once every two weeks or once a month and stated that it takes them approximately two days to read the newspaper. The infrequency of receiving a newspaper, the length of time it takes for these scholars to consume the newspaper and their comments regarding its layout and contents indicates that these scholars' relationship with the newspaper is different to other scholars who have access to it more frequently. They could not describe the kinds of topics they like to read about in the newspaper. They were shy and unsure of themselves and thus tended to copy other scholars' answers in the interviews. Their exposure to newspapers more

frequently in class did improve their knowledge of the content of newspapers, although the tests I conducted indicated only slightly. Regular access thus seems to be a factor in determining the nature of scholars' relationships to newspapers.

From observations in class and questions which I posed, it was evident that scholars enjoyed using newspapers in the class. On a number of occasions, I noted that scholars continued to work on a NIE exercise during break time even when they were told to go outside and play. There were still approximately six or eight scholars who did not seem too interested in using newspapers in class. These scholars were the ones, however, who seldom participated much in class.

As mentioned earlier, the younger scholars were more fluent in English. In class I noticed that these scholars tended to be the natural leaders when engaged in a NIE activity and showed greater competency in completing a NIE exercise. They also read more complex articles than their older classmates. The following chapter includes scholars' views on why the use of the newspaper is more relevant to them than textbooks and explains why this relationship to newspapers is different from that with ordinary textbooks.

The above situation indicates that these scholars have a relationship with the newspaper. They had regular exposure to newspapers and the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the newspaper's style, content and format. Their knowledge of the newspaper increased over the study period and thus their relationship to the newspaper is defined by this greater knowledge. In keeping with the KAP concept, their knowledge of newspapers which they had gained from their regular exposure to newspapers had influenced their attitudes towards the newspaper which in turn influenced their practice of reading the newspaper in that they could identify the key elements which would lead them to read a story.

4.4 Impediments to scholars' relationships with newspapers in class

Scholars' relationships with newspapers were limited to some degree by factors beyond their control. As the study progressed, it became apparent that their relationship to the newspapers they use in class is dependent upon their school environment and to a greater extent, on the context of education in South Africa at

the present moment. While the latter warrants a study on its own, I make some comments about the environment and context at Injabuloyesizwe in particular.

From observations and discussions with teachers in class and at the monthly NIE workshops, it became clear that the methodology of NIE can inhibit scholars' relationship with the newspaper, because it posed various problems to teachers. Although the three standard five teachers had been NIE-trained and used NIE frequently, they were not all fully acquainted with the related methodology and pedagogy and this affected the frequency, nature and content of their lessons. The MIE Trust's training workshops encourage teachers to develop lesson plans on their own. From observations, only the most confident teachers, namely Mrs Mthimkhulu, and the principal, Mrs Cebekhulu, developed their own lessons and with the exception of a few lessons were clear as to the objective of the lessons.

The other teachers at Injabuloyesizwe relied on the teacher's guide prepared by the Media in Education Trust which provided a variety of lesson plans for teachers. These were limited in quantity and teachers were encouraged to use these as a stepping stone to developing their own lessons. Yet these teachers, unsure how to devise lessons and how they related to the syllabus, preferred not to change the manner in which they had been teaching for years, thereby limiting the potential for scholars' access to newspapers in class.

Furthermore, while Mrs Mthimkhulu found it relatively simple to teach English using the newspaper, she did not use it to teach Geography or Zulu in lessons where the newspaper would have been suitable. Neither did Mrs Mdluli use it more than once to teach maths, although it could have been used on numerous occasions. When I spoke to teachers about this, they stated that they were still learning about what is entailed by NIE and unsure whether the content of the lesson could be taught using a newspaper⁷. As regards the nature of the lessons, once or

⁷ This feeling was not restricted to the teachers at Injabuloyesizwe. Other teachers at NIE workshops I attended at Esikhawini during the six months felt that they lacked the skills to do these lessons with ease. Furthermore, some subject teachers, especially history, maths and science teachers, had difficulty developing lessons from the newspaper and thus abandoned the idea after using the few lessons provided in the teacher's guide.

twice teachers tried to teach using the newspaper but as they seemed unsure of the underlying philosophy of NIE, it was unclear how the lesson fitted in with the curriculum. When I spoke to these teachers about the purpose of the lesson, they stressed that this was a lesson using the newspaper, which it was. NIE philosophy, however, stresses that newspapers must only be used in class if they are relevant to the curriculum. In one case, scholars had to use the newspaper to portray pictorially the directions from their school to town. While it was visually interesting for them to do, it was not clear how this fitted in with the curriculum given that scholars were not required to talk or write about the exercise, but merely to stick various images on paper in whatever way they wished.

The lack of confidence as to what is entailed by using newspapers in class also became prevalent when teachers had to teach about the medium. Mrs Mthimkhulu found it particularly hard to teach about the newspaper as she was not that familiar with the newspaper herself. This may be partly due to the fact that she has received no training in this field. None of the other teachers even attempted to teach this lesson.

The teachers' inability to fully comprehend NIE pedagogy and sometimes their unwillingness to change to NIE pedagogy can also be explained in terms of their own background in education. As NIE involves abandoning traditional teaching methods where the teacher is all-knowing and adopting a method where scholars play a greater role in the learning experience, two teachers seemed to find it threatening to abandon the very methods which had got them through their own secondary and tertiary schooling. These teachers stated they did not want to open debates in class which might involve issues about which they as teachers may know nothing. They were afraid of the discovery method approach because if scholars wrote about issues which these teachers considered sensitive (such as pornography), they, as teachers, would be embarrassed. NIE pedagogy also encourages teachers to deal with these sensitive issues and yet I observed that there were unspoken limits to what was considered acceptable in scholars' NIE work. One scholar who had pasted a photograph in his NIE workbook of a woman sitting on a man's lap while the man fondled her was caned without receiving an explanation as to what was

unacceptable about the photograph. Yet NIE pedagogics would see this as an appropriate opportunity to discuss human relations with the class. In this instance, this teacher was not capable of recognising the opportunity to initiate this discussion in a natural way. Furthermore, adopting a new methodology when the state of education is in a flux was also not seen as viable by a teacher who felt that until the education system is more settled, she would continue to use the methods she had used before.

The demands of the curriculum often also impeded the scholars' relationship with the newspaper. Some teachers felt pressurised to complete the syllabus and while some NIE exercises such as how to make a newspaper were regarded as fun to do, they were not always strictly regarded as part of the curriculum. In addition, under pressure to complete the syllabus, the mess created in the classroom⁸ and the time-consuming nature of NIE lessons were inhibiting factors, according to all the teachers. Even Mrs Mthimkhulu, who regarded herself as a staunch supporter of NIE, sometimes remarked over the mess and time-consuming nature of NIE lessons as a problem. This did impede the scholars' relationship with the newspaper as it denied them more frequent exposure to the medium. Yet the exposure they did get, had a positive effect on certain aspects of their relationship to newspapers (see Chapter Six). With few management skills, often these teachers preferred to resort to a teaching pedagogy which they knew, trusted and which maintained order in the classroom.

Thus from some of these teachers' perspectives, NIE was seen as a risky venture and best left alone. This meant missed opportunities for scholars to develop a relationship with the newspaper, because NIE can be seen as an opportunity to familiarise scholars with this medium and for them to discover the relevancy of the newspaper to their lives. Mrs Mthimkhulu's commitment to NIE, however, allowed her class to develop a more comprehensive relationship with the newspaper, even though some of the other teachers at her school felt NIE was not suited to their way

⁸ Teachers complained that cutting up newspapers made a mess in the classroom which they then had to find time to clean up as there were no janitors at the schools.

of teaching.

The teachers' decisions to use magazines more frequently than newspapers was another factor which might have impeded how scholars relate to the newspaper. As the magazine was used in both schools, I had no opportunity to study a class where only newspapers were present. More frequent access to newspapers may have improved their relationship with newspapers over and above the manner in which their present access affected it, but further research would have to be conducted. The main reason for using *Bona* more frequently was that many of the NIE exercises the teacher did with her class involved visual images and the photographs in the newspaper cannot compete with the colourful photographs in *Bona*⁹.

Language was another factor which impeded how scholars' related to the newspapers they used in class. As mentioned earlier, the two Zulu-language newspapers failed to arrive after the first month and in any case, the teachers encouraged the use of English-language newspapers in order to develop the scholars' English language abilities. Yet from my observations in the classroom and discussions with the scholars, it was evident that much of what the teacher says in English is not understood by the scholars. This language barrier did affect the way in which scholars relate to newspapers in the classroom situation because it discouraged scholars from reading the more complex articles. Furthermore, even when reading short articles scholars would identify difficult words, write them down in their books and have to use the dictionary to find out the meaning. This was a laborious task and one which scholars never completed. Faced with this task each time they used the text in the newspaper and given the choice, most scholars used photographs, adverts or captions in order to complete a NIE exercise. Ten scholars do mention later that the English in many of the newspaper articles is often less complex than the English in some of their textbooks. Nonetheless, it was still more difficult than the Zulu-language *Bona*.

⁹ The use of magazines more frequently than newspapers is problematic if the newspaper industry wants scholars to develop a relationship with newspapers, especially for those scholars who only encounter newspapers in the classroom.

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As relates to NIE pedagogy, I found that it was also important that scholars and their teachers establish a working relationship based on mutual respect as NIE requires more co-operation from scholars than normal textbook teaching. This is because scholars often have to take control of their learning experience in the form of working together in groups or merely remembering to bring certain materials such as glue and a pair of scissors to school. If there is no co-operation in the classroom, scholars do not get enough time to interact with newspapers. In one lesson, the lack of glue and scissors at school meant that the teacher's pair of scissors and glue stick had to be shared among 43 scholars with the result that the objective of the lesson was never achieved because of the time-consuming exercise of cutting and pasting.

Injabuloyesizwe scholars responded well to instructions and the majority were confident enough to take charge of activities where they were required to perform a task without their teacher's assistance. They always sought assurance from their teacher that their work was up to standard. It was in this atmosphere that NIE took place in this classroom and it was effective in fostering scholars' relationship with the newspaper because scholars were able to interact with newspapers in an environment which was based on co-operation.

Another factor vital to how the newspaper is used in the classroom and ultimately how the scholar relates to the newspaper is the structure and operation of the school's hierarchy¹⁰. This study did consider the position of power which school principals hold in schools traditionally. Its findings illustrate the importance of principals and teachers alike in supporting the NIE-trained teachers. This would apply to the introduction of any new methodology or pedagogical approach, not only NIE. The impact of the school principal at Injabuloyesizwe on the teachers undergoing NIE training cannot be underestimated. She encouraged her teachers to attend teacher training workshops. She attended the monthly NIE workshops, showing a keen interest in the concept and developing NIE lessons herself. At these

¹⁰ At the top of this hierarchy is the circuit inspector to whom the school principal reports. Inspectors' impact on how the scholars relate to the medium is far-removed, yet significant. But this study does not consider them in depth other than to remark that they may ultimately affect such a programme and the scholars. Further research could be done in this area.

workshops she asked many questions, spoke to other teachers about their NIE experiences and supported her teachers at school by offering her ideas on a particular lesson. This kind of support is critical to the survival of NIE as it provides teachers with the incentive to continue using the concept. And if they do not abandon the concept, then scholars like those in Mrs Mthimkhulu's class have the opportunity to interact with the newspaper and so develop a relationship with the newspaper.

Mrs Cebekhulu was interested in consultation and negotiation with her teachers on school matters. Teachers at Injabuloyesizwe volunteered to take part in the NIE training workshops which might explain their more frequent use of newspapers in class. The need for organisation in the implementation of any new methodology is imperative and given the traditional hierarchy of the school, this organisation and discipline needs to be seen as coming from the principal. It was my experience that teachers look towards their principal for organisation and discipline first and if it is not forthcoming, tend to allow the situation at school to slide into disorder. Mrs Cebekhulu's organisation ensured the smooth running of the school. As NIE is a time-consuming exercise requiring careful planning beforehand, it is important that the school be organised so that NIE can operate effectively and allow scholars to develop a relationship with the newspaper.

While there are many other factors as well which have been excluded, the above illustrate the tradition in which schools operate. From the comments scholars made and my observations, scholars are more enthusiastic about their school work when it involves using the newspaper. They could, of course, be excited about using almost any alternative methodology other than the usual textbook teaching, but some did point out factors relevant to this methodology which are discussed in the next chapter.

5. Conclusion

This chapter set out to explain how the context of this study affected the scholars' relationship to the newspaper. It details the Injabuloyesizwe scholars' access to newspapers at home and at school through the NIE programme. These scholars'

consumption of the newspaper at home and at school and the factors which inhibit and enhance their relationship with the newspaper have been covered in detail. It also became apparent that their relationship to newspapers in the classroom is affected by the context of education at their school. The attitudes of teachers and principals to the NIE programme and the organisation of the schools affects these scholars and their relationship to the newspaper. Chapter Seven discusses these issues with regards to scholars from the other school in this case study, Esikhawini Higher Primary School. Although it was not intentional, this school's organisation and staff attitudes contrast strongly with Injabuloyesizwe Primary School. While there were impediments to developing this relationship, observations in class indicated that there were items of interest to them in the newspapers. These items of interest and the extent to which the scholars' relationship with newspapers was developed in the classroom are discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter Six

The relevance of newspapers to Injabuloyesizwe scholars

1. Introduction

As the Injabuloyesizwe scholars' initial access to newspapers has been discussed in a previous section, this section looks at how scholars use the medium once they have access to it. This information was gained from interviews and observations in classes using newspapers. This chapter reviews how scholars enter the newspaper, moves on to why newspapers are relevant to them and concludes by looking at whether they see themselves as an audience of newspapers and their understanding of the role of newspapers in society.

