Crests and Troughs in Inclusion: Narrative Expressions of a Black Teacher in Independent Schools

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Abstract

The current article draws from Critical Diversity Literacy (CDL) to analyze narrative expressions of a black South African teacher's experiences of moments of exclusion (troughs) and inclusion (crests) after twenty years of service in two predominantly white independent schools. Data was generated from one South African teacher who was prompted to reflect on crests [inclusive moments that deserve to be embraced and celebrated] and troughs [moments of exclusion that seek to assimilate/ignore diversity] in her teaching journey spanning two decades at two independent schools. Using the interpretive paradigm, I attempt to understand the teacher's journey which shows amongst others, that agents of exclusion with tendencies to demand compliance and subsequent assimilation include other teachers, school leaders, learners as well as some parents. The teacher is however, was provided with an opportunity to read/reflect the real life situation and may, depending on her agency, work to circumvent oppressive and exclusionary tendencies. Crests celebrating diversity were noted in her second school. I conclude that diversity remains multi-perspectival and therefore simultaneity should be borne in mind when dealing with inclusion in the teaching fraternity.

Keywords: Critical diversity literacy; disability; independent schools; teacher; power and privilege

Crestas y Valles en Inclusión: Expresiones Narrativas de un Negro Docente en Colegios Independientes

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Resumen

Este artículo está basado en Critical Diversity Literacy (CDL) para analizar las expresiones narrativas de las experiencias de un maestro negro sudafricano en momentos de exclusión (valles) e inclusión (crestas) después de veinte años de servicio en dos escuelas predominantemente blancas independientes. Los datos fueron generados por una maestra sudafricana a la que se le pidió que reflexionara sobre las crestas [momentos inclusivos que merecen ser acogidos y celebrados] y los valles [momentos de exclusión que buscan asimilar o ignorar la diversidad] en su viaje de enseñanza que abarca dos décadas en dos escuelas. Usando el paradigma interpretativa, intentamos comprender el viaje del maestro que muestra que los agentes de exclusión con tendencias de exigir el cumplimiento y la asimilación posterior, incluyen otros maestros, líderes escolares, estudiantes y algunos padres. Sin embargo, la maestra tiene la oportunidad de leer la situación y puede, dependiendo de su agencia, trabajar para eludir las tendencias opresivas y excluyentes. Las crestas que celebran la diversidad se observaron en su segunda escuela. Llegamos a la conclusión de que la diversidad sigue siendo de múltiples perspectivas y, por lo tanto, debe tenerse en cuenta la simultaneidad cuando se trata de la inclusión en la fraternidad de enseñanza.

Palabras clave: Alfabetización de diversidad crítica; discapacidad; escuelas independientes; profesor; poder y privilegio

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The journey to becoming inclusive learning spaces and institutions may be long, arduous and challenging at most times, but ultimately this journey can strengthen a learning community and benefit all. Felder (2018) states that even though inclusion has become one of the most prominent objectives for education, there is still considerable disagreement on the concept. 'Inclusion' is currently understood as the placement of learners/students with disabilities in general education classes (Maciver et al, 2018; Magumise and Sefotho, 2018; Mngo & Mngo, 2018; Walton & Osman, 2018a). The process of inclusion is therefore expected to incorporate fundamental change in the way a learning community supports and addresses the individual needs of each child. As such, effective models of inclusive education not only benefit students with disabilities, but also create an environment in which every student, including those who do not have disabilities, has the opportunity to flourish. In our observation as teachers, teacher educators and leaders and in schools as well as teacher education institutions, the gaze largely zooms into teacher preparedness for inclusion. Inclusive Education has gained significant currency nationally and internationally.

It demands that the teacher be able to meet the needs of learners with impairments in ordinary classrooms (Lindsay et al., 2013, 2014; Ravet, 2011, 2017). The success of inclusive education rests on quality teacher preparation geared towards inclusive education (Zulu, 2014). A number of recent studies suggest that teachers across all age ranges may face difficulties with operationalizing inclusion into practice (Hlalele & Alexander, 2012; Lehohla & Hlalele, 2012; Oliver, 2013). A study probing student teacher preparedness for inclusion revealed that special education student-teachers were not prepared to meet the learning needs of diverse categories of learners with disabilities in inclusive settings (Moswela et al., 2009). UNESCO (2005, p. 7) define inclusion as a:

> ….process of addressing and responding to the diversity of needs of all learners through increasing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. It involves changes and modifications in content, approaches, structures and strategies, with a common vision which covers all children of the appropriate age range and a

> conviction that it is the responsibility of the regular system to educate all children.

