Exploring the impediments to racial integration at South African High Schools in the post-apartheid era: A case study of Bridge Town High School

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Contents

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Background and Outline of the Research Problem

After the dismantling of apartheid, various formal policies were implemented by the South African government to permit racial desegregation in high schools. While the demographic profile of many high schools in South Africa has changed, there have been many impediments to meaningful racial integration in these schools. A distinction between formal and substantive change can be identified. While desegregation has been a formal process which has been implemented through laws and policies, meaningful integration is a substantive process which manifests itself in the daily, lived experiences of pupils in these high schools.

This research aims to explore the various impediments to meaningful and substantive racial integration in South African high schools, with a particular focus on the institutional culture and structures of these schools. I aim to do this by investigating the actual structures, policies and practices at the school, as well as gaining insight into the daily, lived experience of the pupils themselves. Through the identification of these impediments, I then hope to offer practical and relevant recommendations to address these issues.

Literature Review

To begin, I feel it is necessary to define a few key terms and concepts which will be relevant to the research. This research report will draw on the concept of institutional culture to explore the experiences of black pupils in South African high schools. Various other concepts fall under this topic, including formal and substantive change, racelessness or non-racialism, as well as social and cultural capital.

The sociological concepts of institutional culture and institutional racism, also referred to as structural or systemic racism, are particularly relevant topics in post-apartheid South Africa, especially in terms of education - in schools and in tertiary institutions.

Institutions can be defined as fairly stable social arrangements and practices through which collective action are taken (Knowles & Prewitt, 1969: 5). Whether it is a school, a university, a church or a company, each institution has its own unique institutional culture. Institutional culture includes the unique traditions, values, norms and policies of a particular institution. It involves the way in which people in the institution go about doing things, the systems, the operations, the procedures and the objectives (Sehoole, 2005: 107). The policies and laws of an institution act as a formal representation of these values and ideas (Sehoole, 2005: 108).

While each institution has its own unique culture, substantive equality cannot be achieved without problematizing the values and norms of some institutions which are inherently exclusionary or racist and which marginalise certain groups, while catering to a dominant group. This brings us to the concept of institutional racism. Knowles & Prewitt (1969: 1) provide a discussion of the differences between individual and institutional racism. Everyone has witnessed racism on an individual level, in racist slurs or attacks, for example, between one person and another. Institutional racism is a great deal more subtle, covert and difficult to attribute to the actions of one person as it is deeply embedded in the institutional practices and culture of society (Knowles & Prewitt, 1969: 1). Racism has become deeply embedded in the structure of society and is reflected in the practices of its institutions (Penketh, 2000: 16). Ideas reflecting notions of racial inferiority and superiority are reproduced and reinforced in institutional culture and practices (Penketh, 2000: 16). An institution is structurally racist to the degree that it is configured to promote racially unequal outcomes and resource disparities (Taylor, 2014: 43).

Barbara J. Risman, a feminist theorist and writer, provides an apt discussion of institutional inequality. Although her focus is on gender, the model which she uses can be applied to the concept of race as well. Risman describes gender as a social structure which is embedded in the social processes of everyday life and its institutions (Risman, 2004: 430). She discusses the way in which gender is used as a means of creating difference and therefore justifying a socially constructed stratification system in which different people have different positions and varying levels of privilege (Risman, 2004: 430). This argument can be applied to the issue of race as well. Risman's theory is that differentiated opportunities and constraints based on gender have consequences on three dimensions: the individual level, the interactional level and the institutional level, in which regulations regarding resource distribution are gender specific (Risman, 2004: 433). Institutional practices which are racially unequal filter down to affect equality on an interactional and individual level. These

institutional practices shape society and the ways in which people interact with each other, and also the ways in which individuals internalise ideas and feelings about themselves.

In his work, Steve Biko engaged with the systemic nature of racism by referring to white racism as a "system" (Taylor, 2014: 42). In the chapter 'Black Consciousness and the Quest for a True Humanity' in his book, 'I Write What I Like', Biko explains how racism in South Africa does not only exist on an individual basis but is "institutionalised to make it look like the South African way of life" (Biko, 1978: 97). Biko discusses the concept of assimilation, which is very relevant and interlinked with the concepts of institutional culture and racism, in which marginalised groups are often expected to assimilate to a dominant institutionalised culture. He describes how integration is only achieved when black people are forced to prove themselves in terms of white values, leading to "ultimate assimilation' (Biko, 1978: 101). He goes on to explain how these institutionalised white values, which may be in opposition to one's own cultural values, may lead one to question one's personal values, as they are in contradiction to what is classified as 'right' (Biko, 1978: 104). The Black Consciousness Movement urges black people to follow their own value system and not try to assimilate to a white value system.

During apartheid, racism was institutionalised in an obvious manner through a number of laws and acts. In the post-apartheid period, institutional racism is a great deal more subtle and covert. At this stage it is important to differentiate between the notions of formal and substantive equality. Most would agree that formal equality has been achieved in South Africa thanks to a constitution which upholds equality for all, regardless of race, gender, religion or other factors. Unlike the laws and policies of the former apartheid government, the laws and policies of the post-apartheid government aim to institutionalise notions of equality and combat discrimination. Substantive equality, I wish to argue, is yet to be achieved in South Africa. Substantive equality, which has a broader scope than the implementation of formal laws and policies, refers to a situation in which every person has an equal opportunity to succeed. Formal laws and policies overlook the fact that equality cannot be achieved when so many South Africans begin life at a disadvantage due to unequal access to resources and opportunities. Not everyone can run the same race when some are given significant head starts. Institutional racism is therefore an extremely relevant topic in post-apartheid South Africa.

South African society is still highly stratified along racial lines, with deeply embedded structural inequalities inherited from apartheid's discriminatory laws (Thaver, 2006: 157). In educational institutions, such as schools and universities, the pupil or student population may have changed significantly, but senior positions of influence, such as heads of department or members of the governing body, are still held overwhelmingly by white employees. This means that decision-making in these institutions is often directed by white people, even if they do not have a clear understanding of the needs and concerns of those for whom they are making the decisions. The same is true in many private companies. While integration may have occurred at face value, the institutions cannot change if the leadership does not change as well, so as to give those previously marginalised groups a voice.

There are various factors which contribute to the pervasiveness of institutional racism in post-apartheid South African society. One facet of institutional racism is the concept of 'racelessness' or non-racialism. Many institutions in South Africa aim to be raceless in an effort to move past the racial classifications of apartheid society. This is a misguided attempt at equality, without suitably addressing and remedying the injustices of the past. While attempts at racelessness by institutions may be initiated with the best intentions, the concept of racelessness does not problematize the fact that many institutions are inherently racialised. Seekings argues that whiteness is invisible in South Africa, as white people take their culture for granted (Seekings, 2007). Whiteness is the norm in many institutions, meaning that any behaviour which deviates from that becomes associated with the 'other', and 'others' are marginalised in a white-dominated environment. In his study of post-apartheid South African schooling, Fataar (2007) describes how many traditionally white schools only allow rugby as a sport, excluding soccer, which is enjoyed by many pupils of other races. He also describes how school concerts are dominated by "high" cultural items, such as ballet and Shakespearean plays, while again excluding popular youth art forms, such as hip hop, kwaito and modern dance (Fataar, 2007: 11). The shallowness of non-racialism results from the fact that it attributes racism to matters of individual thinking and attitude, while ignoring the fact that it is deeply rooted in social structures (Taylor, 2014: 42). Non-racialism is closely linked to assimilation, as the 'other' is expected to assimilate to the dominant and pervasive culture.

Seekings (2007) also discusses another facet of institutional racism – social or cultural capital. Pierre Bourdieu argues that one's position in a social system is not only a result of one's economic capital, but of one's cultural and social capital as well (Bourdieu, 1979: 404). Social or cultural capital refers to the intangible set of skills, knowledge and competencies which are often taken for granted by privileged individuals and which are vital for success in society. In many institutions these things are tacitly expected. In a university environment, for example, these expectations may include proficiency in the English language, technological competency and ease, as well as the ability to ask questions and participate in class. Seekings (2007) argues that while many institutions implement formal equality and equal opportunity for all, some overlook the unmeasured benefits that social capital brings to individuals from middle-class, and often white backgrounds. He argues that children from poor neighbourhoods, almost all black, attend poor quality schools and grow up in home environments which are unconducive to educational success.