2. A detailed investigation into their newspaper use

In considering the relationship which scholars have with newspapers, it is important to consider the manner in which scholars approach these publications once they have access, because this can provide pointers as to what attracts scholars to newspapers in the first place. The following findings shed some light on these issues.

2.1 Entry into the newspaper

It became evident that generally scholars use two modes of entering the newspaper. Those who have a particular interest, such as sport or employment, turn to these pages immediately. Most, however, start at the front page and are guided by the various devices newspapers employ to entice readers to read an article. These include photographs, headlines, bold type, the use of colour and captions. In both modes, scholars are selective in their reading and either scan the entire newspaper or scan the sports or employment pages. Only two said they read the entire newspaper. Figure E indicates both the various devices which scholars use or the subject areas which draw scholars to page through the newspaper¹.

¹ These questions on how scholars read the newspaper formed part of my triangulation of methods as I was able to deduce from the answers given whether scholars in fact did read the newspaper as earlier questioning had revealed and it provided verification of different scholars' interests. I tried to compile questions which would influence scholars to answer spontaneously

Figure E

How scholars read the newspaper	Number of scholars
Read entire newspaper	2
Scan front page photograph	2
Scan headlines throughout	3
Scan from beginning looking at headlines and photographs	8
Scan from the middle of newspaper	3
Scan sports pages only	8
Scan sports pages then turn to beginning to scan front pages for headlines and photographs	5
Scan employment section	2

As Figure E indicates, a third of the scholars use one or more of the devices employed to get readers to read on. Yet these are ineffective if the reader feels the newspaper has nothing to offer him or her. As Garcia states, it is content, and not the tools employed by newspapers to entice readers, which is the primary motivator for reading since people read newspapers for specific purposes [1991: 64].

Yet, since all but two scholars are selective readers, these devices are relevant given that merely two scholars say they read the entire newspaper. Fry [in Garcia 1991: 67] suspects that all readers are scanners and that scanners are not lazy or illiterate, but rather intelligent and experienced readers who have developed the tools to absorb information quickly. This was confirmed by some of these scholars' behaviour towards newspapers in class and their knowledge of newspapers. Those 13 scholars interested in sport did not read the entire sports pages but scanned them to find out information which interested them, whether it be a photograph, a list of soccer fixtures or the soccer log. In contrast, the two scholars who said they read the entire newspaper had not learnt the art of scanning.

and honestly and not be influenced to give me the answers they thought I sought.

Thus having looked at the way in which scholars first encounter the newspaper and why they begin to turn its pages, it is necessary to focus in more detail on the topics which make this medium relevant to them given the presence of television and magazines in the lives of many of them. Most scholars stated that they read the newspaper for news. Asked to define the term "news", scholars said it was current information based on actual events. Figure F provides greater insight into the scholars' more subjective preferences for news. Other than sports news and fashion, no significant difference between the sexes is noted. More male scholars than female scholars cited sport as a reason why they read the newspaper and only females expressed an interest in fashion.

Figure F

Reasons for reading a newspaper	Number of scholars
For sport news	12
For information regarding accidents	5
For local news about Esikhawini, Richard's Bay and/or Empangeni	5
For news about South Africa	4
For world news	4
For adverts on food and fashion	2
For sensational news	1

These topics provide some insight as to why scholars find newspapers relevant. The following section expounds on these areas of interest and other aspects of the newspaper which are relevant to scholars.

2.2 Why newspapers are relevant to their lives

The majority of scholars feel strongly that there is a need for both television and newspapers in their lives². Television provides the entertainment they desire,

² Further research is needed into the place of radio in their lives, given that the 1995 AMPS figures indicated this to be the most widely used media among black South Africans (cf p 68).

newspapers fulfil a more serious role by providing relevant information as indicated in Figure F. Given that newspapers tend to be the most prevalent written mass medium in scholars' homes, the importance of this written form of communication cannot be underestimated, especially for the 15 scholars who receive newspapers at home but do not have television sets. Eight scholars did not feel newspapers are necessary, yet all of them have television sets at home and none of them are exposed to newspapers at home and thus may not see the relevance of newspapers in their lives. While magazines have a strong presence in their homes, they are read mostly for their entertainment value and for the colourful photographs which scholars often cut out and keep. Newspapers do, as noted earlier, face more competition from the *Bona* magazine used in NIE lessons at school.

Television, plays a prominent role in the lives of these scholars, but they are aware of the limitations of the medium. Many of these limitations have to do with the fact that these scholars take a little longer to assimilate televisual information, either because of language difficulties or the complex nature of the information being disseminated. Some of the reasons why newspapers are relevant to scholars concern these limitations and will be discussed below. While newspapers are relevant to most scholars for reasons outlined below, their relative youth may hinder this medium from being as fully utilised as it could be with an older group of adolescents³. However, the newspaper has attractions which are specific to these scholars precisely because of their youthfulness. While the following headings are aimed at highlighting the main points, they are inter-related and should not be viewed as independent units.

a) Sports news in the newspaper is preferable to that on television

As Figures E and F indicated, sports news is one of the reasons why many scholars pick up the newspaper. This was particularly evident in class. As soon as newspapers were handed out to scholars, many of them turned to the sports pages

³ The Newspaper Advertising Bureau's 1978 study found that as young people grow older they become interested in a wider world and thus in different parts of the newspaper.

immediately, often without glancing at the front or intermediate pages. For 10 scholars, newspapers have value because they publish the weekend's sports fixtures and logs. This allows these avid sports fans to keep track of their favourite teams and plan their lives so that they can watch their chosen games on television. As one scholar stated:

Newspapers are my guide to the sports teams which are going to be on television on the weekend and so newspapers are important to me.

- Eavrie Dlamini, 15.

For these 10 scholars, this is the sole reason they look at the newspaper in the first place. For three other scholars the value of newspapers' sports coverage is that newspapers allow readers to choose the sports articles they would like to read and to read them in their own time. Sport on television is not as easily accessible. Television sports time slots are also sometimes awkward for television viewers which is why newspapers are important. As one scholar remarks:

I can't watch soccer at any time because there are specific time slots and many times these time slots do not necessarily show me the sport I want to watch which is soccer.

- Sabelo Dube, 13.

Four scholars contend that television tends to show the sporting highlights more often whereas newspapers offer a more detailed play-by-play account of a game.

All of the above does not detract from the visual attractiveness of television. Although these scholars find newspapers' sports coverage relevant for reasons outlined above, watching sport being played live is very attractive to seven scholars. As one scholar comments:

The colour and live action makes television very attractive when watching sport.

- Xolile Mathenjwa, 12.

These scholars say they enjoy the visual, active impact of television over newspaper photographs, particularly as newspaper photographs are static and sometimes of poor quality and hence unclear. Despite these comments about television sports coverage, the newspaper is relevant to them as stated above. Furthermore, three scholars did mention that regional newspapers publish information about the provincial teams which television does not cover. They did, however, criticize the

local newspaper, the *Zululand Observer*, for failing to cover the local township sports teams adequately. Thus, the relationship which most of these scholars have to newspapers is dependent to some extent on the sports news they obtain from the paper. As the above indicates, if there were no sports articles in newspapers, most of these scholars would not look at a newspaper.

b) The newspaper's value is in its coverage of local/regional news

The issue of local content features high on the list when it comes to how the scholar relates to the newspaper, as Figure F suggests. When scholars were asked to define the term "news", five scholars defined news in terms of information about local events. "Local content" tended to be defined by the scholars as incorporating regional (i.e. the province of Kwazulu-Natal) content because when asked where they get their local news from, seven scholars mentioned *Ilanga*, a regional newspaper. Thus this section uses the scholars' definition of local content to incorporate both regional and local (i.e. Esikhawini/Empangeni/Richard's Bay) news.

The proliferation of local and regional newspapers in the homes of these scholars indicates an interest bias towards local news coverage. As Figure C indicated, *Ilanga*, a regional bi-weekly Zulu newspaper, and the *Zululand Observer*, a weekly English local newspaper published in Empangeni, are the most frequently bought newspapers in scholars' homes. While these newspapers might not be the choices of scholars had they bought a newspaper themselves, scholars comment that *Ilanga*'s focus on regional and local news is relevant to them. Five scholars mention that national papers do not enjoy much allegiance from them because of these newspapers' failure to cover sufficient local or regional news⁴. This does not mean that scholars are not interested in national or world news. As Figure F indicates,

⁴ These scholars comments indicated that they were aware that television news is incapable of providing them with sufficient local news which was all the more reason why, in their opinion, regional Kwazulu-Natal newspapers such as *UmAfrika*, *Daily News*, *Ilanga* and the *Mercury* should be fulfilling this task.

these two forms of news are important to scholars, but given that many have not travelled far from their home town, the importance of local news cannot be underestimated.

The value of local news is manifold. Many remark that it is relevant because they can identify places within their immediate area and thus the news does not seem so abstract to them. Only ten scholars have travelled as far as Durban, approximately 185 kilometres away. Locations elsewhere in South Africa and especially abroad are therefore hard to identify with because these scholars have no knowledge of these areas. Thus:

This is not to say that we are not interested in news about South Africa but local news is more relevant, because we know more about our environment.

- Precious Fakude, 13.

In class, I noted that scholars were more interested in the *Zululand Observer* than in reading the *Daily News*, which substantiates the above quote. Furthermore, their interest in this newspaper in class is explained by the following quote which echoes many scholars strong belief in the "need to know" local news:

Overseas news is important but local news is even more important because we live in this area and need to know what is happening here.

- Christopher Ngema, 16.

The strong belief in a "need to know" is based on scholars' belief that ignorance about certain local events can be harmful to them. In the light of this, five scholars deem local news to be important to them because it provides information about AIDS and diseases such as cholera and typhoid which might occur in the area. With this information in hand, these scholars believe they can take active steps to avoid possible infection. Local news may also provide scholars with information regarding local areas where acts of violence threaten the community. Information about such events can warn the community of the dangers of entering these areas. Two other scholars stressed that other local news such as a possible strike, while not causing them harm directly, can affect their lives indirectly and thus it is important for them to know.

Nine scholars said that local news is important because it publishes

information which could identify wrongdoers in the community (they referred to identikits and other information contained in police briefs in the local newspaper). Questioned further, these scholars reveal that local news is important to them because it gives them a sense of being able to possibly assist their community.

A further reason why newspapers' local coverage is relevant to these scholars has to do with television's failure to cover local news adequately. Fifteen scholars claim that television's main downfall is that it does not cover local or regional news or if it does, not sufficiently often. As one scholar comments:

Television news always concentrates on places far away which we don't know, whereas newspapers write about KwaZulu Natal.

- Phakamani Ndunakazi, 13.

This claim substantiates an international study in which 64 per cent of respondents said newspapers are their primary source for local news. Only 32,4 per cent turned to television for local news [Little 1995: 26]. Some scholars remark, however, that the *Zululand Observer's* news coverage of Esikhawini is inadequate. Responding to questions about what they would write about if they were journalists, three scholars said they would write about local sports teams as they felt the *Zululand Observer* does not report on this area adequately. However, six other scholars disagreed but believed that more could be written on working and living conditions in neighbouring townships. Over 50 per cent of the scholars from Injabuloyesizwe, however, have never thought about additional issues they would like to see included in a local newspaper. None of these scholars received the local newspaper at home. Thirty per cent of these scholars said they hear about local events from hearsay. Twelve scholars admitted they had never heard of the *Zululand Observer* before encountering it in lessons in class. Three other scholars say they had seen this newspaper but had never read it before using it in class lessons.

The above explication above illustrates the importance of local news, despite the fact that few scholars' parents buy the local newspaper.

c) Local newspapers write about local young people

Most scholars are particularly interested in local news if there is a youth angle to

these local stories. As most scholars had no access to the *Zululand Observer* at home, the presence of this newspaper at school highlighted their interest in youth-related articles. As they paged through the newspaper, many frequently stopped to look at the photographs of scholars, although most of these scholars were from schools in Empangeni or Richard's Bay. Thus one of the reasons why newspapers are relevant is also one of the criticisms which the scholars levelled at newspapers. Five scholars who receive the *Zululand Observer* at home say they page through it looking for photographs of young people. They mention a photograph of their school choir which had appeared. Furthermore, when all respondents were asked to describe the kinds of stories they would write about if they were journalists working at a newspaper, most of them mentioned stories related to their school environment and general leisure activities. When asked to describe what they did not like about newspapers, many mentioned the fact that newspapers did not write enough about or for young people.

d) Newspapers provide more news which affects scholars personally

Scholars' reasons for finding the newspaper relevant often indicated that the news they are interested in is news which could affect them personally and that this is not always available on television.

As Figure F indicates, scholars are interested in national and international news. Further questioning revealed that some scholars show an interest in this news because they believed it could affect their lives. In terms of national news, the five scholars who are interested in news about vehicle accidents are a case in point. The scholars revealed that this information is important to them because it enables them to find out if members of their family or friends have been involved in a vehicle accident. All five of these scholars provided examples of how they had found out about relatives involved in such incidents via information published in newspapers. I noted that they showed great interest in these stories in the newspapers in class too. When asked whether television could not have provided this information too, these scholars stated that while television may have reported a vehicle accident if many people had been involved or if the nature of the accident was in any way

bizarre, it might not consider reporting on an accident if it did not display these characteristics.