The aforegoing discussion provides what has become normal in discourses around inclusion. The Dakar Framework for Action in 2000 called for inclusion to must take account of the needs of the poor and the most disadvantaged, including working children, remote rural dwellers and nomads, and ethnic and linguistic minorities, children, young people and adults affected by conflict, HIV/AIDS, hunger and poor health; and those with special learning needs' (UNESCO, 2018, p. 2). Our article ponders inclusion in four profound ways. Firstly, we foreground the issue of exclusion. Exclusion from meaningful participation in the economic, social, political and cultural life of their communities was noted as one of the greatest problems facing the world (UNESCO, 2003). UNESCO (2005) views inclusion "as a dynamic approach of responding positively to pupil diversity and of seeing individual differences not as problems, but as opportunities for enriching learning" (p. 12). Secondly, we defy taking a one-sided approach to inclusion. We traverse ponder both exclusion and inclusion moments which we depict by means crests and troughs (as in a wave) and accordingly suggest that these crests and waves do not necessarily need to manifest in different or separate spaces or with different individuals. As mentioned earlier, Walton (2018) posits that the objective of inclusion is to work against and reduce exclusion. The Dakar World Education Forum states that education "must neither exclude nor discriminate" (UNESCO, 2000, 41).

Thirdly, we adopt a beyond-disability trajectory to inclusion. Murungi (2015) states that in addition to learners with disabilities, certain groups including girls and indigenous children have historically been directly or indirectly excluded from the existing system of education. The latter, in our view, constitutes a situation where exclusion is not a subject of disability. In tacit acknowledgment, factors other than disability should be considered in inclusion, World Health Organization (2011) states that:

> ... the understanding that the education of all children including those with   disabilities, should be under the responsibility of the education ministries or their equivalent with common rules and procedures. In this model, education may take place in a range of

settings such as special schools and centers, special classes, special classes in integrated schools or regular classes in mainstream schools, following the model of the least restrictive environment (p. 209).

It is evident in the quotation above that inclusion is conceived from one perspective, that is, like many other studies (Forlin, 2010; Florian & Linklater, 2010; Florian & Spratt, 2012; Florian, Young & Rouse, 2010; Hummel & Engelbrecht, 2018; Kozleski & Choi, 2018; Magumise & Sefotho, 2018), it positions the teacher and system as agents/providers of inclusion and learners/students as recipients/clients.

Shifts and Drifts in the Understanding of Inclusion

In most instances, understanding inclusion seems to tether on a disability or special needs education lens. Emphasis is on embracing learners with disabilities in mainstream schools without taking cognizance of and understanding exclusion. Walton (2018) opines that inclusive education seeks to reduce exclusion [inadvertently promoting inclusion] from and within schools, and to secure participation and learning success for all. Our resolve ponders the somewhat pervasive practices of exclusion that may not necessarily be ascribed to specific disabilities. Sources of exclusion include non-disability issues such as language, religion, race, hairstyle and socio-economic background.

The Conversation (2015) cautions that the common misunderstandings of inclusion relate to (incorrectly) considering integration and inclusion to be synonyms; viewing inclusion as simply the presence of a child who is labelled "disabled" or 'different' in a mainstream setting; thinking that inclusion is only about some people (instead of about everyone); and viewing inclusion as a process of assimilation, a process termed the 'epistemology of ignorance' by Steyn (2012). Steyn (2011) further suggests that constructions of difference must underpin institutional culture and interpersonal interactions, and is of the view that we need to "move beyond merely tolerating or assimilating differences into dominant practices, which is the case for some approaches to diversity" (p. 19). Diversity may be conceptualized as "all the ways we differ" (Steyn, 2010). In turn diversity

literacy implies being enabled to understand difference and maintain harmonious co-existence within a plethora of difference. According to Steyn (2015) CDL offers the possibility of an 'analytical orientation' that provides learners and teachers with the 'diversity literacy' necessary to navigate issues of power, privilege and difference.