While in post-apartheid South Africa formal policies of racial integration in schools have been implemented, many of those institutional structures that favour certain races remain. The research presented here relates more specifically to the Western Cape area and the racial integration among black and coloured students within historically coloured schools in particular.

In *Realising the Dream – Unlearning the Logic of Race in the South African School* (2012), Crain Soudien provides a useful summary of the history of school education in South Africa. Education in South Africa has always been segregated and discriminatory. During the period of Dutch colonialism slaves received basic education which instilled a self-conception of inferiority and encouraged slaves to abandon their indigenous cultures and assimilate to the Dutch culture (Soudien, 2012: 100). In 1839, a Department of Education was established in

the Cape Colony (Soudien, 2012: 102). The late 19th and early 20th century saw the rise of missionary education which also promoted assimilation to Western culture and the abandonment of traditional and indigenous cultures (Soudien, 2012: 103). The year 1953 was a turning point in the history of South African education as it saw the implementation of the Bantu Education Act (Soudien, 2012: 106). Black children received differentiated and sub-standard education which prepared them for low- or semi-skilled jobs, at best. They were also educated in the dominant languages – English and Afrikaans – which were not their mother tongue (Soudien, 2012: 107). The apartheid government segregated education further by creating separate Education Departments for each racial group, with the white group obviously benefitting considerably in terms of resources. After the advent of democracy in 1994, a single, unified Department of Education was created and was tasked to address the educational needs of the previously disadvantaged (Soudien, 2012: 110). Desegregation of schools also took place during this process of transformation and schools were no longer reserved for a single race.

Schools were presented with the challenge of integrating different races into schools which were formerly reserved for a single race. Most of these schools were not given formal guidelines and support in negotiating this process of integration and the staff, therefore, did what they felt was best. Soudien (2012) offers a continuum of three possible approaches to integration adopted by schools in the post-apartheid era:

Assimilation ---------- Multicultural education ---------- Anti-racist education

It is a continuum which runs from the left side (representing the least accommodative and integrative schooling) to the right side (representing the most accommodative and integrative schooling). Soudien (2012) argues that most South African schools have taken an assimilationist approach to racial integration, whether this is a conscious decision or not. In this approach, the values, traditions and customs of the dominant group frame the social and cultural context of the school.

Racism, 'Racial Integration' and Desegregation in South African Public Secondary Schools – A Report on a Study by the South African Human Rights Commission (SAHRC) by S. Vally and Y. Dalamba (1999), provides a detailed account of the three integration approaches mentioned by Soudien (2012). The report outlines the findings of a study of 90 schools in South Africa – 10 from each province. The study concluded that of the 90 schools, the majority had employed an assimilationist strategy, a few had developed a multicultural education programme, and not one had utilised an anti-racist education programme.

Vally & Dalamba (1999) describe the assimilationist strategy as one which does not accommodate difference but expects the students to adapt to the norms and culture of the school. There is a discourse around the maintenance of standards at the school – implying a superiority of the traditional norms and values of the school. Allied to this strategy is the concept of "colour-blindness", also referred to as 'racelessness' in other contexts. This refusal to acknowledge the obvious differences in the values and norms of students from different backgrounds effectively hides institutionalized racism and discriminatory attitudes in these schools, making these issues invisible, and ensuring that they are never properly addressed.

Assimilation denotes a process in which power relations determine that a subordinate group accommodates to and is accommodated by a more powerful group (Chrisholm & Sujee, 2006: 142).

Multicultural education programmes attempt to address discrimination and exclusion in schools by promoting tolerance and celebrating 'cultural' diversity. It is a strategy which identifies ignorance as the main cause of discrimination and exclusion. It is thought that if cultural exchange, personal contact and dialogue between different students are achieved, this will eradicate the issue by addressing this ignorance. While there may be noble intentions, this strategy often results in the conflation of race and culture in which culture is essentialised to present stereotypical representations, which are often seen as inferior anyway. Rattansi (2011) explains that cultural essentialism often forms part of multiculturalism. This cultural essentialism presents simplistic versions of cultures as having a small number of unchanging key characteristics – often to do with food, dress, or other features (Rattansi, 2011: 27). This emphasis on difference and diversity legitimates the idea that difference is natural and therefore a fair basis for differentiated treatment. Multiculturalism is unable to address the structural and institutional level of racism, including the socio-economic disadvantage and discrimination suffered by ethnic minorities (Rattansi, 2011: 145). Rattansi (2011) proposes the concept of 'interculturalism' to address the weaknesses of multiculturalism. Interculturalism, rather than just celebrating diversity, encourages positive encounters between different race groups and the setting up of dialogues and joint activities (Rattansi, 2011: 152). This approach aims to create recognition of shared values between cultures or races (Rattansi, 2011: 153).

Vally & Dalamba (1999) propose anti-racist education as the most effective solution in addressing post-apartheid racial integration in South African high schools. This is a strategy which aims to acknowledge the existence of racism in schools and to actively address and challenge it. This involves the dismantling of institutionalised practices of racism. This could involve changing the curriculum at the school, restructuring power relations (such as racial composition of staff in management and teaching positions), as well as bringing about changes in attitudes and behaviours of students.

Language is a key area in which institutional racism is experienced and assimilation is expected in South African schools. Thobeka Mda (2004) describes how, during apartheid, the dominant languages of English and Afrikaans were referred to as "languages", while indigenous African languages were referred to as "tongues" or "vernaculars". "Languages" carried certain rights and privileges, whereas "vernaculars" were marginalised as languages of learning, and were not usually taught beyond primary school (Mda, 2004: 163). The standing of indigenous African languages in education has not greatly improved in the post-apartheid era. Lemon (2004) found in his study of school inequalities in the Eastern Cape, that in some white and coloured schools in the area, Xhosa was not even offered as a matric subject, despite being widely spoken. In another example of the disparity between formal and substantive equality, all South African languages are treated as equal in the constitution, yet English and Afrikaans are still held in high esteem as languages of economic and social advancement (Mda, 2004: 167). Many school pupils feel that they risk losing socio-economic access and mobility if they are taught in African languages rather than English and Afrikaans

(Mda, 2004: 169). Soudien (2010) found that many parents of black children in South Africa actually encourage linguistic assimilation, promoting a shift from Xhosa to English, as they see this as politically, economically and educationally beneficial for their children. Soudien describes language as the "central mechanism in powerful cultural machines" (Soudien, 2010: 358). Mda (2004) argues that black children often experience 'othering' through language as the dominant languages of the school are not their mother tongue. Adding to this 'other' position is the fact that most teachers in South African schools are not multilingual (Mda, 2004: 172). If teachers were to develop competency in African languages this could possibly not only make learners feel more comfortable, but also assist those teachers in teaching English as a second language. This is especially significant as Brook (1996) found that most teachers in South Africa did not receive formal training in teaching English as a second language, creating a barrier to inclusion at many schools.

Soudien (2012) makes particular reference to trends observed in the study of integration in traditionally 'Coloured' and 'Indian' schools. He argues that the demographic profile of these schools has changed dramatically, with the addition of numerous 'African' students. This is especially the case when these schools are located along bus and train routes from the townships. He argues that these schools do not actively address the issue of race, rather avoiding it by creating 'non-racial identities' which, in reality, reinforce the values of the dominant Coloured/Indian culture. He also states that a barrier to integration in these schools is the fact that while the demographics of the students in the school may change, the profile of the teachers often remains exactly as it did in apartheid.

Penny et al (1993) continue in this vein by discussing the issue of 'racelessness'. The issue is that this 'raceless' or 'neutral' school culture is based on the dominant culture of the school and institutionalises its values and beliefs. The authors describe how, unlike traditionally white schools, coloured schools were not given the tools to cope with post-apartheid racial integration. It may therefore be considered a logical move by these schools to incorporate the idea of racelessness (and therefore assimilation), in lieu of any support from educational authorities. These ideas, however, have proven problematic. The idea of racelessness prevents individuals within an institution from identifying and acknowledging that an institutional culture can be racialised.