The other five scholars who are interested in information regarding local areas torn by violence or information indicating the presence of a disease or virus in the area, also indicate that news which could affect them personally is relevant to them and that this information is often only available in regional or local newspapers.

e) Photographs

Twenty-three scholars are of the opinion that photographs in the newspaper are important to them. The relevance of photographs to some scholars was confirmed by observations in class and Figure E which indicates that photographs are the reason why approximately 14 scholars first begin to turn the pages of the newspaper. Four point out that images often help them to gain an understanding of a news item. They criticize television news for being quick to move on to another news story without allowing viewers to appreciate the visual images in a news story. This comment highlights the importance which these scholars place on photographs to provide further understanding of a news item. Their relationship with newspapers is thus dependent to some extent on the photograph's ability to convey information about a news event. These scholars, however, are careful to point out that photographs range in importance. Not all photographs are important to them. A male scholar pointed out that photographs of fashion models in the newspaper are unimportant to him because they do not provide information which is relevant to his daily life. Five scholars classified a photograph of a vehicle accident as important. One of these scholars explains why:

A photograph of a car accident is of value to us because we can perhaps identify our family among the victims. - Thembisile Nyawo, 19.

The above quote echoes the feelings of the other scholars who point out that photographs enhance a story by providing additional details which might not be in the story accompanying the photograph. It also became apparent from comments which scholars made that photographs which are relevant to them often depend

upon their own interests. Two female scholars disagreed with the comment made by a male scholar above concerning fashion models. As they were more interested in fashion than the male, they were interested in photographs of fashion models.

Furthermore, in contrast to television images, some of these scholars contend that newspapers allow them to look at photographs at leisure, whereas television images are transient. As stated:

The problem with television is that one is restricted from feasting one's eyes on a picture because each news item has to be brief in order to fit into the half hour news slot. In print, one can make out what is going on in the picture.

- Thobile Ntshangase, 16.

Four scholars state that photographs make a story credible because a photograph verifies the claims made in a news article. As this scholar remarks, "photographs are important because they show the reader that something actually happened."

Four other scholars are adamant that a photograph must accompany an article otherwise they would not read it. When questioned about those newspaper articles which are not accompanied by a photograph, two scholars state that it does not concern them because if the story is an important one, it will definitely appear on television complete with visuals. To these two scholars, newspapers are relevant, but they are relevant in combination with television. For those 15 scholars without television, photographs in newspapers are their only source of obtaining a picture of what occurred and thus very relevant to them.

Seven scholars, however, state that they are only interested in photographs if they are in colour and of good quality. This is one of the reasons teachers use the *Bona* magazine as the photographs from the newspaper cannot compete with photographs in *Bona* for colour and clarity, although there are colour photographs in the newspaper. Garcia states [1991: 65] that readers are not only accustomed to colour but they are also accustomed to quality colour in television and magazines and that as colour is fully integrated into the culture of communication, if it is used poorly readers recognise this. The Eyetrac research, however, cautioned that it is the content of the photo which is just as important as colour [Garcia 1991: 1]. This concurs with the above comments made by scholars regarding the relative

importance of photographs. Cognisance of these factors is necessary if it is desired that scholars develop a relationship with newspapers, especially in the case of those scholars who only encounter newspapers in the classroom. Furthermore, if photographs in newspapers are to compete successfully with the visuals of television, the above pointers must be kept in mind.

The above comments about photographs illustrate that for many scholars their relationship with newspapers is much influenced by photographs in the newspaper. Since photographs are so important to scholars for reasons outlined above, these visual images could be important in developing the scholars' relationship to the medium. If scholars are of the opinion that photographs in the newspaper are useful to them, provide them with information vital to them and interest them; they may interact with newspapers frequently and their relationship with newspapers may improve. Since observations in class and interviews with scholars yielded the information that most scholars enter the newspaper by looking at photographs first, this method of possibly enhancing their relationship has value.

f) Transient nature of television versus the durability, permanence and convenience of newspapers.

Although television is popular, it does have limitations, one of which is its transient nature. Seven scholars mention that the predetermined television news time slots are not always convenient for them. Hence newspapers are more important than television for news gathering as they can read articles at their convenience.

The transience of the spoken word was also problematic. Genzwein highlights this stating that the reader can turn back the pages or take up the text again and re-read it if his or her attention strays. The spoken word, however "flies away" and usually it is not possible to listen to it again if it has not been understood [1980: 174]. As one scholar said:

Newspapers are better than television because the words are always there, unlike television where the words and pictures go away.

- Bhekithemba Cele, 14.

The fact that the newspaper could be re-read was particularly relevant to these

scholars, as they say they do not always understand an article during the first reading. This is either because the terminology is too difficult or because it is not written in their vernacular. One scholar stated:

Even if you have television, you need a newspaper because you can re-read it if you don't understand something. - Muziwenkosi Khuswayo, 12.

Newspapers are thus relevant to these scholars because they are ever-present and conveniently fit into their lives. They can be read at leisure and the photographs viewed at leisure too. Another South African study also found that respondents found newspapers relevant because they are hard copy and can be put down and picked up later [Nasionale Pers n.d.: 2]. These comments are relevant when considering their relationship with the newspaper because it follows that if scholars feel that the medium is accommodating, then they are likely to use it. Furthermore, if they return to the medium because they feel it accommodates their needs, they are likely to become familiar with it, better understand what it may offer and realise its benefits.

g) Pace of television news reading is too fast

Eight scholars comment that the pace of the television news reader is often too fast for them to comprehend the news. In contrast, these scholars could read the newspaper at their own pace. This point is relevant, because as they use the newspaper more, they are becoming familiar with it and, as evident above, realise some of the benefits of being a newspaper reader.

h) Too little time given to each item on TV

For four scholars, television devotes too little air time to each news item, which means they cannot always comprehend it. This is relevant as it again reinforces the important role which newspapers play in comparison to television. If scholars are turning towards newspapers because television news is too fast paced for them, it indicates they find newspapers relevant because they do not exhibit this shortcoming.

i) Newspapers provide more detailed, in-depth news

While eight scholars state that they understand that time constraints make it impossible for television to present more than the highlights of a story, they say that newspapers are relevant to them precisely because they provide more details. One scholar who does not have a television set at home sums up the relevance of newspapers, saying "I prefer reading newspapers as they explain the beginning, middle and end of a story".

A national survey also found that readers believe that newspapers provide more depth to the news and tell the whole story with much detail in contrast to television which only provides the headlines [Nasionale Pers n.d.: 2] The scholars' comments illustrate that they value the newspaper as a medium which does not only summarise the day's events but offers some analysis of these events. Stark [in Garcia 1991: 66] indicates that newspapers cannot convey information in the rapid manner which television does. These scholars agree, but like Stark, they perceive newspapers to be an extension of television by providing an explanation and analysis of events which appear on television⁵. This is vital for those who do not watch the news frequently on television or, as is the case with 15 scholars, who do not have access to a television set. One scholar had heard of a strike on television three days into the strike, when it was only briefly mentioned on television. She explained that she had obtained background information as to how it started and the current proceedings in *Ilanga*. Those scholars interested in reading about accidents in the newspaper added that the newspaper provided in print the details, including the names of the victims and sometimes a photograph and that television news did not have time for all these details. In this context, these scholars' relationship with newspapers is dependent upon newspapers providing some record and analysis of events, a task which they feel television fails to accomplish.

⁵ Cultural anthropologist Jennifer James takes this one step further when she states that to be effective communicators in the Cyber Age, newspapers must provide a framework that affords readers some historical perspective from which to view world events. Newspapers can supply a "context for the chaos" caused by rapid technological and cultural changes [Terry 1995: 1]. The extent to which these scholars were cognisant of the newspaper's role in giving a "context for the chaos" is unknown and would require further research.

j) Newspaper readers have the freedom to choose what they would like to read and a greater variety to choose from.

Ten scholars prefer reading the newspaper rather than watching television because they are free to choose what they would like to read. In contrast, "on television one has to watch the entire news broadcast from beginning to end."

As mentioned earlier when discussing their entry into the newspaper, many male scholars read only the sport pages in the newspaper. On television news, they have to wait until the end of the broadcast for sports news. In some instances, the television sports stories for the day may not make a mention of the sport on which they seek information. These scholars believe newspapers are more relevant to them as they offer a variety of sport stories and provide choices as to which story they would like to read. The Nationale Pers survey [n.d: 2] also noted that respondents had said that newspapers offered the reader a broader base of subjects to choose from than television which is why the newspaper was preferred. One scholar had the following to say about using newspapers in class: "Using newspapers in class is more fun because I am not forced to read a particular story".

When given the opportunity to choose their own story for a lesson in class, scholars tended to choose an article which reflected their interests and did so with more enthusiasm than they displayed to the lessons involving the ordinary textbook.

k) Newspapers contain useful advertisements

From discussions and observation, scholars are intrigued by many advertisements. Two scholars, upon receiving their newspaper, turned to the employment section as they are interested in the type of opportunities being advertised most frequently. They believe this will serve to guide them in their career choice when they leave school. Another scholar also indicated that the employment advertisements interested him. These three scholars (all aged 13) mention that both their parents have been unemployed at some stage. This had made them concerned about their own future which is why they feel these adverts are relevant to them. This is a small

percentage but considering the ages of most of the scholars in this study, this element of a newspaper may not be immediately relevant to most of them.

Raundelen and Steen's research [1994] also indicates the concern which many young people have about their futures which is expressed in their desire to see more information on careers published in newspapers. They note that the scholars feel concerned about the future and believe that the only way to secure their future is to have a good education and a good job. While the age of the Swedish and Norwegian scholars is on average two years older than the scholars at Injabuloyesizwe, this comment is still noteworthy (cf p 45).

Two female scholars who say they help their mothers with the grocery shopping, maintain that newspapers are relevant because they advertise the sales at certain stores. From observations in class, however, a much larger number of scholars are interested in advertisements. Many of them peruse the flyers inserted in newspapers or the advertisements on the pages of the newspaper. When given the freedom to choose photographs from the newspaper on which to base an essay, many chose photographs from advertisements selling such items as cars, furniture, food or clothing.

1) The newspaper's language is more accessible to scholars

One of the limitations of television involves the language it uses. While there are news broadcasts in Zulu on television, the pace of news reading and the sometimes complex technology is often to the disadvantage of these scholars. These scholars thus rely on newspapers for their news. As the majority of scholars receive *Ilanga*, a Zulu-language newspaper at home, they are reading the paper in their mother tongue. In this situation, if the language is too technical or complex, scholars say they can show their siblings or parents the words in the newspaper and ask for help.

The situation in the classroom is different, however. The two Zulu-language newspapers failed to arrive in Esikhawini after the first month and thus scholars were exposed to the two English-language newspapers on a weekly basis. Teachers regarded the presence of English newspapers as an opportunity to improve their class's English, an attitude shared by other principals who had attended a meeting

hosted by Natal Newspapers and had insisted that newspaper material be only printed in English because their scholars had difficulty with the language. The English language newspapers did, however, pose problems with regard to how scholars relate to newspapers. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, many of these scholars are not fully conversant in English and experienced problems with written English too. While teachers were available to help, the scholars' lack of fluency did impede their access to some news as they tended to avoid articles which were too long and articles, like editorials, which tended to use more complicated terminology. While some scholars tended to read the captions to photographs, very few scholars were seen reading newspaper articles in English-language newspapers in their spare time at school, with the exception of some of the male scholars who read the sports pages. Despite these scholars problems with the English-language newspapers, 10 scholars who are not regarded as strong academic scholars noted that newspapers are easier to read than some of their textbooks. For these 10 scholars, this indicates the relevance of newspapers to them in the classroom.

m) Newspapers are textbooks with a difference

In class, most of the scholars see the newspaper as a textbook, but one which was quite different from the average textbook. In the context of the classroom, these texts are relevant for a number of reasons. To five scholars, the use of the newspaper in class provides a textbook which is relevant because it contains current information. As one scholar said: "In textbooks we learn old history, but newspapers update history."

Another scholar states that she likes to use newspapers in class because not only is the information dated but she can identify with it because as she says it concerns "things which happen in real life". If scholars had to choose an article to do a newspaper-related activity, many of them chose an item which also interested them. Some of these items included their favourite sports team or star, or the president, or were fashion-related. For some scholars, using the newspapers in class does give them the opportunity to quickly browse through it in search of their particular interest, while completing the task set by the teacher. For two scholars,

newspapers are preferred over normal textbooks because "we learn about current issues and learn about competitions".

For three scholars, the colourful photographs in the newspaper provides a change from their ordinary textbooks and thus according to them makes learning using this medium much more interesting to them.

The above points illustrate that the scholars' relationship with newspapers covers a range of factors which make the newspaper relevant to them. The newspaper is relevant to the 15 scholars who do not have access to television, but it is also relevant to those with television. Having discussed the relevance of newspapers to these scholars in their daily lives, the following section explores whether scholars see themselves as an audience of newspapers before exploring whether newspapers are relevant to them on a much larger scale.

3. Scholars as an audience of newspapers

As mentioned earlier, whether scholars see themselves as an audience of newspapers also defines their relationship with newspaper. From the above comments, it is clear that they view the newspaper as containing information relevant to them. There is much, however, which is not relevant to them. This is probably due to the fact that the main body of the newspaper is not written with these young people in mind. Taking their ages into account, however, these scholars do see themselves as an audience of newspapers to some extent.