Teachers must necessarily be historically aware and cognisant of race, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ethnicity, language, (dis)ability (Naidoo & De Beer 2016; Carrim, 2018; Reygan, Walton & Osman; 2018). One of the weaknesses of approaches to diversity in education – particularly those premised on the 'celebration' of difference – is a lack of interrogation of power and privilege. In addition, countries in southern Africa seems to possess pervasive but differentiated notions of exclusion and inclusion. Lindsay et al (2013) purports that amongst others, creating inclusive environments can be hamstrung by a lack of understanding from other teachers, students and parents.

Black Teachers in Independent South African Schools

Vosloo (2014) maintains that independent schools have mushroomed in response to the flight of many white learners from the public educational system, and in response to the rising demand among some middle-class non-white families for private education offered by independent schools. According to Jones (2016) white teachers tend to work in schools with mostly white learners, whereas black teachers teach in schools that have a higher population of black and minority learners. The picture depicted in the previous sentence is relevant in some South African schools that remained white in respect of learner population. However, with the advent of democracy, the racial composition of learners was changed due to learner migration, whereas the teaching staff in the previously racially homogenic white schools remained overwhelmingly unaltered (Radebe, 2015). Franklin (2017) states that there has been an increase in enrolment "due in large part to the growth in low- and middle-fee independent schools that market themselves as an alternative for working-class and lower-middle-class families who are concerned with the quality of education made available to their children" (p. 354). Whilst independent schools are associated with high performing learners and high fees, there are some low fee

independent schools have been found to produce high performing learners (de Villiers 2019). Black teachers in independent schools in South Africa are mostly appointed to teach African languages: A black learner in an independent school indicates:

> Our teachers are mostly white, only four are black and three teach African languages. The lack of representation is a problem because it teaches us that black people are not qualified to be teachers at prestigious private schools like …….." (black learner in a white private school) (The Daily Vox, 2018).

The above is consistent with our current study where the teacher is employed to teach IsiZulu. Our study did not address the issue of learner population and cannot confirm or refute the fact that the two schools where the teacher was employed may have experienced an influx of black learners. Adding a voice, a black learner from a different school further indicates that:

> "We were even discouraged from speaking our native languages because we were the minority and we had to fit in with the majority. It was about speaking with the right accent and aspiring to be like the white girls. The school was ill equipped and unwilling to explore proper issues of identity." (The Daily Vox, 17 August, 2018).

As seen through the eyes of some black learners, the situation at independent schools is likely to benefit from critical diversity literacy [explained in the next section]. There seems to be incongruities which are reproduced and manifest in ways that seek to assimilate everybody who is diverse into the status quo. Elsewhere, Kelly (2007) maintains that token Black teachers face only negative work experiences due to Black and White differences in a White school culture. The conclusion is a discussion about how the work experiences of successful token Black teachers raise foundational issues for educational policy and practice.

Theoretical Lens

The study adopted Critical Diversity Literacy (CDL) as a lens. CDL is defined as "an informed analytical orientation that enables a person to read prevailing social relations as one would a text, recognising the ways in which possibilities are being opened up or closed down for those differently positioned within the unfolding dynamics of specific social contexts" (Steyn, 2010; 2015). Steyn (2010) further purports one of the affordances that CDL offers is to enable people to engage in a process of self-reflection. Steyn (2015) suggests ten analytical criteria that may be used in any social context. They are:

- An understanding of the role of power in constructing differences that make a difference;
- A recognition of the unequal symbolic and material value of different social locations;
- Analytical skill in unpacking how these systems of oppression intersect, interlock, co-construct and constitute each other, and how they are reproduced, resisted and reframed;
- A definition of oppressive systems such as racism as current social problems and not only historical legacy;
- An understanding that social identities are learned and are an outcome of social practices;
- The possession of a diversity grammar and a vocabulary that facilitates discussion of privilege and oppression;
- The ability to 'translate' (see through) and interpret coded hegemonic practices;
- An analysis of the ways that diversity hierarchies and institutionalized oppressions are inflected through specific social contexts and material arrangements;
- An understanding of the role of emotions, including our own emotional investment, in all of the above; and
- An engagement with issues of the transformation of these oppressive systems to deepen social justice at all levels of social organization.