Fataar (2007) provides an interesting discussion regarding the identity formations of black and coloured youth in post-apartheid schools. These youths occupy an interesting middle position between two worlds. They learn to adapt and assimilate to the dominant world of their school environment, while still maintaining their connection to their homes. Fataar (2007) argues that these youths establish what he calls a "translocal cultural citizenship" in the process of crisscrossing between racially and culturally dissonant spaces. They are able to adapt and negotiate the requirements of both worlds. Children will often learn cultural rules and adapt to the school's expectations so as to access educational capital (Fataar, 2007: 23). Battersby (2004) takes a similar position in describing the "identity crisis" faced by many black and coloured pupils entering schools far from their home and background. She describes how many pupils find it difficult occupying a time and space that only exists during school hours (Battersby, 2004: 285). While racial integration may occur in school environments, the majority of South Africa is still sharply divided along racial lines. Black

and coloured children also face issues of authenticity when negotiating home and school life. Black students who attend white schools are often accused of thinking they are better than others in their community, receiving derogatory nicknames, such as “coconut” or “oreo” (Battersby, 2004: 284). Battersby (2004) describes the process of “code switching” or “identity performance” in which black or coloured students actively acquire cultural capital in their schools so as to gain acceptance from peers and teachers. It is clear that their position of acceptance is not guaranteed or unproblematic at these schools, it has to be actively fought for through assimilation to dominant norms and practices.

Vally & Dalamba (1999) propose a number of recommendations in their study in order to address racial integration in South African high schools. These include the implementation of an anti-discriminatory policy at the school, accompanied by anti-discrimination training for staff and learners. Affirmative action policies could be implemented at the school to ensure that teaching and governing body staff are representative of the demographics of the student population. In their study, Vally & Dalamba (1999) identified inhibitive factors which discouraged black parents from actively participating in school activities and parent-teacher meetings. These factors include lack of transport, the language used at meeting as well as the atmosphere which was not welcoming, and the days and times at which the meetings and school activities were held, which often clashed with the parents’ work commitments.

A main issue in the study of racial integration in post-apartheid South African schooling is the disparity between formal and substantive change at these schools. While laws and policies have been put in place to regulate the integration taking place at these schools, there is often a lack of substantive and meaningful integration in practice. Vally & Dalamba (1999) suggest acknowledging the disparity between policy and school practice and implementing measures to address this.

While institutional racism is a relevant topic within this discussion, not all post-apartheid South African schools are inherently racist. The institutional culture of these schools, however, is often significantly racialised, accommodating some racial groups more so than others. This means that children from one group may experience their school life in different ways to others. This institutional culture is created and reproduced through the school’s history, traditions, staff and processes. In my research I aim to explore the institutional culture of Bridge Town High School and how it is experienced by its black learners in particular. I aim to explore why this experience can be exclusionary in nature, resulting in a lack of substantive racial integration at the school.

Research Methods

The research took place over a three week period from July to August 2014 at Bridge Town High School in Bridge Town, Athlone in Cape Town. The research was conducted at the request of the principal, Mr Philander, so I was allowed free and unfettered access to the school activities, teachers and pupils. I observed seventeen classes on a range of subjects, including Afrikaans, isiXhosa, Life Orientation, Tourism Studies, Economic and Management Sciences, Accounting, and Computer Applications Technology, as well as with a range of grades. I conducted eight interviews, five with pupils and three with teachers. Of the five pupils, two were black females, Chiara and Zanele, two were black males, Sbusiso and Mfundo, and one was a coloured female, Lucy. The three teachers interviewed were Mrs Davids and Mrs Peterson, coloured females, and Mr Jacobs, a coloured male.

I also had a number of informal conversations with teachers and with the principal, which were not recorded electronically but which were summarized in written form to draw out the main points. I was given access to the staff room and observed a number of morning staff meetings. I was also given two textbooks by the staff, the relevant chapters of which I scanned and returned.

Research Design

The research design of this project is a qualitative design which aims to explore and uncover the ways in which race and institutional culture are experienced by black pupils at Bridge Town High School. The research design is descriptive and aims to provide a qualitative description of the daily experiences of black pupils at the school from their own point of view, using their own terminology. In this case, the research aims to explore the phenomenon of institutional culture in a natural setting which has not been manipulated – that of Bridge Town High School. The study also describes phenomena from the point of view of the research participants so as to gain a deeper understanding of their own personal experiences in their own context.

The research will also utilise the concept of abstraction to study these particular issues. An abstract concept is a one-sided or partial aspect of an object of study, as opposed to a concrete concept, which represents a unity of diverse aspects (Sayer, 1981: 7). By using the process of abstraction the researcher is able to isolate one aspect or relationship in a complex open system of numerous relationships and interconnections. Even if the isolation of this one aspect or relationship would not be possible in reality, it allows the researcher to focus solely on this without the interference of other issues. In the case of Bridge Town High School there are various relationships and issues at play at the school, including gender and age relations. I aimed to isolate the race relations at the school so as to study and focus on these. I also aimed to isolate and focus on the institutional culture at the school, and how this tied in with race relations. Rational abstractions, in particular, isolate the necessary and internal properties of a system, namely the generative and causal properties (Roberts, 1999: 29). These properties are fundamental to other relationships in the system. The race relations at Bridge Town High School are central and fundamental relationships in this environment, and are influential in determining other relationships in the system.

While I am aware that the findings of my research are not necessarily statistically representative or generalizable to similar schools within post-Apartheid South Africa, or even Cape Town, I hope that I will be able to identify certain 'tendencies' which may be present within other formerly coloured schools experiencing desegregation. Danermark et al. (2002) describes a 'tendency' as a description of a mechanism existing as a property in reality, but whose observable effects strongly vary depending on concrete circumstances. Danermark et al. (2002) also describe that qualitative methods, like case studies, can produce generalizable knowledge about structures and mechanisms. I hope that the structures and mechanisms which I identify within my case study of Bridge Town High School can be applied to other coloured schools in South Africa undergoing desegregation. You could do more here to be explicit about the distinction between the logic of statistical or quantitative generalisation from qualitative generalisation. That is, you need to state what is generalizable about the results of a quantitative method: namely the quantitative estimate of a parameter in a large population. Similarly, you should describe what is generalizable about a finding from a qualitative method: namely the powers and liabilities of causal mechanisms and the conditions under which these powers and liabilities are actualised.

Qualitative Research

This project will make use of qualitative research methods as opposed to quantitative methods. A quantitative approach fails to take into account the complex ways in which people differ from the objects of natural science (Bryman, 1988: 3). Qualitative methods are characterised by sustained periods of involvement as well as the study of actions, norms and values from the perspective of those who are being studied (Bryman, 1988: 61). I spent a three week period at the school, allowing me to start identifying these actions, norms and values. I have chosen qualitative research methods as these methods are useful in uncovering detailed and in-depth information. By 'detailed' information I am referring to information which provides a rich background and which is contextual by nature. Qualitative methods place emphasis on descriptive detail as this provides a context for the research (Bryman, 1988: 64). In this situation, the concept of 'holism' is integral. Holism is concerned with the examination of social entities as wholes to be explicated and understood in their entirety (Bryman, 1988: 64). While quantitative methods may seek constant conjunctions or correlations in the data, qualitative data seeks to identify causal mechanisms which may produce constant conjunctions. By describing the context in great detail, one is able to use qualitative methods to identify various possible causes of events, rather than simply attributing causes to constant conjunction. By studying the context, the researcher is able to differentiate between necessary and contingent relationships and identify causal mechanisms, even if these mechanisms do not always manifest themselves in reality. As qualitative methods also seek to delve deeper than surface-level constant conjunctions to identify inner causal mechanisms, the information obtained is considered 'in-depth'.

A central motif of qualitative research is its emphasis on the way in which those individuals being studied understand and interpret their social reality (Bryman, 1988: 8). My aim is to discover capture and describe the experience of black pupils at Bridge Town High School from their own perspectives, using their own terminology. I will seek to identify the central issues and concerns which the pupils themselves deem to be important.

While quantitative research methods usually present a 'snapshot' in time by providing information about a phenomena at a certain point in time, qualitative methods emphasize longitudinal research and focus on change, process and the stream of interconnecting events (Bryman, 1988: 65). Through my interviews and conversations with the teachers at the school, many of whom have been at the school for over twenty years, I was able to get a holistic picture of the history of the school and the process of desegregation which has taken place over the years, since the dismantling of Apartheid.