Approximately half of the scholars did see themselves as an audience of the English-language newspaper, in spite of the language difficulties. Twenty scholars remark that they do not think the *Daily News* and *Zululand Observer* excludes them as young people. There is information in these newspapers which is relevant to them although they do make some recommendations regarding ways in which these newspapers could be more relevant to them. The above comments have highlighted these. Twelve of these scholars say that because these two newspapers are English-language newspapers, they do exclude those who cannot competently read English; namely the very young and the very old. Six scholars feel these newspapers are

aimed more specifically at white people who can read English much better.

Although it is a small minority, two scholars believe that photographs in the two English-language newspapers, *Daily News* and the *Zululand Observer* are mostly of white people, indicating that this was the market the newspapers wanted to reach. These scholars cite this as one of the reasons why these two newspapers are not that relevant to them.

4. The scholars' understanding of the role of newspapers in society

Less than a third of the scholars indicated that they had thought about the role which newspapers plays in society and these scholars spoke about their views during interviews spontaneously. Most of them showed little understanding of newspapers as a societal institution. Those scholars who did not understand my initial open-ended questions often asked me to repeat the question. In this instance, I tried to contextualise the question (see sections below) and some elucidation on the role of newspapers in society did occur when hypothetical situations were constructed. Constructing these hypothetical questions may have prompted some scholars to answer them, but 17 scholars chose not to answer because they said they did not understand the question or had no strong convictions about the claims made. The following is thus an account of what some scholars regard as the societal role of newspapers.

a) Newspapers as a watchdog for the people

Nineteen scholars do believe that newspapers have a moral responsibility to keep their publics informed⁶. This became evident after I put forward a hypothetical situation involving Dr Frank Mdlalose, the premier of Kwazulu-Natal, embezzling government funds and questioned scholars whether newspapers should publish this information.

Fifteen of these 19 scholars believe strongly that the public has the right to

⁶ The large number of scholars who responded to this issue did so because they were prompted by the hypothetical question I posed. Initially, only five scholars had raised the issue of the watchdog role of newspapers.

know what their leaders are up to in the interests of responsible governance. These scholars also felt that newspapers could be instrumental in getting rid of these corrupt people in top positions. Another scholar, however, feels that while it is important to publish this information for the public's benefit, it is also important that leaders have the opportunity to respond.

Three scholars are of the opinion that newspapers have the right to inform the public in the interest of good governance and also to protect the public's interests. This scholar uses an example from daily life to illustrate his point: "It is very important that the public hear of information such as pensioners not getting paid out because of corruption."

The role of watchdog is not exclusive to newspapers however - television and radio could fulfill this role too, but since newspapers are relevant in the lives of these scholars, it is important to them that newspapers fulfill this role. There are some scholars, however, who do not share their classmates' sentiments. Five scholars say that to publicise this information would be degrading to Dr Mdlalose and harm his reputation irreparably and thus the public need not know. Important figures are exempt from public criticism in their eyes.

b) News for the good of the people

While many scholars feel that the public has the right to be informed, there are also some who are sensitive to the politics of South Africa. When asked whether newspapers should publicly criticize Inkatha leader, Dr Buthelezi, for disagreeing with the State President, Mr Mandela, seven scholars are not so convinced that newspapers should publish this information as it might not benefit the public. They believe that these matters should be settled behind closed doors and not appear in print because they fear that this might incite hatred and foment political violence among warring factions.

The above scholars' comments involving the rights of individuals and institutions to access certain information highlights the issue of fairness and what role scholars regard newspapers as playing. On the right of the newspaper to criticize Mr

Buthelezi, two scholars believe that newspapers should remain neutral and instead of publishing both sides of the story, the newspaper should not write about it at all. Five other scholars maintain that newspapers should compromise fairness for the sake of peace and not publish such information. As one of these says: "It is not fair to criticize Mr Buthelezi because it would be provocative and the one party will feel threatened by the other."

Six other scholars say that newspapers should waive the right to fairness and journalists should be prevented from writing about such an incident because such an article would harm the leader's reputation. Three scholars feel that a newspaper which published this information would be seen as being partial to one party over the other and that this should be discouraged as it did not set a good example.

Despite the above comments, 11 scholars say they believe that newspapers report both sides of a story without adding extraneous information. Only one scholar feels that newspapers are sometimes biased in their coverage of an event, but this scholar could not provide an example. Whether the newspaper should explain both sides of the story is a question which bothered one scholar who was concerned about the way in which violence is portrayed in the newspaper. He is of the opinion that if too much detail is given away, one of the injured parties may take revenge on the other party. In this case, this information should be withheld from the public by not printing the information.

The above comments indicate that most of these young scholars had not given much thought to the role which newspapers play in society until various case scenarios were put to them. These young people define the role of the newspaper in a very practical way - that of disseminating certain information, indicating the importance which they place on particular types of news and the relevance of this information to them. When scenarios were constructed, however, most scholars did see the newspaper as a protector of public interests, a role which was very relevant to them. While it is important when considering their relationship with newspapers, the fact that they did not raise these issues themselves, indicates that the role of newspapers in society is not as relevant to them as those factors in section five. There is no definitive explanation why this role is less relevant, but it may have to do with

their relative youth. As the 1978 NAB study indicated, older scholars are more interested in press freedom than younger ones (cf p41). Further research may indicate if this is the case in South Africa.

The sensitivity of many scholars to the political situation in South Africa also defined what some saw as the role of newspapers. As indicated, these scholars felt that certain sensitive issues should not be published. Generally these scholars feel that the political role of newspapers is less relevant to them than the informational aspect.

5. Conclusion

This chapter spelt out how there are specific attractions in the newspaper which draw these young readers to the newspaper and define their relationship with this medium. The chapter has portrayed more clearly those attractions which are particular to the newspaper and which make this medium relevant to these young people. Further, while their understanding of the newspaper as a societal institution is limited, yet they do make some commentary on the role of newspapers in society. The following chapter discusses the situation at Esikhawini HP School.

Chapter Seven

The scholars of Esikhawini Higher Primary School

1. Introduction

This chapter focuses on the scholars at Esikhawini Primary School providing a profile of these scholars and their general media habits before reviewing their specific relationship to the newspaper both in and outside the classroom.

2. A profile of the scholars

The 38 scholars who form part of this survey are all in one class in standard five and form part of a larger class of seventy-six scholars. Time constraints prevented the entire class of seventy-six scholars from being interviewed, although I observed the entire class. These scholars either live in the formal township of Esikhawini or on the same tribal trust lands surrounding the township as their counterparts at Injabuloyesizwe. The ages of scholars range from 12 to 16 years. Figure G provides a breakdown of the various ages of this sample. The mean age of the sample is 13.15 years old, thus they are approximately the same age as the scholars at Injabuloyesizwe Primary School.

Figure G

Age of scholars	Number of scholars
12 years old	14
13 years old	10
14 years old	10
15 years old	2
16 years old	2

The sample was purposely divided evenly along gender lines with 19 female scholars and 19 male scholars in order to detect any significant gender differences in the research. Beyond the issue of sports, no significant gender differences were noted. The mother tongue of all these scholars is Zulu. I noted from observations and discussions with scholars, that their level of English was poorer than that of the

scholars at the other school. Simple questions about their well-being had to be translated before they were understood and although English is supposed to be the medium of instruction, most class instruction is in Zulu. Attempts to teach in English while I was in class had to be abandoned as scholars could not understand instructions. The issue of language is relevant and is discussed later.

3. The media habits of the scholars at Injabuloyesizwe

3.1 General comments

All scholars said they have either television, newspapers or magazines or combinations of these in their homes on a regular basis. This section looks at the access and implications of access to various media to the scholars' relationship to newspapers, because access to different media may tinge this relationship (as is evident later in the chapter). Again, radio is not accounted for and further research would be needed to consider this medium (cf p 95).

3.2 Newspaper reading

Unlike the scholars at Injabuloyesizwe, newspapers are not the most prevalent mass media form found in the homes of these scholars. In total, 23 of the 38 scholars report that they receive a newspaper in their homes at least once a month, but three stated they did not read the newspaper. Of these 23 scholars, two state that newspapers are the only form of the three mass media in their homes. In 13 of these 23 scholars' homes, newspapers are found in combination with television and magazines. Seven of the 23 homes have newspapers and television sets, but no magazines. In one home, newspapers and magazines are present, but not television.

Like the scholars of Injabuloyesizwe, newspapers are bought by relatives from shops near their place of work, or from the two supermarkets in Esikhawini. Precisely because their relatives bring home the newspaper affords these 23 scholars greater opportunities to access and relate to newspapers than the 15 scholars who do not receive newspapers at home.

The frequency with which these scholars read the newspaper depends upon how often their parents, siblings or relatives buy the newspaper (See Figure H).

These scholars have no choice as to which newspaper is brought home or how often as none of them buy their own newspaper.

Figure H

Number of scholars	Frequency of newspaper reading
13	Once a week
5	every two weeks
5	Could not pin down the frequency as it depends upon how often their relatives buy the newspaper

Reading time of a single copy takes anything from 5 minutes to 2 days, but most respondents spend 10-15 minutes reading or looking at the newspaper. These scholars also do not place reading or looking at a newspaper as one of their top priorities of things to do in a day, tending to browse through the newspaper when they have nothing better to do. Unlike the scholars from Injabuloyesizwe, the time spent looking or reading a newspaper is not connected to the age of the scholar.

Figure I represents the newspapers which scholars have at home. The results were obtained from questions asked at the beginning, middle and end of the study period¹.

The popularity of the newspaper, *Ilanga*, a regional bi-weekly Zulu newspaper, is consistent with findings at the other school, although by a much smaller margin. The other regional weekly Zulu newspaper, *UmAfrika*, is more popular among these scholars than amongst those from Injabuloyesizwe.

National newspapers are also more popular in these homes than in the homes of the scholars from Injabuloyesizwe. Scholars could provide no explanation for either of these trends as they did not purchase the newspapers.

¹ The number of newspapers cited exceeds the number of scholars who said they have newspapers at home. The reason for this can be ascribed to the presence of *Umlozi*, a free sheet delivered in the formal section of the township.

Figure I

Title of the newspaper	Number of scholars who access this newspaper
Regional newspapers	
Ilanga	8
UmAfrika	3
Daily News	1
Mercury	1
Local newspapers	
Zululand Observer	3
Umlozi	5
National newspapers	
Sowetan	3
City Press	2
Sunday Times	1

National newspapers are almost as popular as the local newspapers, the *Zululand Observer*, a weekly English local newspaper published in Empangeni and *Umlozi*, a weekly Zulu-language free sheet distributed to houses in the township by the *Zululand Observer*. The presence of a larger proportion of national newspapers compared with their presence on the Injabuloyesizwe scholars' list and the narrower gap between these newspapers and the local and regional newspapers may explain why these scholars place less emphasis on the relevance of local news to them later on in this chapter. The appearance of *Umlozi* on this list is largely due to the fact that more Esikhawini HP scholars live in the formal section of the township (where *Umlozi* is distributed) than those scholars who attend Injabuloyesizwe Primary School². The relevance of these newspapers to the scholars is discussed later in the chapter. Figure I also substantiates Scott's research [1992] that few people buy

² While I am aware that more scholars do receive *Umlozi* since they live in the formal section of the township, this is not reflected in the above figure, because this figure only represents the newspapers which scholars mentioned having in their homes.

English-language newspapers or magazines even in relatively affluent townships. The issue of language is referred to later on.

Like the scholars at Injabuloyesizwe, scholars at Esikhawini Higher Primary also had access to newspapers at school. Teachers at this school also received the *Zululand Observer* and the *Daily News* and very briefly *Ilanga* and *UmAfrika* due to the failure of the latter two to arrive in Esikhawini after the first month. The frequency of access to the two English-language newspapers depended upon the five teachers who had been trained in MIE methodology. This access and the extent to which these scholars' relationship with newspapers was developed in the classroom is discussed later in this chapter. The school library is not an alternative means of access to newspapers as scholars are not encouraged to use it, although it does contain print media.

Thus, even if fewer of these scholars state that they read newspapers, they do have some kind of relationship with them, even if newspaper reading is not a top priority.

3.3 Other reading habits

Magazines are found mostly in homes which either have televisions, newspapers or both. Only two male respondents say that magazines are the only form of mass media in their homes. Seventeen scholars say they have one or more magazines at home, but not on a weekly basis. Magazines are seldom bought by the scholars themselves as such publications are regarded as expensive commodities. Figure J indicates the most frequently read magazines.

The popularity of *Bona* might be explained in terms of this magazine's presence alongside newspapers in class as part of the NIE programme, but would require further research. From observations in classes, the colour photographs, particularly in advertisements, and portrayal of teenage idols in this magazine are particularly attractive to these scholars.

Figure J

Title of magazine	Number of scholars
Drum	6
Bona	11
Pace	3
Soccer	2
True Love	2

As regards other reading matter, Esikhawini HP's school library was opened in April 1996 but none of the scholars interviewed had ever used it by the end of the study. The teacher in charge of the library commented in passing that he was concerned that scholars might soil the books with their dirty hands. I did not observe scholars reading either a book, newspaper or magazine for leisure in class because teachers said that the syllabus did not allow time for this. No scholar volunteered reading any other form of literature outside of school during interviews and I did not press the issue for reasons outlined in Chapter Five.

3.4 Television viewing

With 33 of the 38 respondents stating that their family owned a television, this was the most predominant of the three mass media forms surveyed in their homes. In seven homes, television is said to be the sole form of mass media most frequently available. From their lists of their favourite television programmes, I deduced that like the scholars from Injabuloyesizwe, these scholars watch an average of three to five hours of television a day. As only five say they use a printed television schedule, the others' television viewing is erratic. Despite the lack of schedules, popular television programmes such as Kideo, Jam Alley, Woza Weekend, Ubambo Lwami, Ezodumo, Zama Zama and the Bold and the Beautiful are watched more frequently because they appear regularly and scholars have memorised their viewing times.