In an attempt to complement the analytical lens presented above, we adopt an interpretivist paradigm, suggesting that the participant's experiences may not necessarily be generalized.

Paradigm

That the study has CDL as a lens, it would be expected that the tenets of critical paradigm appear prominent. However, since our study also sought to understand the lived experiences of a black isiZulu teacher in two private 'white' schools over a combined period of twenty years, interpretivism is also greatly tapped into. A paradigm constitute an expression of the core beliefs and assumptions that inform social research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) and comprises four elements, namely, epistemology, ontology, methodology and axiology . Ontology is the study of the nature of existence (Kawar, 2004). Therefore, the ontological dimension of research focuses on expressions of fundamental beliefs and assumptions about a certain reality. In this paradigm, it is accepted that the social world cannot be understood from the standpoint of an individual and belief that realities are multiple and socially constructed holds (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

Epistemology as a philosophical aspect of social research concerns attempts to comprehend "what it means to know", "how we come to know something; how we know the truth or reality" [1] or what counts as knowledge within the world (McDonald, 2011). Thus, in social research, the epistemology provides a rationalisation for the kinds of knowledge that are deemed reasonable and acceptable (Lincoln & Guba, 1989; Gray, 2009). Summed up, epistemology traverses beliefs on the way to generate, understand and use the knowledge that are deemed to be acceptable and valid (McDonald, 2011). In social research, values refer to ideas and statements about "what does happen" as opposed to "what should happen (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). Thus, in research, values differ and play different roles depending on the theoretical framework, aims and objectives of the research. Consequently, they have an impact on the research design and methodology employed to satisfy the objectives of the study and realise its aim. Social research is value-laden in such a way that the research process − including the research methodology.

Methodology

Narrative Inquiry as a Data Generation Technique
The study adopted a phenomenological approach. Phenomenology as a descriptive rather than explanatory or deductive process, which aims to reveal experience as it is, not to frame hypotheses or speculate beyond its bounds

(Cibangu & Hepworth, 2016; Vagle 2018). Phenomenologists therefore recognize the essentially subjective nature of human experience and apply descriptive methods to attempts to understand those experiences (Falconer & Scott, 2018). Owing to ontological, epistemological and axiological prescripts interpretivist paradigm, the study therefore adopted narrative inquiry as an approach. The narrative approach acknowledges human experiences as dynamic entities that are in a constant state of flux (Lemley & Mitchell, 2011; Wang, Andre & Greenwood, 2015; Wang & Geale, 2015). According to Clanindin and Ruziek (2007):

> Narrative inquiry is a ubiquitous practice in that human beings have lived out and told stories about that living for as long as we could talk. And then we have talked about the stories we tell for almost as long. These lived and told stories and the talk about the stories are one of the ways that we fill our world with meaning and enlist one another's assistance in building lives and communities (p.35).

In addition, stories add value by making "the implicit explicit, the hidden seen, the unformed formed, and the confusing clear" (Chou, Tu & Huang, 2013; Wang & Geale 2015; Wang, 2017). According to Clanindin and Ruziek (2007), Narrative inquiry:

> is a ubiquitous practice in that human beings have lived out and told stories about that living for as long as we could talk. And then we have talked about the stories we tell for almost as long. These lived and told stories and the talk about the stories are one of the ways that we fill our world with meaning and enlist one another's assistance in building lives and communities (p.58).