Sayer (1992) differentiates between intensive research design, which utilises qualitative research methods, and extensive research design, which uses quantitative methods. He argues that while extensive research simply aims to discover common properties and general patterns of a population, intensive research seeks causal powers and mechanisms (Sayer, 1992: 242). Intensive research aims to discover how a process works and produces a change rather than simply identifying regularities and common patterns (Sayer, 1992: 243). Intensive research seeks out substantial relations of connection and situates practices within wider contexts (Sayer, 2000: 22). In my project I aim to conduct in-depth research which will identify the causal powers and mechanisms which have prevented substantive integration from taking place at Bridge Town High School.

Sampling Procedure and Research Participants

This study has made use of **purposive sampling**. (Johnson & Reynolds, 2008: 225). Purposive sampling is used when cases are selected for inclusion in the study if they are judged as typical of some category of cases of interest to the researcher (De Vaus, 2002: 90). While the sample may not be statistically representative, it does provide some insightful and interesting information of a particular case. I chose mainly to interview black learners, and only one coloured learner, as I was very interested in exploring the experience of being a black learner at the school, especially to understand how institutional culture is experienced by these learners. Interviewing the teachers also gave me a great deal of insight into the racial issues at the school and also uncovered facets of institutional culture. By acquiring information from the teachers as to the processes and practices at the school, as well as understanding the teachers' own attitudes and concerns, I was able to piece together a picture of the institutional culture of the school.

While the study does not aim to be statistically representative or generalizable as a non-probability sample will be used, I aim to uncover the causal properties of particular kinds of cultural practices which affect integration at South African high schools, particularly formerly coloured high schools with a significant black student body. Lewis & Ritchie (2003) distinguish between inferential and theoretical generalisation in qualitative research. Inferential generalisation applies a proposition to settings and people other than those studied, whereas theoretical generalisation applies constructs developed in a study to the generation and refinement of theory (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003). By using theoretical generalisation, one is able to take the findings of this case study of Bridge Town High School and apply them to other South African high schools facing similar conditions with regards to racial integration. The causal properties may be very similar in other South African high schools and therefore may produce similar circumstances to those at Bridge Town High School. I aim to contribute

to the theory on racial integration in South African high schools through the findings of this case study.

Sample Size

Qualitative Samples are usually small in size as statements about incidence or prevalence are not of concern (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003: 83). Another reason for the smaller size is that the type of information qualitative studies yield is rich in hundreds of "bites" of data (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003: 84). The eight interviews I conducted, as well as the informal conversations and observations which I carried out provided rich data on a number of topics. When coded, each interview had various different references to themes in the research. The interview with Mr Jacobs, for example, had 83 references to themes in the research.

Theoretical saturation is reached when the data being collected provides no new insights or themes which will add substance to the research. Given the time constraints of the research, I was limited in the number of interviews and observations I could conduct. While I am sure that an extended period at the school would have enriched my research and may have provided me with new avenues for exploration, I feel that the data collected sufficiently developed and contextualised the themes and findings in my research.

Sampling Frame

As I was conducting my research at a high school, I had to work within the constraints of the school day and respect the practices within the school. I was allocated classes to observe by Mrs Davids. The teachers of these classes were accommodating and allowed me to sit and observe. I gave Mrs Davids my requirements for the interviews and she allocated me five pupils which matched the race and gender of what I required as well as two teachers and herself for interviews. The interviews with pupils had to be conducted during class time, so the pupils were sent to me and we were given a private and quiet space within which to conduct the interview.

Data Collection Instruments

Semi-structured Interview

This study involved eight face-to-face semi-structured interviews with the pupils and teachers at the school so as to gain qualitative data, as well as a number of informal conversations with teachers and the principal which were not electronically recorded or transcribed. I created two interview guides; one for the teachers and one for the pupils (please see Appendix 1 & 2). These guides provided a list of questions and topics to guide the conversation. They were not, however, followed word-for-word in the interviews and the structure and flow of the interview varied from person to person. While the same general topics were consistently covered from one interview to the next, a number of unanticipated themes emerged which I followed and explored. This allowed me to identify a number of themes and findings which were not present in my preliminary research. The value of an open, semi-structured qualitative interview lies in the fact that there is very little or no imposition of prior and possibly inappropriate frames of reference on the individuals being studied (Bryman, 1988: 66). This allows the interviewer greater flexibility in addressing the issues and concepts which the respondents raise themselves, in their own words, even if these issues are unforeseen. In these types of open, semi-structured interviews, there is always a possibility that the interviewer may come across unexpected and unforeseen issues which may be of interest (Bryman, 1988: 67). This is the strength of qualitative research in comparison to quantitative research; it can discover new phenomena.

The interviews were very conversational and I felt that the respondents were relaxed and felt free to talk openly and honestly. Through the more flexible nature of semi-structured interviewing I was able to gain insight into the issues and concerns pertinent to the pupils and teachers, in their own language and context. This allowed me a greater understanding of the institutional culture at Bridge Town High School. I also feel that, because I interviewed both teachers and pupils, I was able to gain a multi-faceted understanding of the institutional culture at the school as well as the issues and challenges experienced by both parties.

Literature

I have used extensive literature to gain background knowledge of the topic. This literature has also assisted me in developing certain propositions on the topic, which I attempted to find empirical evidence for in the field, while still remaining open to unforeseen findings.

Observations

I observed seventeen classes on a range of subjects, including Afrikaans, isiXhosa, Life Orientation, Tourism Studies, Economic and Management Sciences, Accounting, and Computer Applications Technology, as well as with a range of grades. I did not participate in these classes but merely sat and observed, while taking notes. Through these observations I was able to witness the race relations and dynamics between various pupils within the classroom setting. I was also able to observe the relationship between the teachers and the pupils, as well as how race is handled by teachers in the classroom setting. I feel that these observations allowed me to explore how race is experienced, enacted and reproduced by the

pupils and teachers at the school. The observations also allowed me to contrast the group dynamics and interaction in the classroom with the individual thoughts and experiences of the pupils in the individual interviews.

Study of the Curriculum

In accordance with the school's recommendation, I chose to study the curricula of the Tourism Studies and Life Orientation subjects. I was able to borrow the textbooks for these subjects from Mr Jacobs and Mrs Davids. The textbooks are Quigley, et al.'s *Shuters Top Class Tourism Grade 11* and Via Afrika Publishers' *Life Orientation Grade 12*. I then scanned the relevant chapters and analysed these as part of my research. These subjects were chosen as they deal with race most explicitly and these are the subjects in which teachers have been accused of racism in dealing with the sensitive racial topics. I was able to gain a multi-faceted understanding of how race was handled in an academic context by analysing these textbooks, as well as interviewing both teachers and pupils on the topic.

Data Analysis

Nvivo 10 software was used as one of the tools to analyse the qualitative data collected. I uploaded the eight interview transcripts as well as my observations document, which included notes on my informal conversations with the teachers and the principal, onto the program. I then used the software to code these documents. I started with first-level coding which involved sorting the data under different descriptive codes. These first-level codes were then combined under broader second-level codes which covered themes, hierarchies and arguments. The software allowed me to identify patterns and relationships between the codes as I could see which topics were coded together. I was able to identify a relationship, for example, between 'age and grade differences' and 'fighting'; a relationship which will be explored later in the findings section.

Ethical Issues

When incorporating children as part of one's research, ethical concerns are always relevant. I received an ethical clearance letter from the Department of Sociology before conducting the research. Each of the eight interview participants signed a consent form to allow me to use the information they provided as part of my research. This consent form provided the title and the nature of the research, as well as the name and email address of the researcher. This consent form also assures the participant that they will not be personally identifiable and ensures their anonymity. I have changed every name in my report to ensure this anonymity. Three of the pupil participants were already over the age of 18 so they were able to sign the consent form themselves. The other two participants asked their parents/guardians to sign their forms, which they did. There were no issues related to ethical concerns experienced. The fact that the school personally requested this research was helpful in this regard.

Findings

Race and Culture in the Classroom

A significant finding of this report is the way in which the topics of race and culture are handled, spoken about and constructed within Bridge Town High School.