There is not much difference between the television viewing choices of the scholars from the two schools. Music, sport, local drama in their vernacular and international sitcoms head the list of the most popular subject choices.

Ten respondents say they watch the news on television. This is a much smaller proportion than at the other school and all but two could provide details of a news item they had seen on television news recently. As with the scholars of Injabuloyesizwe, these scholars are particularly attracted to the visual element of television. This did not mean that news in the newspaper is less important but that it is the action, immediacy and visual impact which is appealing.

In summary, it is evident that most scholars have access to one or more mass media, with television being the dominant mass media form in most homes. Over half of the sample do, however, have access to newspapers in their homes. Those who do not, have access to it at school. The following section looks at this exposure.

4. NIE in the classroom at Esikhawini Higher Primary School

4.1 The organisation of NIE at the school and gaining access

The five NIE-trained teachers at Esikhawini HP School were subject teachers as opposed to class teachers (like at Injabuloyesizwe) and so I observed a wider range of teaching practices at this school. Of the five teachers at Esikhawini HP, Miss Mazibuyo, a Standard 5 maths teacher who was presently on the NIE training course was never observed using the newspaper in her class. The other four teachers were: Mrs Zulu who taught Standard 4 English, Mr Hlongwane who was a Standard 4 history and Zulu teacher, Mr Sibise who taught Standard 5 maths and English initially but by the end of the study taught only maths and Mrs Mhlongo who taught Standard 4 maths and science initially but towards the end only maths. The latter two had been trained the previous year and should have been familiar with NIE. It was not possible to observe only one class as none of these teachers taught their subjects to the same class. Thus observations are based on all four teachers interacting with different classes, but the interviewed respondents are scholars in Mr Sibise's class.

4.2 Scholars' exposure to newspapers in class

Only two teachers, Mr Sibise and Mr Hlongwane, used the newspaper and then infrequently. Mr Sibise used the newspaper for a lesson three times in the first

month and then again three times towards the end of the study period when he heard that I would be at school for the day. Mr Hlongwane used the newspaper three times during the study period.

The other teachers at Esikhawini HP preferred to use *Bona* magazine in the classroom relying on the colourful photographs for their lessons, but this use of magazines was also infrequent. Mrs Mhlongo used the *Bona* magazine twice during the first week of my arrival and then never again. Mrs Zulu used it five times. Miss Mazibuyo, a standard five maths teacher, used neither newspapers nor magazines. Thus, in contrast to Injabuloyesizwe, most scholars at Esikhawini HP had less access to the newspaper in their class, because most of their teachers restricted the use of mass media in the classroom to a limited use of magazines only. There were only two classes who used the newspaper in lessons.

4.3 The nature of the lessons

When scholars did have access to newspapers, the nature of the lessons using the newspaper inhibited the scholars becoming familiar with the newspaper. The restricted access to newspapers in class meant that scholars were given less chance to interact with newspapers and become familiar with it. This contrasted with the situation at Injabuloyesizwe. Very little text was used in any NIE lesson, thus not allowing scholars to become familiar with the nature of the newspaper's contents. Scholars did not have the opportunity to read the newspaper in class as no lessons were devised where this was required. Furthermore, teachers, concerned that scholars would not complete the exercise in the half hour period, encouraged scholars to complete the exercise quickly. This, however, did not prevent scholars from scanning the newspaper quickly, particularly the sports pages. Also, six to eight scholars had to share a newspaper (in some instances not a very thick one) which meant that each scholar had little opportunity to familiarise him or herself with the newspaper. Thus not only were very few scholars exposed to newspapers but those that were, had less time to browse through them. This clearly limits familiarisation with newspapers.

Despite these limitations, scholars did have freedom of choice as regards the

items they chose to complete a NIE exercise. Being able to choose their items also meant that they had time to scan the newspaper, which they did. This meant that lessons often took longer than the 30 minute class period which further irritated teachers who wanted to complete the lesson in 30 minutes. The items they chose did give an indication of their interests. While in most of the NIE lessons teachers stipulated that scholars use visual images, occasionally Mr Sibise and Mr Hlongwane encouraged scholars to use both visual images and text from the newspaper, but since using text was not mandatory, few did so.

Except for one lesson which I gave on how to make a newspaper, no teacher ever gave a lesson on the structure, format and style of a newspaper. This exercise is viewed as important in familiarising scholars with the various components of the newspaper. I tested scholars' knowledge of the nature of the newspaper's contents and structure as I did at Injabuloyesizwe throughout the study. Scholars did not show significant improvement in their newspaper knowledge and this is probably due to the fact that they did not have frequent access or more lessons about the newspaper.

This is not to say that all scholars showed no knowledge of newspapers. Ten of the 20 scholars who received a newspaper at home displayed some degree of newspaper literacy when they discussed how they read the newspaper. Eight scholars who were interested in sports and comics were able to tell me where these pages are to be found in the newspaper. Another scholar stated that she started looking at *City Press* from the centre because that was where the main photographs were placed in this newspaper. One scholar who read the film reviews illustrated some knowledge of the entertainment section. This knowledge did not, however, increase during the course of the study.

From observations and questions posed, it was evident that scholars not only enjoyed using this medium, but that they did not consider it a school textbook. Despite the pressure of a group of six to eight scholars using one newspaper, the entire group was involved in the NIE activity. In contrast, in a lesson using the textbook, it was very difficult for them to concentrate on the lesson for the entire half an hour. This interest in the use of the newspaper in the class illustrates that

newspapers have the potential to interest scholars.

The above situation in the classroom indicates that many scholars were not necessarily becoming familiar with the newspaper's content or format at school. In spite of this, scholars did enjoy the few lessons using the newspaper, participating more in these classes than in those using the ordinary textbook. When asked, scholars provided a number of reasons why they thought the newspaper was not a textbook and why it was more enjoyable than textbooks. These had much to do with the fact that newspapers contains information about "real" life. This enjoyment and the fact that scholars have freedom of choice regarding the items they chose to use to complete a NIE exercise, indicate to some extent why newspapers are relevant to them and will be discussed in the following chapter.

4.4 Impediments to scholars' relationships with newspapers in class

As mentioned in Chapter Five, how scholars relate to the newspapers they use in class is dependent upon their school environment and on the current context of education in South Africa.

As was the case at Injabuloyesizwe, the methodology and pedagogy of NIE posed several problems to teachers which adversely affected scholars' relationships with the newspaper. More so than at Injabuloyesizwe, the Esikhawini HP teachers were not fully acquainted with the relevant methodology and pedagogy and thus tended to use the lesson plans from the teacher guides supplied by the MIE Trust. As these were limited in quantity, once completed, the teacher would revert to his or her former mode of teaching.

Only twice did a teacher develop his own lessons and then in one instance it was unclear how the lesson related to the curriculum. This teacher, Mr Hlongwane, was a very confident teacher. Quite often I noted him using different teaching methods, NIE being one of them. This seems to substantiate what I found at Injabuloyesizwe - that only the most confident teachers feel comfortable adopting an alternative methodology.

Another impediment to using newspapers in class was mentioned by the three maths teachers (Mr Sibise, Miss Mazibuyo and Mrs Mhlongo) and the history

teacher (Mr Hlongwane) who stated that they had particular trouble knowing how to relate the syllabus to the use of newspapers in class. In this situation, under pressure to complete the syllabus, teachers preferred to resort to their usual methods which their teachers had used and which in their opinion had worked for not only themselves but also for all the other scholars they had taught. Using newspapers in lessons were possible if the teacher clearly understood how to link the newspaper to the syllabus. Teachers who found it difficult to devise lesson plans for subjects other than English tended to use the teacher guides for the few lessons on their particular subject and then never again.

When I asked teachers why they had not used newspapers in a particular class, they replied that the particular lesson was not conducive to using them. Yet I had observed scholars at another school doing a NIE lesson on that particular topic. This indicates that teachers either lack the ability to devise these lessons because they lack confidence or knowledge or that they are unwilling to do so.

Teachers also told me that as they did not know much about newspapers themselves, they were ill-equipped to give lessons about the medium. Furthermore, given the time pressures at this school to complete the curriculum, lessons about the medium were not viewed as essential.

But the scholars at Esikhawini HP did exhibit some knowledge about newspapers, particularly those who had newspapers at home. Four were aware of space limitations in the newspaper, which is why they understood why there were not more photographs in the newspaper, although they would like to see more. Further, observations showed that those scholars who were interested in sport knew how to find and read the logs and fixtures in the newspaper.

The teachers at Esikhawini HP showed less desire to change their teaching practices. As mentioned above, part of this was due to the context of education. Not only had many of these teachers received teacher training which had not equipped them with the confidence to adopt new teaching practices, but in three of five cases, it seems that their teacher training had not prepared them for learner-centred teaching. These teachers were worried that scholars may raise issues which they could not answer and it seems that their training had not equipped them to deal

with this situation. Furthermore, from observations, I noted that two of these teachers lacked the commitment necessary for a MIE programme. These two teachers were seldom in their classrooms and when they were present, had little verbal interaction with their scholars, preferring to give scholars exercises to complete from the textbook. The lack of motivation is substantiated by one teacher who said:

Many teachers do not do justice to the school. Teaching is a calling. Many teachers never check scholars' work - only to see that it is done. They mark for the principal, but they do not correct the mistakes.

In many instances, teachers were not aware of the organisation which is required for a NIE lesson or were not prepared to alter their existing methods of lesson preparation. A NIE lesson requires from the teacher much pre-preparation: a clear statement of the purpose of the lesson, the teacher's preparation of materials prior to the lesson in order not to waste time at the beginning of the lesson, an understanding by the teacher of whether his or her scholars are capable of executing the lesson or whether they require a lesson on an aspect of the activity (eg. cutting out) before the activity is actually executed and if so required, the preparation of scholars to bring the necessary materials from home. All this has to be thought of prior to the actual execution of the lesson.

While all teachers agreed that a NIE lesson requires much pre-planning, observations led me to conclude that teachers did not do much of this necessary pre-planning. In all cases, after a NIE lesson, teachers would state the problems with that particular lesson, often acknowledging that the faults in the lesson were due to a lack of pre-planning. Against this background, it is much harder to do a NIE lesson which explains why most teachers did not do many NIE lessons. Only Mr Hlongwane and Mrs Mhlongo showed any signs that they had prepared their lessons.

Furthermore, the consistent high absentee rate of certain teachers and the fact that certain teachers consistently arrived late at school indicated that they were not enthusiastic about teaching. In this situation, it was easier to use the teaching practices to which they were accustomed.

The pressure to complete the syllabus affected both the choice of NIE activity and the doing of NIE activities. As regards the choice of NIE activity, some NIE activities, while viewed as an enjoyable exercise for scholars, were not viewed by teachers as a vital part of the curriculum. Thus, although there were lesson plans in the teacher's guide concerning how to teach newspaper literacy, this exercise was never done by any of the teachers at Esikhawini HP because, as teachers stated, it was not required by the curriculum.

As regards the completion of a NIE activity, teachers pressurised to complete the syllabus preferred not to embark on an activity which, often due to their lack of organisation, took too much time. A NIE lesson was often not completed in a period which meant it had to be continued in the next period, either later in the day or the following day. Teachers under pressure to complete the syllabus also did not encourage scholars to browse through either media while completing the exercise.

Another impediment to scholars' relationships with newspapers concerned the management of their classrooms when a NIE activity was taking place. All five teachers said that NIE was problematic because it caused a disruption in the classroom. Mrs Mhlongo, one of the teachers who planned her lessons, stated that she preferred order in her classroom and thus returned to her former mode of teaching. All these teachers agreed that, too often, a NIE lesson resulted in a noisy and chaotic classroom over which they had very little control and these teachers did not appreciate this in a situation where there are on average 80 scholars in a class. As Mr Sibise states:

It is hard to control big numbers in a classroom when doing a newspaper lesson. While I am busy with one group (of scholars), others are getting up to nonsense.

With very few management skills at hand, these teachers preferred to resort to a system of teaching to which they are accustomed, which they trust and which maintains order in the classroom. Effective classroom management is necessary for an effective NIE lesson and aside from using corporal punishment to achieve this, this was not possible at Esikhawini HP.

The teachers at Esikhawini used magazines much more frequently than

newspapers for lessons and this obviously impeded scholars from getting to know the newspaper. Both schools used *Bona* magazine for the same reason, yet Injabuloyesizwe did use the newspaper more frequently.

Language also impeded how scholars relate to the newspaper, especially at Esikhawini where the scholars' level of English was not as good as those at Injabuloyesizwe. The language barrier did not encourage these scholars to read any articles, as all the newspapers in class were in English. Thus it is not surprising that given the choice, all scholars chose visual images over textual images for their NIE lessons.

As noted in Chapter Five, it is important that both teacher and scholars establish a good working relationship in order to achieve an effective NIE lesson. This pupil-centred approach requires an understanding between the teacher and his or her scholars and tolerance. Teachers at Esikhawini were not prepared for the higher noise levels and reacted with corporal punishment. Scholars reacted by ignoring instructions to keep quiet and the cycle continued. This created an environment not conducive to effective NIE.

This school's organisation clearly inhibited scholars from relating to newspapers. The principal at this school did not support those NIE-trained teachers. When I interviewed him, he did not display any indication that he knew much about NIE and what his teachers were doing with it in the classroom. He did not attend any NIE workshops nor did he attend classes at his school where NIE lessons were being given. Furthermore, indications were that teachers had been forced to go to the NIE training course which might not have encouraged them to adopt NIE. Their relationship with him was also different from the one at Injabuloyesizwe where the principal encouraged consultation. At Esikhawini HP, a teacher said that, "If you try to advise him (the principal) - he doesn't listen."