In order to generate data for this single case (Qutoshi, 2018, p. 219) phenomenological study, a black female teacher was recruited purposefully because of her work experience in independent schools. What defined her situation as deserving of a scientific inquiry was that she never worked in public schools. Her employment was in independent schools which were predominantly white [mostly white teachers and white learners] and was trained received her teacher training at a former college of education training black teachers. The

participant was recruited as she could provide the richest data and was "knowledgeable on the phenomenon and can articulate and reflect, and are motivated to communicate at length and in depth" (Moser and Korstjens, 2018, p. 3). The following prompt was used: *Through your twenty-year journey in two independent schools as a black teacher, share with us your moments [experiences] of crests and troughs pertaining to inclusion in a written narrative. Inclusion in your case, may not necessarily focus on disability.*

The Participant
In our study, we use one participant (Lutovac & Kaasila, 2004) whose story, in our view, provides rich data on the one and cannot be generalised on the other. As Clandinin (2013) posits narrative inquiry is inspired by a view of human experience in which humans, individually and socially, lead storied lives. She started working at an English medium private school 20 years ago. She graduated at a former College of Education in 1998. She started working in a Convent School in Kwazulu-Natal. The school was going through changes from Girls' only school to co-educational school, introducing High School Phase as well new subjects into their syllabus. IsiZulu was not in their syllabus but was offered as a conversational subject and was taught by an old white farmer. The participant's job as a newly qualified teacher with no experience was she had to introduce isiZulu as a subject from Grade three to eight. She worked there for seven years.

Results

In flirting with the narrative (storied) data and ensuring trustworthiness, we are cognizant of the fact that narratives "are *re*-presented in ways that preserve their integrity and convey a sense of the 'irreducible humanity' of the person" (Leggo, 2008; Kim, 2016; Kruczek, 2016). Narrative analysis treats stories as knowledge *per se* which constitutes 'the social reality of the narrator' (Etherington, 2004, p. 81) and conveys a sense of that person's experience in its depth, messiness, richness and texture, by using the actual words spoken (Kim, 2016).

Teaching the subject which was regarded as free lesson where learners could do whatever they wanted from playing cards to music was very hard. I had to face discipline; attitude and laziness problems. I couldn't punish a learner or give home work because isiZulu was not an important subject. So learners were not interested. There was no support from teachers or management.

The above provides evidence for at least three explanations. Firstly, it might be a situation where inclusion is constructed as a "problem and attitudes and values are maintained that are hostile to an inclusionary culture" (Steyn, 2007). Secondly, the situation may be understood as a manifestation of 'pedagogies of ignorance' (Steyn, 2010). Thirdly, there seems to have been a situation where the school almost spontaneously engaged in 'othering' the participant (Naidoo & de Beer, 2016). In response to such situations, Walton and Osman (2018b) suggests the need for "engaging with the reality that many identity markers are not valorized in societies, nor in schools, and that many people therefore teach and learn under the oppression of their class, race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality and/or dis/ability" (p.5). In addition, the situation above depicts the "on-going othering of the participant based on amongst others, pigmentation and the concomitant subject taught, the inability to embrace our common humanity as a point of departure" (Naidoo & de Beer, 2016). In addition, the teacher shows a lack of 'embrace' for the subject below:

> *Teaching a subject with no syllabus or guidelines was the biggest challenge. I had to design my own worksheet and ask teachers from public schools for work programmes and guidelines* (*trough*).

The utterances above afforded the teacher a 'reading practice' which perceives and responds to social climates and prevalent structures of oppression (Steyn 2010). We observe that the teacher might have been challenged to traverse "an understanding of the role of power in the construction of differences that make a difference" (Reygan, Walton & Osman, 2018, p. 2). We are of the opinion that the teacher should have assessed the situation and attempted to address it. The engagement with the status quo as well as the attempt to sidestep oppressive structures, in our view, signify breaking new ground. Further, we contend that oppressive structures [troughs] may be spun on their heads and be seen as opportunities.

> *As the school was growing there was a need for High school teacher who was going to introduce isiZulu in High school. I was appointed because they believed in me since I managed to turn a 'free lesson' into a 'productive lesson'. The Head of High School*

worked closely with me in collecting information and designing the syllabus for High school. I was given an opportunity to attend a syllabus and curriculum development workshops which were intended for school managers. (crest).

The above provides evidence of a crest where inclusion was celebrated as spawned by the need. Even though the participant was different on the basis of language, a 'different language' made her feel welcome and comfortable at the school. Mputa (2016) states that for people to feel comfortable in a group; they need to have a sense of belonging to that group. The teacher says:

Working hard trying to find your place in the environment where colour and race played an important role was hopeless. Some learners were enjoying certain privileges that even some teachers of colour couldn't enjoy e.g. having a special parking under the shade (trough).