Bridge Town High School is a school which fell under the separate 'Coloured' Education Department during Apartheid. Soudien (2012) argues that formerly coloured schools, like Bridge Town High School, experienced significant transformations in the demographic profile of their student body with the advent of racial desegregation post-apartheid. Their staff composition, however, often remained almost exactly as it was during apartheid. This is something which I noted during my time at BTHS. The teaching staff, principal and administration staff, made up of 23 individuals altogether, are all coloured, barring one white teacher and one black teacher. The language used by these coloured teachers is also important. Even though Bridge Town High School is an English-medium school, I noted through my observations in the staff room that, when talking amongst themselves, the coloured teachers predominantly speak Afrikaans.

One incident I noted in my observations during the daily staff meeting was relevant in this regard. The principal usually runs the daily staff meetings, which are about 15 minutes long, and in which he makes relevant announcements for the staff. On the day of the observation, the principal was not present so one of the coloured male senior teachers took over. He made a main announcement in English but then made a shorter, more rushed announcement in Afrikaans. The black, Xhosa-speaking teacher was present at this meeting. For someone who is not familiar with Afrikaans, it would have been very difficult to understand this last announcement.

I also noted various instances in which Afrikaans is used by the teachers to communicate with learners. During my observations in one of Mrs Davids's classes, the class was interrupted by an announcement made over the intercom, regarding a rehearsal for a concert during break. The teacher making the announcement, Mr Jacobs, a coloured male, uses an Afrikaans phrase – "stiek uit" – at the end of the announcement. In another one of Mrs Davids's classes, she uses one Afrikaans sentence in her lesson and also uses an Afrikaans phrase – "skelling out". Even though over half the student body is made up of black learners, the use of Afrikaans phrases during class seems to be relatively common-place.

While language will be explored in more detail later in this report, it is important to note now that the race, as well as the language, of the teachers is important in this case. Through my discussions with Mrs Davids I gathered that of the 20 teachers on staff, around 5 were referred to as "new", meaning they had been working at the school for 5 years or less, while the rest had been working at the school for over 20 years. The composition of the staff at the school has not changed very much from the days of apartheid, while the composition of the student body has altered dramatically. The staff at BTHS obviously play a vital role in shaping the institutional culture of the school, and this is why it is important to discuss their race and language. I had 3 recorded, semi-structured interviews with teachers at the school, as well as a number of informal teacher interviews which were not transcribed but the main

points of which were recorded. I will now discuss how the 3 teachers interviewed deal with the topics of race and culture in their classrooms. To do this I will also refer to the material they teach in the form of my extracts and analysis of the textbooks.

Mr Jacobs is the Life Orientation and English teacher at the school. An interesting finding I made at the school was the high level of trust and personal involvement among pupils and teachers. This level of involvement seems a lot more intense than normal teacher-pupil relationships. This may be a result of the learners' poor background and social issues – resulting in them needing personal and financial assistance from the teachers which they cannot obtain anywhere else. This trust and involvement is especially evident in the case of Mr Jacobs. He gives his students his personal contact information, such as his cell phone number and Facebook contact, and encourages them to contact him if they ever need help. I think this is quite relevant to the way in which he deals with race and culture in his class. As he teaches Life Orientation he needs to cover potentially sensitive topics like race and culture. During my interview with Mr Jacobs, I ask him whether his learners ever feel uncomfortable discussing these sensitive topics with him. He believes that due to the close relationship he has with his learners and the trust which he has developed, they feel comfortable enough to discuss anything with him. This is an extract from his interview where he discusses how he engages with his learners on a personal level. This is what he says to his learners about contacting him outside of school:

> "If you are in trouble, even if it's at home, after school, give me a shout, we'll talk about it and try and sort it out".
>
> (Interview: Mr Jacobs)

It seems that because students trust Mr Jacobs, they feel more comfortable talking openly with him about race and culture in the classroom. Through my observations I also noticed this unique dynamic between him and his learners. While he is relatively strict in terms of demanding order and silence when the learners walk into the class, he is very interactive with the class, jokes around with them and chats to many of them in an informal, friendly way. He especially enjoys chatting and joking around with the black females in class. He is a very energetic and funny character and the class responds really well to him and are keen to interact in class.

When teaching the Life Orientation content Mr Jacobs seems to encourage an open dialogue regarding race and culture. He encourages students to openly discuss and dissect stereotypes so as to see the untruths. Mr Jacobs's level of trust and involvement with his learners facilitates this open dialogue. This is an extract from my interview with him where he explains that his openness with these topics makes the learners feel that they can discuss them in an open, non-judgemental space:

> And so when I, so I can…I can use the word, um, "black", and say, "Hey!", you know. And they respond to that because they know it doesn't come from a place where I'm discriminating against them.
>
> (Interview: Mr Jacobs)

He often uses humour to engage with these stereotypes and does not hesitate to joke and play with these contentious topics. This is an extract from my interview with him where he discusses an incident where a black learner walked into class late:

> R: (laughs) The one boy walked in…an isiXhosa learner, and the other learners arrived and he said, "Ai, ai, ai, these black people, hey, they forever late".
>
> I: (laughs)
>
> R: I said, "Ja, ja, ja", talk to them, talk to your brothers and sisters. We Africans, we don't know time, we don't respect time."
>
> (Interview: Mr Jacobs)

Mr Jacobs is playfully addressing the stereotype that black people are always late for meetings, while still addressing the issue of punctuality in the class. By using the word "we" to describe Africans, Mr Jacobs is identifying himself with the black learners, and therefore defusing the racial tension which may arise from this stereotype.

The Life Orientation textbook, *Life Orientation Grade 12,* published by Via Afrika, facilitates an open dialogue regarding race and culture. One of the activities in the book (p.115) takes the form of a role-play in which students are asked to openly discuss racism and other forms of discrimination in class. The book deals with a number of sensitive topics but in quite a realistic manner relevant to contemporary South Africa. In a section entitled, "Examples of human rights violations" (pg.113), the following headings need to be discussed by the learners:

"Lesbian beaten up in hotel"

"Women forced to remove pants at taxi rank"

While the textbook does provide a basis for discussions around race, culture and discrimination, the nature of this subject requires an educator to stimulate class discussions and open dialogue on these topics. In this case Mr Jacobs seems to manage the task quite well without offending any of his learners.

Mrs Davids has a very different approach to teaching as well as her relationship with learners. Through my observations of her classes I saw how she made her learners line up outside the classroom before coming inside, and then they were asked to stand and greet her in a formal way. She does not tolerate any interruptions so the class is very quiet and well-behaved. As she is a lot stricter with her learners, she does not engage and interact with them on a personal level, as Mr Jacobs does in his classes.

Mrs Davids teaches various subjects at the school including Tourism Studies. She tells me that she has been accused of racism by her pupils and she points to the Tourism Studies class as the period in which these accusations are generally made. Mrs Davids argues that much of the content of the subject refers to "ethnic groups" and "culture groups" and the different practices and preferences of these various groups. So to teach her learners how to work in the tourism industry she feels that it is important that they know the unique characteristics of

each cultural group so as to tailor an itinerary to suit their needs and preferences. Here is an extract from my interview with her where she argues this point:

> So if you are going to teach tourism you have to tell them, "This culture, you have to, if you get a Chinese person coming and greeting you with his hands folded and he doesn't want to shake your hand it doesn't mean it's rude. In his culture, bowing is his way of greeting, you know. So we should learn each and everybody's different way of cultural greetings.
>
> (Interview: Mrs Davids)

My assumption is that the root cause of these accusations of racism by learners relates to the content of the Tourism Studies subject, as well as the way she teaches it, which is perceived by learners to be racist as race and culture are essentialised. BTHS seems to take a multicultural approach to education around race and culture at the school. Teachers encourage students to talk openly about these topics but stereotypes which essentialise race and culture are still used. Rattansi (2011) argues that cultural essentialism, which presents simplistic versions of cultures as having a small number of unchanging key characteristics, often to do with food, dress, or other features, is often present in multicultural approaches. This emphasis on difference and diversity legitimates the idea that difference is natural and therefore a fair basis for differentiated treatment.

