


LEARNING PROGRAMME MASTERCLASS WEB PAGES

<p>TITLE:</p> <p><i>“Africa – tough arenas for developing teachers.”</i></p>	<p>MASTERCLASS</p> <p>Ref: W7</p>
<p>Speaker/Lead Presenter(s):</p>  <p>Dr. Carol van der Westhuizen,</p> <p>Head of Undergraduate Teaching Practice, Faculty of Education, University of Pretoria, South Africa</p> <p>E-mail: carol.vanderwesthuizen@up.ac.z</p> <p>Carol is currently the Head of Undergraduate Teaching Practice for approximately 2000 students. She also teaches research methodology to 365 final year students. Carol taught English in schools then English (and sometimes Afrikaans) in three teachers’ training colleges. Two colleges were closed by the previous and current governments respectively, and the third was incorporated into the University of Pretoria in 2002/2003.</p> <p>Carol is involved with the work of the South African Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) at various universities and undertakes a number of roles within the Education Faculty at Pretoria including liaison with the Teacher Education in Sub-Saharan Africa-liaison (TESSA) programme. She has written extensively - on the education of gifted learners, (e.g. the “gifted disadvantaged”); the attitudes, beliefs and values of teacher educators in transition and power relationships in teaching practice and mentoring and action research in teacher education</p>	<p>Session(s):</p>

and professional development.	
Chair: Professor Allan Owens University of Chester a.owens@chester.ac.uk	Room:
Supporting Practitioner(s):	

KEY THEMES AND ISSUES: “Africa – tough arenas for developing teachers.”
South Africa is still emerging from one of the most divided and divisive systems of governance and education. The policy of Apartheid and the politics of difference have left a legacy that makes “narrowing the gap” in the UK look very straightforward by comparison. Teacher Trainers in South Africa have worked with the Government to respond to these challenges. This Masterclass will consider some recent research on the variety of needs among teachers in schools in South Africa today and their plans for tailoring initial and in-service training to cope with these massive challenges. Reference will also be made to experience in other African countries with links to UK local authorities.
KEY QUESTIONS: “Africa – tough arenas for developing teachers.”
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the challenges facing teacher training in Africa today? 2. What strategies and practices have been adopted by Teacher Trainers in response? 3. Does the research and experience of Africa carry any lessons for Teacher Training in the UK?
PRACTICE EXAMPLES: “Africa – tough arenas for developing teachers.”
1. Wirral school link with the Sudan.
2. ‘A volunteer’s experiences in South Sudan and Rwanda 2005-2007 Context: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Working as a volunteer Education Coordinator for JRS –Refugee Service in South Sudan 2. Acting as Headteacher Mentor and Teacher Trainer in Rwanda – NAHT /VSO Teacher Training under the Mango Tree’ See attached.....
3.

THINK PIECE – exploratory paper for discussion at the conference:

Mind the gap! Teacher education challenges in the African context

The value of education as the foundation for lifelong learning and human development and its value in addressing worldwide challenges like economic stagnation, debt, violent crime, and civil strife, particularly in the least developed countries, led to the EFA (Education for All) declaration in Jomtien, Thailand in 1990: “Every person – child, youth and adult – shall be able to benefit from educational opportunities designed to meet their basic learning needs” (World Declaration on Education for All: 1, 2). Yet, in 2000 over 113 million children worldwide still had no access to primary education and 880 million adults were illiterate (World Education Forum 2000: 1). In addition, a UNESCO report indicates that the teaching force in Sub-Saharan Africa will have to be extended by 68% to enable primary education for all children there by 2015 (UNESCO Institute for Statistics s.a.: 1).

This implies a major responsibility for governments and teacher education institutions in developing countries with particular constraints. Research has established that existing education systems in developing countries will be unable to meet the EFA commitment and that many still base their training on colonial models or attempt new approaches based on experience in high-income countries without considering context-specific factors. Teacher education in such countries is generally under-theorised, practice is generally ineffective and educational change is slow and often unproductive (Lewin & Stuart 2003: 691-692).

Most literature on educational change focuses mainly on change and improvement in schools (Hargreaves, Lieberman, Fullan & Hopkins 2005; Ponder and Strahan 2005; Simmons 2006), but the pressing need for improving teacher training, and in particular school-based components in teacher education programmes, has lately been highlighted (Cochran-Smith 2005; Darling-Hammond 2005a, 2005b).