As indicated in literature, milieus which do not embrace diversity and seek to assimilate/ignore simultaneously provide an opportunity/space for introspection and environmental scan. The above suggests that the teacher resembled someone who falls outside of the centered positionality, there is concomitantly, "an acute sense that the system does not work for" (Steyn, 2007) her. This is consistent with experiences of black teachers elsewhere around the world. The Griffin and Tackie (2016) indicate that:

Black teachers experience both professional and personal challenges that devalue or other them. Not only are their expertise and professional contributions dismissed, but often they experience negative treatment and lack of individual or personal recognition from their colleagues (p. 9).

Carrim (2018, p. 156) states that what remains problematic with social categories is that they are reinforced to an extent where people become fixed in them; the categories are reified and rest on the polarizing logic (black/white, male/female, dominant/subordinate). Below is a narrative of a teacher assessing the situation around her. In addition, the situation is further enriched a rupture [in terms of social categories and 'categorized' abilities/competence] resulting from her appointment as a moderator and sub-examiner.

Discipline was a biggest problem. Certain races if they don't feel like doing your work if you punish them parents will complain and at some point learners will drop your subject. Discipline was not for me but I had my ways of disciplining them as a result my Matric results were amazing. Being appointed as the moderator for Orals and Sub-Examiner by the IEB was the biggest achievement of the school not myself. (They will use it as part of their marketing for the school).

It is also evident that the school saw value and tapped into it to positively benefit the school. This resembles opening up and leveraging. Building on this and further embracing and celebrating diversity, the second school evinced more evidence to celebrating diversity. The participant points out that:

As the school was growing new young staff members joined the school and that is when I could say I belong. I made good friends with the High school staff. I was made to feel I am a Team Member. At school I will be asked to be part of the school play or help with the play. This was a big turnaround for me since I was made not to feel comfortable (crest). I had my social squad which was very interested to learn about African Culture and Township Life style. They will visit the townships and go to villages populated by Africans and took part in African cultural activities which occur in the village visited. When they come back they normal report back to other teaching staff members as a result the school choir started to sing isiZulu songs and even school games changed and African theme was introduced. (crest).

From the above, a number of deductions may be derived. Firstly, we recognise a "social space where human interactions are more intimate" (Naidoo, 2015). The effort above is consistent with Bialostocka's (2016) view of embracing participation in learning, cultures and communities, and reducing exclusion within and from education. As Reygan, Walton and Osman (2018) point out, there seems to be an appreciation of the need for a generation of teachers with a sophisticated understanding of the diverse identities as well as how these identities intersect. Furthermore, the gesture and culture of 'embracing' pluralism towards creating a "positive multicultural climate" (Hasberry, 2013). We attest to what Meier and Hartell (2009) refer to as an "effort to accommodate the diverse nature of society" (p. 180). In addition, Carrim (2018) suggests that in tandem with postmodernity, we need to "fracture,

de-centre and pluralize social categories" (p. 161) and spaces. Difference, therefore should be engaged in terms of "multiplicity, intersectionality as well as power axes" (Kiguwa, 2018, p. 25). In the process, there is an indication that the teacher shows the ability to 'translate' (see through) and interpret coded hegemonic practices (Reygan et. al., 2018). Below are utterances indicative of positive thought and observation by the participant:

> *IsiZulu at my second school was fully established and the former teacher worked very hard to set the standards. My responsibilities as a teacher and staff member were defined and I was given an opportunity to decline or agree to the terms. (crest). Classes were bigger than my previous school and I was more of a manager during Extra Murals than before. I had a say to how the sporting code was executed. I was made part of the committee for Sports and I was given training for sporting codes that I was not familiar with (crest).*

The above show a situation where the school has interrogated and understood [to some extent and in this respect] diversity when it comes to language and IsiZulu as a subject. At this stage, the school may have, in the past, done some introspection (Reygan et. al., 2018) and have come to celebrate diversity (Walton & Osman, 2018) and some recognition of teacher autonomy (Xiao & Kwo, 2018). In addition, an affordance in terms of decision making (Mputa, 2015) in extra mural activities. In the mix, the fact that parents pay fees has repercussions. For example, the participant says: *Parents have more say and teachers have less say now. Simple because they pay school fees. (trough).*