This seems to be the case in the Tourism Studies subject. The textbook, *Shuters Top Class Tourism Grade 11* (Quigley, et al.) blatantly essentialises race and culture and presents various stereotypes. In a section which attempts to explain the different local South African cultures, the textbook presents simplified versions of cultures possessing unchanging key characteristics. The categories used for comparison of different cultures are "cuisine", "dress", "dance and music". The following are a few statements which are made (Quigley, et al. p.148–149):

'The Indians are known for their hot dishes.'

'The only indigenous cereal of African-speaking cultures is grain sorghum which is enjoyed by all African groups'

Then, under a section labelled "The Nguni Group (Zulu, Xhosa, Swati, Ndebele)" the following claims are presented (Quigley, et al. p.150):

'The Zulu people have a distinct culture that makes them stand out from other cultural groups in South Africa.'

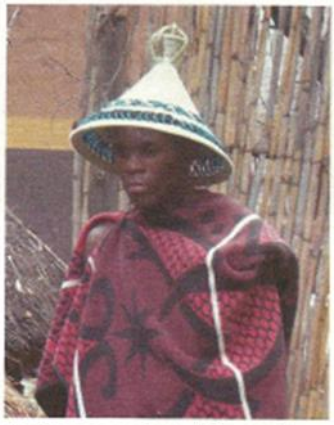
'Through films and media, the Zulu people have become probably the best-known cultural group for visitors to South Africa.'

'Women are traditionally responsible for the cooking in a Zulu household.'

'Men are responsible for the well-being of their families'

The first statement essentialises culture by presenting Zulu culture as "distinct", meaning it has a number of core, unchanging characteristics which make it "stand out" from other cultural groups. The second statement 'others' the Zulu people by presenting them as a tourist attraction for overseas visitors. The last two statements present gender stereotypes in relation to these cultures. These extracts are essentialising culture by presenting very established and unchanging gender roles. This does not account for the shifting gender dynamics in contemporary South African society, and presents an essentialised and 'traditional' Zulu culture which is static and out of date.

This is how these cultures are visually represented in this section:



A BaSotho man in traditional attire.

© Wikipedia

Woman in traditional Ndebele dress

The textbook uses stereotypical images of the traditional aspects of these cultures. The textbook does not offer any information or images of young, modern, urban black South Africans. These cultures are presented as rural and traditional, leading the reader to believe that they are static and unchanging, with no reference to the new social positions black people occupy in contemporary South African society.

The way in which race and culture are presented in this subject contributes to institutional racism at the school. These stereotypes of essentialised culture are accepted, taught and reinforced in the classroom setting. The classroom is also the setting in which black South African people are 'othered' and presented as part of static, unchanging cultural groups which are offered up as tourist attractions for foreigners. A classroom setting in which black people

are othered and presented as possessing a number of stereotypical features is one that is institutionally racist in my view.

The next section is entitled “White, Indian and Coloured Cultural Groups” (Quigley, et al. p.155). Whereas in the previous section black South Africans could be classified into one of a number of cultural groups, now simply to be “white” or “coloured” is a cultural grouping on its own. These are the images used in the textbook to portray the Indian and coloured cultures respectively:

A traditional Indian dancer.

The Cape Minstrel Carnival.

There is an activity at the end of the unit which I feel is in line with a multicultural education approach and encourages pupils to think in terms of static cultural features and stereotypes:

“Your teacher will divide the class into groups consisting of learners from different cultural backgrounds.

1. Each person in the group is to share one aspect of their culture with the group. This could consist of a story, a song a piece of clothing, or a food eaten.

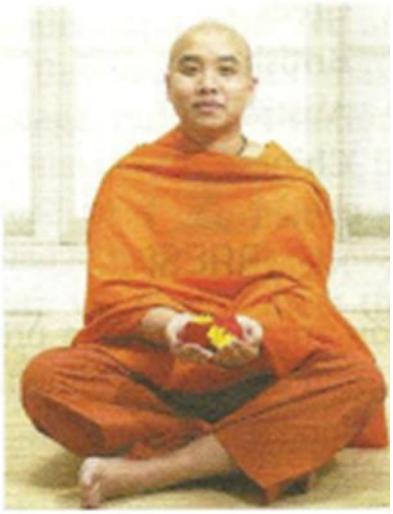
2. In your group, discuss each of these cultural practices; find out how cultures differ, but also what they have in common.

3. Discuss whether you think any of these cultural practices could become a tourist attraction, and if so, how." (Quigley, et al. p.162)

I think the third question is especially problematic as it encourages pupils to 'other' these cultures by presenting them as tourist attractions available for viewing by foreign tourists, with static and unchanging features.

The textbook's description of religions is just as essentialist and problematic. In a section entitled "Food preferences and choices" (Quigley, et al. p.266) the textbook lists different religions and their food preferences. Once again, these religions are described as possessing essential and static attributes and are visually presented in a stereotypical manner:

A Muslim woman



A Buddhist

A Hindu

A Jewish rabbi

Having observed both Mr Jacobs's and Mrs Davids's classes it is evident that while Mr Jacobs relies heavily on group work and interactive class discussions, Mrs Davids follows the textbook more faithfully and does not really allow for as much group discussion so that learners can engage directly with the material and contradict it if necessary. It is also clear from conversations with Mrs Davids that she also tends to present stereotypical and

essentialised versions of culture. She often discusses the "isiXhosa culture" and argues that isiXhosa people have a very distinct way of doing things which is different to how other people do things. During my interview with her she described one serious disciplinary incident at the school where a black male hit a black female. She concluded that this incident resulted from cultural factors and argued that this treatment of women is acceptable in the "isiXhosa culture":

> To fit in and to adhere to these cultures, um, it's a bit difficult, because they would expect that their culture is that…for instance, the male isiXhosa learners, they have the culture of where they can do what they have to do to a female isiXhosa learner.
>
> (Interview: Mrs Davids)

She also discussed how the parents were called in and did not have an issue with this incident. She warned the parents that what may be acceptable in one culture is not acceptable in another. She then contrasted the "isiXhosa" culture with the "coloured" culture:

> "You must remember that's in your culture, if you touch another culture, it will be different, because you may not lift your hand to anybody, it's assault". So in the coloured culture, perhaps if you touch a coloured learner, that parent might take the boy to court and there will be consequences.
>
> (Interview: Mrs Davids)

Mrs Davids clearly segments people into different cultural groups with distinct practices and behaviour.

In my view, therefore, the content of Tourism Studies, as well as the way it is presented by Mrs Davids, leads to these accusations of racism by the learners, who resent the stereotypical and essentialised versions of race and culture presented.

Mrs Peterson, a young coloured woman, has only been at the school for two years. She teaches Mathematics, Maths Literacy and Natural Sciences. She has a slightly different take on the issue of race in the classroom. She has also been accused of racism by her learners but differs from Mrs Davids in her view as to the reason. Mrs Peterson believes that pupils are not actually sensitive about race at all, but use these ideas about race in a playful way so as to avoid doing certain things. The learners are aware that the teachers are sensitive about these topics as they do not want to say anything that would be considered racist, so the learners are more likely to get away with something when they bring the race issue into the conversation.

> R: So you see they try to…I think they using this whole race thing as a way to escape certain things. So I think they using that. And they know it's a sensitive topic. So, I think, in that way they also trying to see whether the teacher is feeling sensitive towards this or is she just going to blow it off. Because I think they intrigued by the fact that if teachers get upset, they like that. They want you to get upset. But I think if you handle it well and then they won't say stuff like that. But I think they using that as like a scape goat for them (laughs).

(Interview: Mrs Peterson)

In her classes of Maths and Natural Sciences, however, none of the content refers to race or culture so she does not really deal with these issues directly very often.

The predominantly coloured staff at BTHS, most of which have been at the school for more than 20 years, may not be able to step back and recognise their role in shaping the institutional culture of the school. This is an institutional culture which has not seemed to adapt in accordance with the transformation in the student body post-apartheid. Aspects such as language are part of a learner's cultural capital, and cannot be taken for granted by teachers. In her interview, Mrs Davids said (in reference to herself and the other BTHS educators), "We teach a child, we don't teach a race". It may be important for the teachers at BTHS to recognise that their learners do have a race which needs to be acknowledged, and one learner's experience of the institutional culture at BTHS may not be the same as another.