In South Africa the current driving forces behind the “enormous and fundamental change within the education system” (Parker and Deacon, 2005: iii) are internal socio-political transformation imperatives aimed at redressing apartheid inequalities and external economic imperatives that were implemented after the first democratic elections in the mid-1990s.

“South African teachers do not currently see themselves as ‘owning’ the transformation of education in South Africa but as subjects of it” and they regard themselves as implementers, rather than formulators of policy (Carrim in Lewin, Samuel and Sayed 2003: 319). A prime example of such a policy is the shift to outcomes-based education (OBE), which followed the desegregation of schools and, among others, was an attempt by the education ministry to radically improve education and to re-professionalise teachers. The perception that “teachers are civil servants rather than autonomous professionals” (Douglas 2005; Mokgalabone 1998) is reinforced by a number of factors, e.g. the fact that OBE impedes creativity, individuality, and teacher autonomy, poor working conditions for teachers and perceptions that initial teacher education curricula should mirror school curricula.

Radical post-apartheid policy changes have impacted heavily on teaching and teacher education, among others, the shift to OBE, and the Higher Education Act of 1997 (Republic of South Africa 1997), which drastically cut the number of teacher-training institutions from 150 (1994) to 23 (2002). Attempts by government to improve teachers’ professional status

include the establishment of SAQA (the South African National Qualifications Authority) (1995), the National Qualifications Framework and the publication and implementation of the *Norms and Standards for Teacher Education, Training and Development* (NSE) (Department of Education 2000). The NSE describes teaching practice as an integral aspect of teaching and assessment (not merely unguided experience) and recommends that student teachers experience and demonstrate the integration of knowledge, skills, and values developed in their curriculum in an authentic context (Department of Education 2000: xii). In light of the fact that it believes that the NSE raises “elaborate and utopian expectations” of initial teacher education (Department of Education 2005: 14) and based on its belief that a novice teacher is not likely to achieve the seven roles stipulated in the NSE, the Ministerial Committee on Teacher Education (MCTE) advocates re-conceptualising initial teacher education as two closely linked phases: formal qualification and site-based induction (Department of Education 2005: 10; also see Morrow 2007:207).

Provincial priorities and contexts are included in the Teacher Development Strategy (TDS) which encourages higher education institutions (HEIs) to align pre-service teacher education programmes with school curricula and educators’ needs, and to provide opportunities for understanding theoretical aspects, through the application of knowledge and observation of practice (Gauteng Department of Education 2005). A recent national policy initiative, the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa (NPFTE), stipulates that the practical component for Bachelor of Education (BEd) students should consist of brief teaching practice periods, with an extended final-year internship within the framework of a “structured mentorship programme” and that unqualified, serving teachers in schools be supervised by a mentor (Department of Education 2007: 14). The NPFTE considers continuing professional teacher development (CPTD) and the initial professional education of teachers (IPET) as two complementary sub-systems (Department of Education 2007:2).

Against the background of the large-scale political change and consequent transformation efforts, the focus here is the challenge of training sufficient teachers of quality to fulfil the 21st century need of the country. Aspects to be addressed include: diminishing interest in teaching as a career, teacher retention, information on teacher demand and supply and ability to re-enter the profession; the low status of teaching as a profession; the theory/practice divide; financial constraints; increasing numbers of learners; the disproportionately low enrolment of black students in teacher education programmes, especially in the foundation phase; poverty; violence in schools; discipline issues; illiteracy; lack of resources; administrative overload; and HIV/AIDS and related issues, such as child-headed families.

The challenge for teacher education in South Africa lies in enabling individuals, groups, and HEIs to adapt and reconstruct their roles and their notions of initial teacher preparation (Villegas-Reimers in Douglas 2005: 18), so that they can develop curricula and pedagogy “capable of educating the critical citizens and competent workers envisaged by the White Paper and SAQA’s critical cross-field outcomes” (Gultig 1999: 66). Fourteen years after the official demise of apartheid, there is a great disparity among different types of schools in South Africa. In historically disadvantaged and currently still under-resourced schools, some “on a par with the worst to be found further north in sub-Saharan Africa” (Johnson, Monk and Hodges 2000: 180), teachers battle against the constraints of their environments and lack of

resources, while those in well-resourced former model C schools have adapted successfully.