The organisation at the school also prevented scholars from regular contact with newspapers. As mentioned in Chapter Five, given the traditional hierarchy of schools, this organisation and discipline is seen as coming from the principal. The behaviour of the principal at Esikhawini did not encourage a well-organised school. He often organised staff meetings during class periods without giving teachers any

prior notice. It took this school three times as long to finalise their timetable as it did Injabuloyesizwe and then it was never upheld. The organisation of the timetable was also such that there were never a double period which ran consecutively. For example, the standard five class had a maths class once in the morning and then later again that same day. Further, three months into my study, I noted that teachers were teaching different subjects to those they had started the year with. When I asked, they informed me that the principal had changed the subjects they would be teaching at his school. In this atmosphere, it was difficult for teachers to organise their school lives. These factors were not conducive to running an effective NIE programme.

Further, while only a few teachers were willing to comment about their dissatisfaction with this disorder, I noted that other teachers seemed demoralised and unmotivated. One teacher did comment saying that he thought priorities were wrong, in that the

"school has never been renovated or added to (and yet our classes are over full). Also, I read about a classroom library in the newspaper but I can't have it until there is security at the school".

Despite this situation, when newspapers were used in class, scholars were enthusiastic. While their access was stunted by factors mentioned above, they did encounter newspapers in class and they enjoyed this experience as the NIE activities in class indicated.

5. Conclusion

This chapter set out to provide insight into scholars' access to newspapers in and out of the classroom in their particular context. As illustrated, NIE was not seen by most teachers as viable at Esikhawini HP for a number of reasons. This did impact on scholars' relationship with the newspaper in terms of either limiting the use of newspapers in the class or in limiting the choice of newspaper-related activity in class. By abandoning this programme, teachers deprived scholars of the opportunity afforded by NIE: to familiarise scholars with newspapers and to discover the relevance of newspapers to them in a manner which, from observations and

discussions with scholars, was enjoyable to young people. This opportunity is probably more relevant to scholars at this school as my sample indicated that only slightly more than 50 per cent receive a newspaper at home. The following chapter provides more details about their relationship with newspapers.

Chapter Eight

The relevance of newspapers to Esikhawini Higher Primary scholars

1. Introduction

This chapter looks at how Esikhawini scholars use the newspaper once they have access to it and why it is relevant to them, including whether they view the role of newspapers in society as being relevant to them. As mentioned before, the manner in which scholars approach newspapers once they have access to them provides pointers to that which attracts them to newspapers. But these pointers are only a few of the reasons why scholars find the newspaper relevant, as will become evident.

2. Entry into the newspaper

Of the 23 scholars who stated earlier that they had access to newspapers at home, three stated that they did not read the newspaper. All the remaining 20 scholars are selective in their reading of the newspaper, preferring to read or scan selected sections of the newspaper. Like the scholars from Injabuloyesizwe, these scholars use two methods of entering the newspaper. The 10 scholars with a particular interest in sport, the entertainment section, comics and the centre pages of *City Press* which often consist of photographs only, turned immediately to those pages. The remaining 10 scholars scanned the newspaper from the beginning looking at photographs or headlines and depending upon the interest these may provoke, may read the article. They thus make use of the various devices newspapers employ to entice readers to read an article. As Garcia also found [1991: 64], these devices only serve a purpose if there is something which interests the reader in the first place. Yet they are relevant given that most of the scholars are selective newspaper readers.

With the above knowledge of how scholars first encounter the newspaper and why they begin to turn its pages, it is necessary to focus in more detail on the topics which make this medium relevant to them given the presence of television and magazines in their lives.

Figure K displays the reasons why scholars read the newspaper. This figure is based on questions asked throughout the six month period of study. No significant

difference between the sexes was noted with the exception of sport. No females cited sport as the reason why they read the newspaper. These reasons were generated by the scholars themselves as I tried as much as possible to pose questions which would not lead scholars to answer in a particular way.

Figure K

Reasons for reading the newspaper	Number of scholars
To read sport	7
For information on accidents	6
For photographs	5
For the TV guide and film reviews	3
For news about South Africa	3
For comics	3
For local news	2

The following section provides further detail about these categories and other reasons why newspapers are relevant to these scholars.

3. Why newspapers are relevant to their lives

The youth of these scholars is one factor which does prevent the newspaper from being as fully utilised as it could be with an older group of adolescents [cf p 40]. The newspaper does, however, have attractions which are specific to these scholars precisely because of their youthfulness. The appeal of television is strong among these young people too, yet newspapers are relevant to them. Given their limited access to newspapers at school, some of the following comments are based more on information gained from interviews and discussions than from observations.

a) Newspapers publish lists of sport fixtures and logs

Sports articles top the list of reasons why scholars read the newspaper as Figure K indicates. Interviews with scholars confirmed my observations. Most male scholars upon receiving the newspaper turned it over to look at the back page of sports. Most

males chose photographs of the sporting heroes to use in NIE exercises in class, especially the soccer heroes who had recently won the Africa Cup of Nations Soccer Tournament. In interviews, nine scholars revealed that the manner in which sport news is covered and the presence of logs and fixtures in the newspaper makes this medium very relevant. Four of them state that the newspaper is the only mass media they know of which publishes logs and fixtures, thus allowing them to track the movement of their favourite soccer teams within the logs and to take note of the date and opponents which their team would be facing at the next game. As one scholar states: "I look at the newspaper to see the logs and fixtures to find out what is currently happening on the sports field."

For two of the nine scholars, the newspaper has added value because it provides more coverage on different sports than television, although they state that the visuals on television are better than in the newspaper. Questioned further, these scholars acknowledge that television also provides a wide variety of sports in its coverage, but they stated that the newspaper allows them to get a brief overview of all these sports. This scholar explains:

"I am interested in golf a little, although my favourite sport is soccer. In the newspaper I can get an idea of what happened at a golf match without having to sit and watch the whole match."
- Vusi Makhunga, 15.

Furthermore, six of the nine scholars believe that newspapers offer more in-depth commentary on a game than television. (This was also the sentiments of four scholars at Injabuloysizwe Primary School (cf p 97)). Two of these scholars say that the added advantage of reading about sports in the newspaper is that newspapers highlight the personalities of sports players more than television does.

Scholars from both schools, however, still find the visual attractiveness of television more appealing than that in newspapers. Also, when asked what they thought was lacking in the newspaper, two scholars indicate a lack of news on local sport. Two other scholars feel newspapers should write more about school sports.

b) Newspapers provide more news which affects scholars personally

The second highest category in Figure K relates to information on vehicle accidents. Scholars are particularly interested in this information as it offers them the opportunity to find out whether a member of their family or somebody in their community is involved. Like the Injabuloyesizwe scholars, three scholars could provide examples of how they had found out about relatives involved in an accident via the newspaper. Furthermore, scholars explain that most people within the township either know of or know one another and are interested in each others' well-being. Scholars call this interest *Ubuntu*. An injury to any person in the township is thus viewed as an injury to a close friend or relative and is thus relevant to these scholars.

c) The value of newspapers lies in their coverage of local news

The issue of local news caused much discussion among these scholars. Local news does not feature highly as a reason why scholars read the newspapers [see Figure K]. Unlike scholars at Injabuloyesizwe, these scholars' definition of "local content" refers to news about the Esikhawini/Richard's Bay/Empangeni area and does not include regional news. There are a few scholars, however, who found the local news in the *Zululand Observer* and *Umlozi* relevant. Two scholars comment that they would not have learnt of a shooting incident at the Esikhawini bus depot had the *Zululand Observer* not reported this event. Three other scholars feel that local news is not only important to keep local inhabitants informed but it is also relevant because it informs people in other places about those in Esikhawini. Another three scholars state that the publication of useful information such as the dates of school terms and the dates and times of new karate lessons are pieces of information which are relevant to them.

Although this is a small number of scholars, this does not mean that the majority do not believe that local news is relevant. On the contrary, it is very pertinent. An additional 10 scholars feel that local news is particularly important to them in order to keep themselves informed of happenings in their community. This is substantiated by the presence of predominantly regional and local newspapers in

17 of 23 scholars' homes, although these may not necessarily reflect their choices of newspaper. Yet these scholars feel that the newspapers they read are neglecting their duty in covering local news sufficiently. One scholar who had been exposed to the local newspaper the *Zululand Observer* is of the opinion that the *Zululand Observer* "only writes about Richard's Bay and the (former) white schools."

When scholars were asked what they would write about if they were journalists or owned a newspaper, 10 scholars mention stories with a local content flavour. One scholar clarified why he would write about Esikhawini: "I would write about things around Esikhawini because this is the place where I live and know about."

In spite of the above scholar's sentiment that the target market of the *Zululand Observer* does not include him, the presence of this newspaper in their classrooms might have satisfied some scholars' need for local news had it been used more frequently in the classroom. For the 12 scholars who had never seen the *Zululand Observer*, the opportunity to familiarise themselves with it was denied when it was only used once at this school.

d) Photographs

Photographs in the newspaper are relevant to 16 scholars. While the visual appeal of television is most certainly attractive, the transient nature of these visuals is criticised by scholars. Six scholars state that newspaper photographs can be looked at leisurely and thus can enhance their understanding of a news article. As this scholar states: "Photographs give a clearer picture of what's being talked about".

These scholars, like those at Injabuloyesizwe, rank photographs according to what they regard as important. They too claim that a photograph of a car accident is important in that it could assist them in identifying some of the victims who might be family. Two scholars point out that a photograph or drawing often provides additional details which might not be contained in the accompanying article. Two scholars say that photographs or drawings in newspapers can assist in identifying wanted criminals, stolen goods or missing persons much better than a written description of the criminal. Another says that photographs of candidates for voting

are important, suggesting that this scholar believes that appearance is important in casting a vote. Scholars' relationships with newspapers are thus dependent to some extent on the newspaper photographs' ability to convey additional detail of a news item.

e) Transient nature of television versus permanence and convenience of newspapers.

The transient nature of television is another reason why many scholars value newspapers. Two scholars mention that they are not always available to watch the news at the particular news time on television. In contrast, newspapers can be read at any time. An additional benefit of the newspaper over television is mentioned by this scholar: "Newspapers are necessary because I can refer back to it."

This is an important factor for two scholars who state that often new terminology is introduced in the news which they did not understand. With the newspaper, they were able to ask their relatives to explain the concepts to them, but this was not always possible with television news due to its rapid pace and transient nature.

The permanence of newspaper photographs versus the transient nature of television visuals is also appreciated by three scholars who like to peruse a photograph at leisure.

f) Pace of television newsreading is too fast

For three scholars, the pace of television newsreading is at times too fast for them to comprehend the news. The newspaper counteracts this inaudibility in that it is read at the reader's own reading pace. Again, this point is relevant as it reinforces scholars' familiarity with newspapers and leads them to use the newspaper more as a source for news.

g) Newspapers provide more detailed, in-depth news

In comparison to Injabuloyesizwe, fewer scholars from Esikhawini mention that news in the newspaper is more detailed than that on television. But given that this

study argues for perceptual reality, even three perceptions are worth noting. All three mention that newspapers often provide more background information.

h) Newspapers provide commentary

One scholar said that newspapers are relevant as they provide commentary on an issue and not merely the facts. She used the example of cartoons to illustrate her point. Four other scholars comment that newspapers are of value because they cater for their desire for opinions about serious "hard" news about youth. These scholars still maintain that television caters more for their entertainment. One scholar uses the example of unrest at a technical college. He says: "Television only offered the facts briefly, while the newspapers gave us an opinion on the unrest".

The other scholars' examples which included juvenile justice and news on street children also stress the serious nature of the news they are interested in and the youth-focus of this news. From conversations with these scholars, it emerges that they are concerned about these issues and this is reflected in the fact that they seek more than just the facts, but opinions about these issues. They feel the newspaper supplies these opinions more readily than television.

i) Newspapers readers have the freedom to choose what they would like to read

Three scholars felt that newspapers offer one the freedom of choice. As one scholar states: "Newspapers are better than television because you can read the news you want". In contrast, on television one has to watch the entire broadcast. This is particularly pertinent to these scholars who are interested in sport.

j) Newspapers contain useful information relating to daily lives

For five scholars whose families buy a Sunday newspaper, the newspaper is particularly relevant because it provides details of the programmes which will be appearing the following week. Three scholars, when asked what they would write about if they were journalists, said they would like to write television and film reviews. In the area of entertainment, scholars felt that newspapers were lacking. Three of them indicated that they would write more about entertainment if they

were journalists.

Another scholar mentioned that newspapers are vital to those people who do not have television to spread information which could affect their lives. She used the example of voter education. This was particularly relevant at the time as Kwazulu-Natal was heading towards local elections while this study was in progress.

Four scholars indicated that if they were journalists, they would write advice columns. The examples they cited included advising people how to improve relationships between people in tense situations, how people can improve their lifestyle and how to prevent kidnapping.

k) Newspapers cater for the youth

Two scholars said that newspapers occasionally contain information which might be useful in determining their future prospects. Most scholars, however, were critical of the newspaper's coverage of news about youth, saying that they felt that more should be published about youth activities in the township and school events.

l) Newspapers carry information relevant to their lives

One reason why newspapers are relevant to these scholars relates to how newspapers are different from school textbooks. Six scholars cited the fact that information in the newspaper is current and related to real life as a reason why they enjoy the use of the newspaper in class. This was evident in a maths lesson using advertisements from various food stores to teach addition, multiplication and subtraction. In the previous day's lesson, scholars were asked to complete the examples in their textbook. These were done in their exercise books and I noted that they were never marked. When asked to use the advertisements from large food stores and to work out how much they had spent or how much change they should receive if they paid a certain amount, scholars were much more excited and willing to do the sums on the blackboard. Five scholars said that since they did the shopping for their families, they easily understood how to do the sums.