Language

Bridge Town High School is an English-medium school. Learners are required to study English as a first language and then to study one 'first additional language'. Up until the start of 2014, the only 'first additional language' BTHS offered was Afrikaans, even though just over half the student body is made up of black pupils, the majority of which are Xhosa-speaking. After three years of appeals by the teachers at BTHS, the Western Cape Education Department finally allocated the funds to the school to enable them to employ a full-time isiXhosa educator. For those learners in grades 10 – 12 this year, however, it is too late for them to take isiXhosa, and they will need to take Afrikaans as a final matric subject.

The discussion of language is a vital one for this study of Bridge Town High School, as language is one of the key facets of a learner's cultural capital. At Bridge Town High School, proficiency in the English and Afrikaans language is required by the learners to cope with academics. This proficiency, however, is not a given, but rather a result of the learners cultural capital and past experiences. Those learners that are proficient in these languages possess unmeasured benefits in comparison to their classmates that are often tacitly expected. Black South African learners can often experience 'othering' through language as the dominant languages of their school are not their mother tongue (Mda, 2004).

Mrs Pretorius is an Afrikaans and Life Orientation teacher at the school. I observed one of her Afrikaans classes and also had a number of informal conversations with her regarding language at the school. She explains that most black learners in her class really struggle with Afrikaans and many failed the recent exams. During my observation of her Afrikaans class I noted that she conducts the class in Afrikaans but also explains certain things in English. When learners are given time to do an individual activity she goes around and explains the activity to some of the black learners in English. She says that she has to explain to them in English as many barely understand Afrikaans at all. In her experience, most of her black learners do not have an eagerness to learn the language and most resent having to do the subject.

This is in sharp contrast to the isiXhosa classes I observed. In the Afrikaans class most of the black students are quiet and unresponsive, while many of the coloured children offer up answers in front of the class. The behaviour of the black children in the isiXhosa classes, on the other hand, is significantly different. In the isiXhosa classes the learners are responsive and eager to learn. Often they will offer answers in unison and they seem very engaged in the class. I observed different grades in the isiXhosa and Afrikaans classes so this may also account for the differences in behaviour, but I feel that the language taught has a major influence.

Mrs Dlomo is the new isiXhosa teacher, as well as the only black teacher on staff. I observed a number of her classes and also had numerous informal conversations with her regarding the issue of language at the school as well as her experience teaching isiXhosa at a school where it has never been offered before. Mrs Dlomo feels that a major barrier to racial integration at the school is the language barrier. This is also something I have noted in my observations. Language seems to act as a unifier at among the learners. In class, black learners congregate and speak isiXhosa among themselves. Black learners seem to feel more comfortable around

classmates who share their home language, and there is also no risk of being teased for one's lack of fluency in English. Sbusiso struggled with English when he first came to BTHS. He shared with me how his classmates would tease and laugh at him for his mispronunciations and strong accent. As a result, he socialized mainly with other isiXhosa learners, not because he had a problem with his other classmates, but because he felt more comfortable around isiXhosa-speakers without the social risk of being teased and mocked.

> …and communication it was something that was challenging for me because when you try and speak, because your accent is quite different from the others, they would just laugh if you maybe mispronounce a word as you are not used to communicating in English fluently. So it was challenging to make friends, so most of the time we would just speak to those who know they can understand isiXhosa.
>
> (Interview: Sbusiso)

A high school learner's acquisition of cultural capital, such as language proficiency, can either be enabled or prevented by this learner's primary school education. Through my interviews with learners at BTHS, I found that the learners' primary school educations have a significant impact on how they cope with English and Afrikaans at the school. Sbusiso went to Impendulo Primary School in Khayelitsha, which is an isiXhosa-medium school, and all subjects were taught in isiXhosa. He also speaks isiXhosa as a home language. He points to his primary school education as the cause for his struggles with English. When we move onto the topic of Afrikaans he says that he has also struggled with this subject as he feels he did not get the primary school foundation which other learners did. It is also a third language for him which has made it more difficult and he gets quite bad marks for the subject. Sbusiso struggles so much with the subject that when isiXhosa was introduced this year he asked the principal if he could switch and take isiXhosa instead, but unfortunately it was too late. He feels that if he was given the opportunity to do isiXhosa in high school it would have been very beneficial for him and would have brought his overall marks up. Right now he feels he has a "disadvantage" in comparison to other learners, as he did not receive the foundation in Afrikaans which is required.

Chiara went to Plumstead prep school and then to John Graham, which is also in Plumstead, and is an English-medium school. John Graham offered isiXhosa as a subject, so high school was the first time Chiara was required to do Afrikaans and she did struggle with it. Chiara's home language is isiXhosa and she would often not do her homework as she didn't understand the work. Since grade 10, however, Chiara has seen her Afrikaans marks improve significantly and she attributes this to the persistence of her Afrikaans teacher as well as her own determined attitude towards the subject.

> But it also had to start with me accepting that I had to now do Afrikaans and I had to go the extra mile because I did not know the subject.
>
> (Interview: Chiara)

Interestingly enough, even though she has struggled with Afrikaans and isiXhosa is her home language, when I asked her whether she would take isiXhosa if it was offered, she said she

would not. Her reasoning is that she has heard from friends at other schools who are doing isiXhosa that it is a very challenging subject, even if it is one's home language. Many of her isiXhosa friends who are taking the subject are failing.

Zanele gave me a similar account. Zanele went to four different primary schools, the most recent being St Agnes Primary School in Woodstock, which is an English-medium school. The others were Hugenot Primary School, Mamre Primary School and Rondeheuwel Primary School, all of which are Afrikaans schools. Even though isiXhosa is Zanele's home language, when asked about her experience with studying Afrikaans she gave a surprising answer:

> Well Afrikaans is my favourite subject (laughs). When most people ask me what my favourite subject is I say Afrikaans.
>
> (Interview: Zanele)

She says that because she went to Afrikaans-medium primary schools she has always done well in Afrikaans, and actually struggled with English when she first came to BTHS. When asked if she would have taken the opportunity to do isiXhosa as a subject if it was offered she says she would not. Like Chiara, she feels that the isiXhosa that is taught at high school level is very difficult and she refers to it as "deep Xhosa". So even though it is her home language, she feels that she would have struggled studying it as a high school subject.

This is something that I also picked up on during my observations and conversations with Mrs Dlomo. I observed five of Mrs Dlomo's isiXhosa classes. During one of the classes a black female pupil is asked to read aloud for the class from the worksheet provided. Although she reads quite confidently, she struggles to pronounce some of the words, even though it is her home language. In another class, a similar situation occurs, in which a girl reads aloud for the class but struggles with pronunciation, especially with certain click-sounds. Mrs Dlomo shares with me that she has found teaching isiXhosa at the school very challenging. She says that most of her learners, even though they are isiXhosa speakers, have never been taught the subject before in a school setting and, therefore, they struggle quite a bit. She says that she has had to start with the very basics of pronunciation with her classes. This explains why the two girls struggled with their reading. Even though they are fluent in the language, they have never studied isiXhosa as a formal school subject and clearly it is taught at a high level.

Another challenge for Mrs Dlomo is the fact that because the subject has never been offered at the school before there is no structure or foundation in place, and she says she has had to start from scratch. There is also very little assistance from the Western Cape Education Department in this regard. The department has not delivered isiXhosa textbooks, for example. In one class I observed, Mrs Dlomo had made photocopies for learners from one of her own personal textbooks. In a conversation with the principal, Mr Philander, he also comments on the lack of assistance from the department. He says that the department has only sent an isiXhosa subject advisor to the school on one occasion this year. He feels that, because isiXhosa is a new subject which is being offered for the first time at the school, the school requires guidance and assistance from a subject advisor in how to offer the subject at the school. He feels that one visit from a subject advisor is not enough to assist in the implementation of this new subject.

Mrs Dlomo describes Bridge Town High School as a traditionally Afrikaans school, even though English is the medium of instruction. She feels that this is why many black learners have struggled academically at BTHS. From my observations it seems that Mrs Dlomo has a close bond with many of her students. I observed a number of informal chats between her and her pupils. On the first day of term one girl hugged her and many others came up to her to ask how she had been. Mrs Dlomo says that when she came to the school many learners expressed their happiness and relief that they finally had a teacher who they felt comfortable talking to and who could understand them. She also admits that many learners have come to her with personal problems. For this reason, Mrs Dlomo is of the opinion that the school would benefit from employing more black, isiXhosa-speaking, teachers as this would make the black learners at the school feel more comfortable.