The introduction to this Masterclass will illustrate some of the ways in which teacher educators are addressing the challenge of preparing students for a wide disparity in learning resources, socio-economic context and learner behaviour, including escalating violence as well as responding to contrasting expectations, aspirations and attitudes among student teachers.

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“Africa – tough arenas for developing teachers.”

Education Management, Administration and Leadership Journal special edition on South Africa. (ref. to follow)

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Beginner teachers’ experiences of initial teacher preparation, induction and early professional development: a review of the literature

(University of Nottingham and University of Leeds) (2008) DCSF research report RW076

The Becoming a Teacher (BaT) study is a six year (2003-2009) longitudinal research project that examines teachers’ experiences during their initial teacher preparation (ITP) and the first four years in post for those who remain in the profession. The latest publication from the project is an international review of the literature on becoming a teacher.

Key findings from the literature review:

1. The review identified a number of themes that suggest a need for ITP, induction and early professional development to take into account (where they do not already) individual needs, concerns, contexts (including those of the school), and teacher identities.
2. The importance of encouraging trainee teachers’ choice and autonomy was emphasised. The research suggested that elements of individual choice relating to teachers’ initial, early and continuing professional development could lead to

- ownership and empowerment, to beginner teachers consciously assessing and to some extent taking control of their own future career paths.
3. ITP providers and teacher educators were seen as playing an important role in fostering beginner teachers' ability to make informed choices particularly in the areas of: assessing their own skills; recognising their individual teacher identities; discussing personal concerns and needs; and taking a proactive approach to in-school relationships.
 4. The process of becoming a teacher is a highly emotional journey for many trainee and beginner teachers. Previous research and findings from the empirical strand of the project suggested a need for teacher educators to: take account of trainees' and beginner teachers' initial concerns and expectations; address the specific needs of individuals; ground theory in trainees' and beginner teachers' practical experiences and relate it to their personal experiences; and model in their own teaching the approaches they were advocating.

Teacher voice omnibus – pupil behaviour, June 2008 survey

(NFER) DCSF research report 069 2008

Download: <http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/data/uploadfiles/DCSF-RW069.pdf>

NFER's Teacher Voice Omnibus Survey in June 2008 included six questions relating to pupil behaviour submitted by the Department. The survey was based on a nationally representative sample of 1,400 primary and secondary teachers.

Key findings from the survey:

1. The majority of teachers (70 per cent) rated pupil behaviour as either 'good' or 'very good'. Twenty-four percent of the sample said that pupil behaviour was 'acceptable'; six per cent said that it was poor, and less than one per cent said that behaviour was very poor.
2. About half of the sample believed that the standard of behaviour has deteriorated over the last five years (either marginally or substantially), around one quarter believe that it has remained the same, and the remaining quarter believe that it has improved (marginally or substantially).
3. Secondary teachers tended to be more pessimistic about this issue than their primary colleagues, as 14 percent of secondary respondents believed that pupil behaviour had 'substantially deteriorated' compared with five per cent of primary respondents. Proportionately more primary teachers said that behaviour remained the same (32 per cent) than secondary teachers (20 per cent).
4. Senior leaders were found to be more optimistic about trends in pupil behaviour than classroom teachers: 41 per cent of leaders said that pupil behaviour had improved (either 'marginally' or 'substantially') in the last five years, compared with 23 per cent of classroom teachers.
5. Over four-fifths of respondents (83 percent) agreed that they were 'well equipped' to manage pupil behaviour, with 13 per cent neither agreeing nor disagreeing, and only

four per cent disagreeing with the statement.

DELEGATE COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

“Africa – tough arenas for developing teachers.”

If you would like to leave feedback relating to this Masterclass please go to:

<http://www.nec2009.co.uk/guestbookform.asp>.

LEARNING FORMAT FOR MASTERCLASS

“Africa – tough arenas for developing teachers.”

The format for this Masterclass will provide approximately 15 minutes presentation, 15 minutes of questions and 20 minutes of structured delegate discussion and feedback on the learning to be derived for the UK from the research and experience in South Africa.

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