Although only two teachers occasionally encouraged their classes to use text from the newspaper, some scholars, especially those interested in sport, did scan the

newspaper for certain information during class.

4. Scholars as an audience of newspapers and the issue of language

Some of those scholars who criticised the newspaper for the fact that it does not cater for the youth said that this was the reason why they did not read it. One scholar had this to say about why newspapers are not written for them: "We (children) are not as important as adults which is why we do not get any attention in the media".

One scholar states that when newspapers do cover youth issues, they often portray youths in a bad light. She cites an example of problem youths caught committing a crime.

Seven scholars state that as the newspaper does not write enough about youths, they would do so if they were journalists. The topics they list include their school and its extramural activities such as the choir and sports and how young people should conduct themselves. The latter topic is popular with the female scholars.

Only three scholars volunteered the information that the level of English in the *Zululand Observer* and *Daily News* was too difficult. They state that these newspapers are for anyone who can read English, but admit that it excludes them as their English is not of an adequate standard to understand what is being written. The small number who state the above may seem unusual given that I noted the poor level of English among all scholars. But the fact that scholars did not have regular access to newspapers in class nor were forced to use the text in newspapers meant that they were not frequently exposed to the English language in the *Zululand Observer* and *Daily News* available in class and thus did not feel the need to comment on it voluntarily.

A scholar's comment cited earlier in this chapter that most local news in the *Zululand Observer* concerned Richard's Bay and the "white" schools there, indicates that the person concerned did not see himself as an audience of this newspaper.

5. Scholars' understanding of the role of newspapers in society

As in the case with the Injabuloyesizwe scholars, specific questions were posed to these scholars relating to the role of newspapers in society, as less than half indicated that they had thought about this role. Half of remaining scholars chose not to answer the questions because they had no strong convictions.

a) Newspapers as a watchdog

Nine scholars believe that newspapers have a duty to keep the public informed, even about the wrong doings of a leading politician such as the hypothetical situation involving Dr Frank Mdlalose, premier of Kwazulu-Natal, embezzling government funds. One scholar explains why it is so important that the newspaper fulfill this role:

"It is fair (that the newspaper publish this information) because one buys a newspaper to get acquainted with what's happening in places one can't go to, like parliament".

- Wilbert Phungula, 16.

Three of these scholars feel that leaders are not necessarily trustworthy because of their elected position and that the newspaper should thus keep readers informed if he (Mdlalose) does anything illegal. Four other scholars said that the disclosure of this information would ruin his reputation and no leader should experience this.

Four scholars feel that newspapers should only observe and record and allow people to make up their minds on their own. For them, journalists should not be involved in causing conflict between leaders and should not take a particular stance towards criticising other people.

Three scholars feel that should journalists comment about such an issue, they might be accused of supporting one political leader over the other. Another scholar said that not to print this information might give the same impression.

b) News for the good of the people

Again, there were scholars who volunteered information which revealed that while the public has the right to be informed, information which could cause disharmony

should not be made public. Seven scholars felt that such information about Mdlalose would cause faction fighting between the IFP and the ANC and thus should be avoided.

The above comments indicate that most young scholars had not given much thought to the role which newspapers play in society until these various scenarios were set out. There is no definitive explanation why this role is less relevant. Again some scholars were sensitive to politics in South Africa, indicating that they are very aware of the context in which they live. These scholars felt that newspapers should compromise the right to publish in order to maintain peace in the country.

6. Conclusion

This chapter set out to explore in more detail how scholars relate to the newspaper and has revealed that these scholars share many of the same interests and concerns as the scholars at Injabuloyesizwe, although some differences did emerge. These similarities and contrasts are explored in the next chapter.

Chapter Nine

Conclusion

1. Introduction

This chapter defines the implications of this study for the theorisation of NIE, as well as the practice of NIE in South Africa. The situation at the two schools is thus reviewed, offering some explanation for the similarities and contrasts found. It must be stressed that as mentioned in Chapter Two, context is all important. The broader implications of this study are based on the context at these Esikhawini schools and are not necessarily transferable to any NIE programme unless the programme exhibits a similar context to that at Esikhawini. But bearing this in mind, this chapter places the findings in a wider context indicating findings that are similar to, or contrast with studies elsewhere. The chapter also looks at the implications for research methodology and concludes with a summary of its findings.

2. Injabuloyesizwe and Esikhawini HP schools and other experiences

2.1 Access to newspapers

In terms of access to newspapers at home, only 60 per cent of Esikhawini HP scholars receive newspapers at home compared with 88 per cent of scholars from Injabuloyesizwe. No explanation can be given for this difference, as all scholars receive newspapers via relatives and do not buy them themselves. Those scholars who have newspapers at home, say they receive them once or twice a week and both sets of scholars spend the same amount of time reading the newspaper.

In terms of access to newspapers at school, both schools had equal opportunity to access newspapers via the NIE programme set up by the MIE Trust, but in fact Esikhawini HP made much less use of this than Injabuloyesizwe. Injabuloyesizwe scholars were exposed to newspapers at school more regularly than Esikhawini HP scholars where teachers limited the use of newspapers in class. Injabuloyesizwe scholars used them in class at least once a week, while those at Esikhawini HP used them once or twice a month. This frequent access to newspapers allowed Injabuloyesizwe scholars to become more familiar with the publication's

contents, style and structure than Esikhawini HP scholars. Furthermore, those scholars who had access to newspapers at home were more media literate than those who first encountered the newspaper in class (cf p 84).

The 1982 Newspaper Advertising Bureau study (cf p40) also indicated that scholars who used newspapers consistently throughout the study period showed more pronounced improvement in the categories under study, including media habits. As was the case in my study, this 1982 study also highlighted the critical role which teachers play in determining how newspapers are used by scholars and that it is difficult to control for outside influences (cf p42). The Grusin and Stone research [1992] also suggested that the quality of NIE programmes and quantity of exposure can influence the relationship which young people have to the newspaper in such a way that they are predisposed to becoming adult newspaper readers.

2.2 The nature of NIE lessons at the two schools

The nature of NIE lessons was also relevant to scholars' relationship with newspapers. Due to the nature of NIE lessons at Injabuloyesizwe, these scholars had greater opportunities to use both the text and visual images from the newspaper in their lessons than Esikhawini HP scholars. Some lessons at Injabuloyesizwe involved scholars reading large sections of the newspaper, while other lessons involved looking for both text and visual images to complete the lesson. Thus while browsing through the newspaper to complete a lesson, Injabuloyesizwe scholars had more opportunity to familiarise themselves with both the textual and visual contents of newspapers. Esikhawini HP scholars only once did an exercise which required them to read an article, chosen by the teacher prior to the lesson, in the newspaper. All their other lessons involved scanning the newspaper for photographs and other visual elements. Thus, although sporadic, Injabuloyesizwe scholars read a newspaper in the classroom more often than Esikhawini HP scholars.

Furthermore, the opportunity to relate to newspapers was not only restricted to curriculum-related lessons. Injabuloyesizwe scholars were given more lessons on the structure, format and style of newspapers, whereas the Esikhawini HP scholars only had one such lesson. Although scholars from both schools who had newspapers

at home displayed some knowledge about newspapers before they were used in class, Injabuloyesizwe scholars' knowledge about newspapers increased during the study (albeit slightly) while the same tests did not indicate this to be the case with the Esikhawini HP scholars. The lessons about the newspaper are regarded as contributing to this increased knowledge. Thus the nature of the lessons and frequent use of newspapers in class enhanced Injabuloyesizwe scholars' relationship with newspapers in terms of their knowledge of a newspaper's contents, format and structure. Unlike the scholars at Esikhawini HP, Injabuloyesizwe scholars were given greater opportunities to interact with the newspaper and thus greater opportunities to become familiar with it.

2.3 Impediments to scholars' developing a relationship to newspapers at school

The frequency, nature and content of NIE lessons and the opportunity for scholars to relate to newspapers was hindered by certain aspects. That Esikhawini HP teachers did not use the newspaper in their lessons as frequently as those at Injabuloyesizwe, was due to factors concerning the capability and motivation of the teacher, the support of the principal and the organisation of the school.

In both schools, however, it was a common occurrence that only the most confident and motivated teachers, like Mrs Mthimkhulu and Mr Hlongwane, developed their own lessons and felt comfortable adopting a new teaching methodology and pedagogy. Only these teachers had the ability to manage their classrooms sufficiently well to feel confident that they could do NIE, complete the syllabus despite the time-consuming nature of NIE exercises and cope with the related disorder created by NIE exercises in class. As indicated in Chapters Five and Seven, the others preferred to resort to the teaching practices to which they were accustomed given that they did not understand the methodology and pedagogy. Dahl [1980: 190], Morduchowicz [1994: 319], Edfeldt [1990] and Palmer [1990] found that teachers who did not understand the methodology and pedagogy of NIE can negatively affect a NIE programme and this did appear to be the case at Esikhawini HP. In Harcourt and Hartland's study [1992], it is noted that:

"Experience of NIE was very wide and varied across the sample but limited in each school. Strong evidence emerged of the inherent versatility of NIE in connection with a wide range of school subjects but its actual use within a school was limited by the initiative, awareness and imagination of the individual teachers. It must be pointed out that recognition and understanding of the overall concept and core values of NIE among children and teachers was limited." [1992: 44]

Genzwein [1980: 175] warns further that "changes to increase the efficiency of educational work are inevitable but often counter productive. A frequent change in aims may be good in principle but in practice these aims mostly become distorted especially if teachers are not made to understand and accept the reason for and essence of the change and if they are not properly trained to carry out their new duties." This was particularly relevant to this study as regards the case of Esikhawini HP in particular.

Morduchowicz's study of the effect which a NIE programme had on scholars' political education found that the NIE "programme does not in itself produce any difference. It is the way the teacher uses it that makes the difference. The newspaper has a great potential because it is a social text, but this is not enough. The teacher needs to know how to use it with the scholars" [1994: 319]. This was evidenced especially at Injabuloyesizwe where Mrs Mthimkhulu, who understood the methodology and pedagogy of NIE, created NIE lessons which were original, relevant to the curriculum and interesting to her scholars (cf p 81).

Teachers indicated their lack of confidence in their ability to do NIE and/or lack of motivation by not doing many NIE lessons. All the teachers lacked knowledge about newspapers themselves to teach about its format, content and style, yet Mrs Mthimkhulu was the only teacher confident enough to attempt to teach this.

The relationship between scholars and teachers can also affect how scholars interact with newspapers. One teacher at Esikhawini HP was seldom in his class whenever I arrived at the school and his class was left to their own devices quite often. He did not arrive in time to conduct his classes and then when he did, the class took a long time to settle down and pay attention. Teachers at Esikhawini HP

were not prepared for the higher noise levels and disorder often occurrent in NIE lessons and reacted with corporal punishment. Scholars reacted by ignoring instructions to keep quiet. In this atmosphere it was difficult to conduct a NIE lesson, especially when scholars were asked to bring materials to school for a NIE lesson and did not co-operate.

The fact that most teachers at both schools used magazines a great deal in NIE lessons also affected the frequency with which scholars had access to newspapers and the opportunity to become familiar with them. Esikhawini HP teachers used the *Bona* magazine more frequently than Injabuloyesizwe teachers in their NIE lessons thus restricting these scholars' access to newspapers. Furthermore, the English language of the two newspapers most frequently used in school inhibited scholars from using more than the most simple texts and encouraged them to use visual images more frequently than text. Some Injabuloyesizwe scholars did point out, however, that the level of English in newspapers was less complex than that in their regular textbooks.

These two schools also illustrate the influence which the principal can have on a NIE programme. The Injabuloyesizwe principal was committed to her school and encouraged and supported those teachers who had participated in the NIE training course. In contrast, interviews with the Esikhawini HP principal indicated that he knew little about NIE and he did not indicate an interest by attending any of the training courses or NIE classes at his school as the Injabuloyesizwe principal did. Faced with little or no support, the teachers at Esikhawini HP were not encouraged to try out this new methodology and pedagogy. When lessons did not work out as teachers had planned, the principal did not offer advice as was the case at Injabuloyesizwe, and thus teachers tended to abandon the concept of NIE much quicker than teachers at Injabuloyesizwe (although it must be noted that one teacher at Injabuloyesizwe abandoned NIE after one or two attempts. This was, however, only one teacher as opposed to almost all of the five teachers at Esikhawini HP). In this atmosphere, the Esikhawini HP teachers showed less desire to change their teaching practices.

Furthermore, as indicated, if the school is not operating efficiently, teachers

get dispirited and are less inclined to try any new methodology. The Esikhawini HP teachers complained that they could not do much in the 30 minute class periods which were often reduced to 20 minutes as it took scholars about 10 minutes to move between classes. Injabuloyesizwe scholars had more time to complete a lesson, thus time constraints did not affect the nature of the lessons at Injabuloyesizwe. In addition, at Injabuloyesizwe, the teachers and not scholars moved between classes thus eliminating the time wasted moving between classes. The disruptive nature of the Esikhawini HP school contributed to fewer NIE classes taking place, as teachers' lessons were often disrupted by overly long morning assemblies which reduced every class period thereafter from 30 to 20 minutes, staff meetings during the lesson time and the other organisational inefficiencies mentioned above. Furthermore, the large number of scholars in each class meant that six to eight scholars shared a newspaper and this allowed few of them to browse through it and become familiar with it. Despite all these impediments, when scholars did encounter the newspaper at school, observations indicated that they were more interested in the lesson than when textbooks were used.