Consideration of the financials here gives rise to power dynamics. Whilst it remains an expectation that parents will and should participate in their children's education, it may appear to some teachers that the situation gives rise feelings and concomitant actions of power and privilege. In other words, postures pertinent to power and privilege on the part of parents may need to analyse "the ways that diversity hierarchies and institutionalised oppressions are inflected through specific social contexts and material arrangements" and teachers to "understand the role of emotions, including our own emotional investment" (Walton & Osman, 2018a).

Discussion

Adopting phenomenology provided us with a "methodological space" to study the exclusion/inclusion conundrum "at a deeper level of conscious to understand lived experiences" (Qutoshi, 2018, p. 215) of a black South African teacher in independent schools. We find that the journey provided space for reflection. Throughout the journey, the teacher was afforded an opportunity to interrogate not only how to 'do' her chosen line of work, but also how to 'be' in this complex world (Wood, Soudien & Reddy, 2016). The journey, in our view, further afforded the teacher an opportunity of engaging in a process of critical reflection around her own positioning as a teacher [insider and outsider], her biases and her desire for pedagogically useful tools to engage with issues of difference at school (Reygan & Steyn, 2017). Kruse and Dedering (2017) as well as Kielblock (2018) caution us about implications of differentiated understanding of inclusion.

In addition, this study finds that an individual learning environment may not find it easy to be absolutely inclusive or exclusive. Independent schools appear to be on a continuum of exclusion and inclusion. In the first school, we note a lack of appreciation of difference and subsequent lack of engagement with issues of power and privilege in ways which essentialise difference and promote assimilation (troughs) (Moletsane, Hemson and Muthukrishna, 2004; Haspberry, 2013). Reygan et. al. (2018) maintain that a lack of engagement with issues of power, privilege and difference perpetuates diversity illiteracy in school communities, which in turn inhibits competent classroom practice. We note the power and privilege that teachers, management, parents as well as learners possess in the first school. In our view, one of the blind spots in the first school where the teacher was employed might the celebration of the 'comfort with non-difference' and an unconscious quest for assimilation.

Thirdly, we find that there are agents who facilitate either inclusive or exclusive practices. These include learners, parents, teachers, school leaders and managers. The results pointed out to some learners, parents and teachers as agents of resistance to inclusion on the one hand. Fairclough (2004) states that Black teachers are mainly bullied into silence. On the other, the school tended to be more amenable to inclusion. In the second school, Isizulu was fully integrated and carried similar weight as all the other subjects. It may not be incorrect to assume that the school would have earlier confronted hegemonic codes of

oppression and comfort as well as engaged with issues of the transformation of

these oppressive systems to deepen social justice (Reygan et. al., 2018) at all levels of the school. The teacher enjoyed more freedom, authority and recognition which should, in accordance with CDL, be celebrated (crest) and reproduced.

Conclusion

In this article, we fore grounded inclusion from a non-disability perspective and as discussed broadened its horizons. We further turned the hegemonic trajectory to inclusion that situates the teacher as the provider and learners as recipients of inclusive services. In our article, the teacher was positioned as a receiver and other teachers, parents, as well as learners were positioned as the ones to stretch out an inclusive head, heart and hand. To generate data, we drew on a black teacher's narrative of moments of exclusion (troughs) and inclusion (crests) [as in a wave]. Without generalizing, we tapped into the storied life experiences of the participant. Relativist ontology informs us, through this research, that for one individual, realities remain dynamic, nuanced and can mutate simultaneously. The article further added value to the understanding of diversity as it navigates and negotiates power and privilege. It can be concluded that reflections on one's experiences of diversity affords both the individual and organization to self-introspect.

Notes

IsuZulu is a language spoken by more than nine million people mainly in South Africa, especially in the Zululand area of KwaZulu/Natal province. The Zulu language is a member of the Southeastern, or Nguni, subgroup of the Bantu group of the Benue-Congo branch of the Niger-Congo language family.

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