2.4 Relevance to scholars

Despite the fact that the average age of these scholars was 13 years old and the fact that newspapers are not meant to cater to them, these scholars had clear ideas of what interested them in newspapers. This was more the case with the Injabuloyesizwe scholars and this might be because they had more frequent access to newspapers in class. Despite this, both groups of scholars indicated a very clear interest in sport, especially the publication of logs and fixtures in the newspaper which coincides with some international research reviewed in Chapter Three. Similarly they showed an interest in local news, photographs, youth-focus news, television entertainment news, information which was useful and news which could affect their lives, be it national or international.

These subject-related interests are consistent with findings in studies by Raundelen and Steen [1994], Harcourt and Hartland [1992], Brooks and Kropp [1994], the Finnish Newspaper Publishers Association and the Newspaper

Advertising Bureau (NAB) [1980 and 1989] (cf p 39-48 in Chapter Three). As was the case with the 1980 NAB study, the scholars at Injabuloyesizwe and Esikhawini did read 'hard news' as well as features which appealed to young people in general. Relating to youth-focus news, many scholars when asked to describe what they did not like about newspapers, mentioned that newspapers did not write enough about or for young people. This was also found to be the case in Harcourt's study [1992] and Steen and Raundelen's study [1994] which found that this left young people with the impression that their daily lives were not valued highly. They stressed a desire to see more reports about their school environment and general leisure activities including sport, which was consistent with my findings. In Brooks and Kropp's study [1994], the increased interest in the student work available on the electronic newspaper also indicated an interest in youth-related articles (cf p44). Also consistent with the Steen and Raundelen study, Esikhawini scholars commented that when young people are portrayed in the media, they are portrayed in a negative light (cf p45, 139).

The Injabuloyesizwe and Esikhawini HP scholars' interest in news which could affect them personally, was consistent with a German study which found that young people find the newspaper relevant for the same reason [Noelle-Neumann & Rudiger, 1993]. As was the case at these two schools, Raundelen and Steen [1994] and Harcourt and Hartland [1992] indicated that scholars were particularly interested in news which could be related to their home environment. They found that the local edge to a story made scholars feel that the news was more applicable to them and thus they felt was more relevant to them¹. Like those scholars in the Finnish study [1993], the scholars in this study tended to use the newspaper as the provider of local or regional news, having heard the 'main' news on television.

In terms of using newspapers in class, all scholars noted that the current nature of news available in their newspaper 'textbook' is vastly more appealing than

¹James Clark, assistant editor of *The Orlando Sentinel* is quoted as saying that after studying papers with above average daily and Sunday market penetration, he found that newspapers with the highest household penetration had one thing in common: "an almost fanatical devotion to local news." [Howcroft 1990: 51]. He went on to say that no matter whether the story was national or international, there was an effort to relate it to local people and events.

the information in their old textbooks.

No significant gender differences, except in the arena of sport and fashion articles, were noted regarding newspaper usage, attitudes and subject-preferences among Injabuloyesizwe and Esikhawini HP scholars which contrasts with the international studies of Harcourt and Hartland [1992], Harcourt [n.d], the Newspaper Advertising Bureau [1989] and the Finnish Newspaper Publishers Association [1993]. More female scholars were interested in fashion articles at Injabuloyesizwe and more males interested in sports news at these two schools.

2.5 The character of the newspaper in relation to television

Newspapers were also particularly relevant to these scholars in how they differed from television, a vastly popular medium with all scholars. Like those young people interviewed in the Finnish Newspaper Association study [1993] and Harcourt and Hartland study [1992], the Injabuloyesizwe and Esikhawini HP scholars preferred the newspapers' more in-depth, detailed version of the news which supplied sufficient background information to a story. The two sets of scholars in my study also preferred the ability to choose what to read rather than having to watch the transient, fast-paced version of news provided on television.

The predetermined television news time slots were not always convenient for scholars, which is why they turned to newspapers. This was confirmed in a South African study which found that while television is a popular form of entertainment and relaxation, viewers find it annoying to have to tune in at a specific time [Nasionale Pers n.d: 2]. Harcourt and Hartland's research also found that some young people preferred newspapers because they could choose the news they wanted to read and were not have to be constrained by television news times [1992: 16]. In terms of the pace of television news, scholars' comments are substantiated by Genzwein's study [1980: 174] and a South African study [Nasionale Pers n.d.: 2] which notes that the fact that the pace of newspaper reading can be determined by the reader, is appealing to many.

2.6 The role of newspapers

Scholars from both schools showed little understanding of the role which newspapers play in society. In relation to press freedom, some of the scholars' views in my study were consistent with the 1982 NAB study which found that young people feel that newspapers should not be allowed to criticize an important person in government (cf p42).

2.7 Scholars as an audience of newspapers

Most of those from Injabuloyesizwe saw themselves as an audience of newspapers, but did acknowledge that there were parts of the newspaper, like the business section, which did not interest them much. Furthermore, it was clear from their interest in local news and even national or international news written with a local slant, that they felt that the urban bias of the *Daily News* was not always applicable to them. But the local newspaper, the *Zululand Observer* was also felt by some scholars to exclude them, because they commented that the photographs in this newspaper were mostly of white scholars. In these ways, these scholars did not perceive themselves as an audience of these newspapers. As both newspapers used in class were written in English, some scholars did indicate that the language inhibited them from reading more of the text, especially at Esikhawini HP where scholars' English levels were much lower than at Injabuloyesizwe.

3. Implications for educators

In spite of the above-mentioned impediments, the scholars studied did relate to newspapers. Injabuloyesizwe scholars had a more well-rounded relationship than Esikhawini HP scholars but even some of the latter had a relationship with newspapers as they had access to newspapers at home. I would argue though that, like the Injabuloyesizwe scholars, perhaps all Esikhawini HP scholars would have developed a more well-rounded relationship had they been exposed to newspapers in class more frequently. This is certainly the case for the 15 scholars who do not receive a newspaper at home.

From the educational point of view this study sheds some light on the assumptions which surround NIE, one of these being that scholars enjoy

newspapers. While some international studies (see Chapter Three) have indicated this to be the case, they have not provided much detail as to why young people enjoy them. This study provides some detail on this aspect. Despite their youth, these scholars are not like the American younger generation which according to a survey are "less curious about news of all sorts, and one with an especially small appetite for the most serious and complicated of issues" [Editor and Publisher 1990: 11]. These scholars' interest in news relating to AIDS, harmful diseases, substance abuse, political issues and other news which has a direct bearing on their lives, indicates that in one aspect they are not part of the 'Age of Indifference' [ibid].

Furthermore, while there does not seem to be NIE theory in a formalised sense of purely abstract interrelated concepts, a theoretical framework of sorts exists and in this light it is necessary to provide a more holistic approach. As mentioned, the area of how scholars' academic performance is affected by NIE is well-documented and relevant to both educators and the newspaper industry. But underlying this, one might ask why their academic performance is affected. Some studies have indicated that scholars' academic performance is improved by a NIE programme, other studies contradict this finding [Avery 1973, Reid 1972, Reynolds 1972, Sherman, 1980, King 1984]. Why either of these findings exist may have something to do with how the scholar relates to newspapers, because it makes sense that if scholars are not interested in learning about something, it is reflected in their academic performance and vice versa. This relates to the above assumption that scholars enjoy using newspapers in class. Until this assumption is verified, an explanation for why scholars fare well academically or vice versa may not be forthcoming. The theoretical implications of the evidence assembled in this study may contribute to the dearth of theoretical discussion of this aspect. Further work could be done in abstracting more general and widely applicable principles from the empirical data and analysis of this study.

4. Implications for the newspaper industry

In terms of this study's practical relevance to NIE in South Africa, newspapers are seeking some return on their investment. As indicated in the chapter on NIE in

South Africa, some newspapers are aware that finding out how scholars relate to newspapers is an area of research which will help define to what extent their investment is paying off.

As NIE is for some newspapers, including the *Daily News*, motivated by the need to create future newspaper readers, this study does indicate that scholars are interested in certain sections of the newspaper. This motivation may be very relevant to South African newspapers, given a trend in the USA where other factors which contribute to young people becoming regular newspaper readers are weakening. These factors include the fact that fewer newspapers are being found in young peoples homes indicating that adults are also not reading newspapers so frequently anymore [Fitzgerald 1990: 13]. Furthermore, another regular newspaper readership predictor, delivering the newspaper, is also down. Stone [in Fitzgerald 1990: 13] states that it has been known for about 20 years that having a newspaper in the home as a child is the chief predictor of later newspaper use as an adult. Given this decline (even among black South Africans cf p 3), the importance of newspapers in school assumes significance and yet little research has recognised this.

5. Relevance to research methodology

Participant observation with a peripheral membership role was conducive to studying these young people in their natural setting as it was an attempt for me to become a natural part of their habitat. Chapter Two illuminated some of the difficulties in studying young people from a different cultural background to my own. Naturalistic inquiry which stresses the need for minimal *a priori* units to be imposed on the outcome allowed for these scholars' attitudes and practices towards newspapers to emerge without any pre-conceived theories to guide them. Instead inductive data analysis allowed for the many perceptions to emerge. Further the constructivist paradigm and its concept of mutual shaping were conducive to the participant observer methodology. Cronbach's 'working hypothesis' offered an explanation of conditions which are dependent on their context. The possibility for transferability of this explanation was based on whether the sending and receiving contexts display some congruence. This definition of transferability was an attempt

to avoid illegitimate generalisations, but proved difficult at times as the receiving contexts of the international studies cited in my research were not always known. In spite of this, it was possible to link this research to mine in terms of the insights which these international studies provided. The practice of distinguishing between Knowledge, Attitudes and Practices (KAP) and applying them to this study was particularly useful. Being conscious of these categories throughout the study defined the term 'relationship' more clearly and thus provided clearer insight into scholars' relationships with newspapers. An understanding as to why they read or scanned the newspaper in a particular manner was possible once their knowledge of newspapers (including media literacy) and their attitudes towards the newspaper in general were revealed. And understanding the manner in which scholars approach the newspaper (in the practical sense) could alter the nature of present and future NIE programmes in order to improve scholars' relationships with newspapers.

This study also indicates the limits of using a paradigm from another place which can de-emphasise potentially important factors. The relevance of radio in the lives of these scholars was not emphasised because I used studies from the USA as a starting point for my initial research into NIE and in the USA, the focus is on television and not radio, as the threat to print.

6. Looking ahead

Internationally, many newspapers are beginning to realise the importance of capturing a younger market. Increasingly, youth-oriented newspapers are becoming more and more popular [Astor 1990, Astor 1992, Fitzgerald 1993]. Some newspapers are showing a tendency towards more bottom-up NIE initiatives with the training of young people to be journalists as is the case in the USA, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The influence of the Internet in this arena is also enhancing this development, as young scholars get to produce newspapers on the Internet for all to read. This adds another dimension to scholars' relationships with the newspapers (both on and off-line) as the Internet allows for more interaction between writer and reader. This topic merits much further research.

On the education side, the 'Norms and Standards for Teacher education in

South Africa' policy document (cf p2) indicating the trend towards more learner-centred approaches bodes well for development of NIE. Furthermore, the introduction of NIE pedagogical modules into some teacher training institutions in South Africa means that pre-service teacher training will replace in-service training. This may give teachers a clearer understanding of the methodological and pedagogical aspects of NIE, which will impact on scholars' relationships with the newspapers in class. The effect of this pre-service training on teachers' attitudes towards NIE would be worthy of study, as would the effect of their attitudes on the relationship which their scholars will have to newspapers. Furthermore, as no research of this nature has been done in South Africa, the effect of NIE on scholars' academic performance needs to be researched, as newspapers indicated that sponsorship of NIE initiatives relied on the possible benefits being shown.

Both internationally and locally, research on the type of NIE exposure which creates future adult newspaper readers would be welcomed by all interest groups involved in NIE.

7. Summary

In earlier chapters on NIE internationally and in South Africa I also indicated the nature of the organisation of NIE between the newspaper industry and educators. These chapters indicated the high degree of organisation between these two interest groups as regards NIE and the reasons for this high degree of organisation. What I found particularly interesting was that there was little indication of the nature of the relationship between the newspaper and the scholars who are the recipients of a NIE programme, other than some anecdotal evidence.

This study indicates that the relationship which scholars have to newspapers is important for both educators and those in the newspaper industry who are involved in NIE. It indicates that this third side of the triangle which links newspapers to teachers and teachers to children has been neglected and that while these scholars enjoy certain aspects of the programme, there are other elements which need to be considered for it to be beneficial to all interest groups, i.e. the scholars, the newspaper industry and educators.

As seen, for scholars to develop a relationship to newspapers at school, teachers need to understand NIE pedagogy and methodology, school principals have to be fully supportive and certain organisational elements at the school needs to be achieved.

This study has also indicated that young people do use newspapers and that there are elements in newspapers which they find very relevant and which define their relationship to the medium. This relationship is a multi-faceted phenomenon, reliant on access, type of programme and the knowledge and attitude of young people. These latter are evidenced in their news preferences and navigation-literacy and understanding of newspapers. NIE programmes and the character of the particular newspapers (especially language and localness) are key factors in determining the relationship as a whole.

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Keith Harcourt

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