It is clear that learners' primary schools provide them with vital cultural capital which assists them in coping at a school like BTHS, where proficiency in English and Afrikaans are tacit expectations. The introduction of isiXhosa as a subject at the school will assist in incorporating black learners into the school culture and therefore reducing this feeling of othering. Further assistance and resources are required, however, so that isiXhosa can take its place as an established subject at the school, along with English and Afrikaans. The addition of more isiXhosa-speaking educators can also assist in transforming the institutional culture of the school to meaningfully incorporate isiXhosa, creating a school that is more inclusive of its black learners.

Extra-mural Activities as a Unifier

A key finding of this report is the variation in racial integration among learners of different grades and ages at Bridge Town High School. Within the higher grades, in which learners have been in a class together for a number of years, there seems to be significantly more racial integration than in the lower grades in which learners are quite new to each other. I will argue that interaction among learners fosters racial integration at the school.

A number of the learners who I interviewed shared their experiences of racial integration at BTHS and described their view that integration and friendships between learners of different races were more prevalent in the higher grades. Zanele, a black female learner, described how she felt comfortable with the other learners in her class, regardless of race, as they have been in the same class together for a number of years.

> Um, but now my classmates are all…I mix with them…since we've been together since grade 8, we know each other and we comfortable with each other.
>
> (Interview: Zanele)

From her observations at the school Zanele has noted that coloured children and black children do not really mix with each other in lower grades, especially the boys.

> But in lower grades I don't think that happens. I think there's still…um, that division between them.
>
> (Interview: Zanele)

Mr Jacobs also believes that interaction among learners throughout the years results in integration and friendship among learners of different races. He says that there are "vast differences in integration" between the lower and the higher grades.

> Certainly when, by the time they leave here they are very different from when they arrived here. You know, they get along very well with one another. They become inseparable, joined at the hip.
>
> (Interview: Mr Jacobs)

Mr Jacobs, in his years at the school, has also noted an increase in racially-based physical fights among younger learners at the school, especially when new learners come to the school and do not know many other children yet.

> Little fights on the school premises or whatever, or after school. It happens…and I've noticed this trend now every year. But it's new learners coming in from outside, because they are probably asserting themselves in the territory or whatever they want to call it…marking the turf type of thing.
>
> (Interview: Mr Jacobs)

Chiara, a black female learner, has seen a few incidents of racially-motivated physical fighting among the younger grades. She describes one incident in which one coloured grade 8

learner was hitting another black grade 8 learner and saying, "No, you Xhosa and we don't socialise with people like you."

Sbusiso, a black male learner, shares a similar view with Zanele regarding the prevalence of racial integration within higher grades at the school, due to interaction over a number of years.

> So there is that racist tension, but I feel like it's there for when you are still new to each other, like from grade 10…sorry from grade 8, grade 9, grade 10, maybe there, but as you grow older and go to different grades and start knowing more about other people
>
> (Interview: Sbusiso)

Sbusiso believes that racism is still prevalent at the school and has been a victim of racially-motivated verbal attacks in the past. He describes one incident on Valentine's Day in his grade 9 year when he was in the school bathrooms and a coloured grade 12 student shouted, "Black people are stupid!"

Sbusiso believes that these racist attitudes have been transferred to the learners by their families or communities. He also feels, however, that interaction among learners assists in dismantling these racist attitudes and uncovering racial stereotypes as false.

> But most people, as they meet other races, they start to interact with them and know more about them, and they see that, no man, this person is the same as I am, it's just the colour that is different.
>
> (Interview: Sbusiso)

He has experienced this in his grade 12 class. He feels that the majority of his classmates do not hold these racist attitudes anymore and he feels that they treat each other "fairly" and "equal".

Like Sbusiso, when asked where racial stereotypes and racist thinking originate, most respondents, both teachers and learners, felt that these originated from families and communities. Chiara believes that racist perceptions come from "home". She feels that some homes still teach children racist attitudes. Zanele has a very strong belief that parents instil racist attitudes in the minds of their children.

> R: Ja. A child's attitude is a parent's attitude. If your parents act that way then you also act that way. If you grow up seeing your parent doing something, then you bound to do it when you older.
>
> (Interview: Zanele)

When asked where racist attitudes originate, Mfundo, a black male learner was uncertain but said he assumed that racist attitudes were taught in a learner's "society". All three of the teachers interviewed also believed that racist attitudes and stereotypes originated in the homes and communities of learners. Mr Jacobs believes that racial "stigmas" and stereotypes

are more prevalent in "older", more "established" communities. He counts Bridge Town as one of these older, established communities. Mrs Peterson admits she was confused by the racial sensitivity and racist attitudes at the school, as these learners were born post-Apartheid. She therefore concludes that these attitudes must be a result of an "influence at home". Mrs Davids also believes that racial sensitivity often originates with learners' parents.

Of the 5 pupils interviewed, when asked what changes they would like to see at the school to make it better for learners, 4 said they would like to see more extra-mural activities as well as greater involvement in the current limited range of activities. Three learners noted that greater involvement in these activities would foster interaction among learners of different races and lead to closer bonds among the learners. Lucy, a coloured female learner, said that she believed learners would be excited to get involved in these kinds of activities as currently there is nothing to create a "bond" between learners of different races.

Two of the three teachers interviewed also stated their belief that greater involvement in extra-mural activities would foster racial integration at the school. Mr Jacobs, who is a soccer coach, believes in the power of sport to unify people.

> There's always a place for sport and culture to unify people. I mean we've seen it nationally. It definitely helps to bring people together.
>
> (Interview: Mr Jacobs)

Mrs Peterson also agrees that extra-mural activities, such as sport, act as a unifier for learners, encouraging them to interact and bond over a shared common interest. She describes how she has observed these bonds being formed among the grade 8 boys after a few months together over their common interest in soccer.

> …now the grade 8's, they are forming now their own groups and so on, now what I've noticed is with the boys, like the races, there's no issue there because they all play soccer, so the conversation is…they have something to talk about, something in common, besides school work and school now. So that's a good thing. I think sport is a very good thing to bring that together.
>
> (Interview: Mrs Peterson)

Various authors have argued that sport acts to unify people and create strong group or national identities. This is especially relevant in the context of South Africa, a country with a past of racial divisions and segregation. In post-Apartheid South Africa, big sporting events, such as the 1995 Rugby World Cup and the 2010 FIFA World Cup, have been used in an attempt to create a strong, unified, and non-racial collective South African identity. Nauright (1997) argues that, due to the significant public role that sport plays in South African society, Nelson Mandela and the ANC government saw sport as a key area of reconciliation and a great way to generate a new national identity post-Apartheid. Danilewitz (1998) also argued for sport in South Africa as a potential force for "unification and reconciliation". He referred to the singing of 'Shosholoza', a popular Ndebele migrant workers' song, at Ellis Park during the final of the 1995 Rugby World Cup, as well as the South African victory, shared by all races, as a signifier of integration and the intermingling of racial traditions (Danilewitz,

1998). Alegi (1999) discusses how, in South Africa, sport is tied to politics and can play a role in eliciting social and political change in the country.

The only learner not to suggest extra-mural activities as an improvement at the school was Sbusiso. I think his suggestion, however, is related to the idea of creating a shared common bond among learners of different races so as to facilitate integration. When asked what improvements he would like to see at the school, Sbusiso said he would like a stricter uniform policy to be implemented at BTHS. During my time observing BTHS I noted that learners' uniforms were inconsistent and a strict uniform policy clearly was not implemented. Many learners had facial and ear piercings and wore jewellery and nail polish. Many wore their own jerseys and hats that were not part of the school uniform. When I asked Mrs Davids why there was inconsistency in uniform she told me that many learners cannot afford to buy the uniform so in winter they are allowed to wear their own jerseys and jackets. Those that are reprimanded for incorrect uniform continue to ignore the uniform code. Sbusiso's reasoning for implementing a stricter uniform policy is that, in his mind, these visible differences between learners exacerbate racial tension at the school. He feels that those who cannot afford brand-name clothing, the black learners in this case, are therefore mocked by the coloured learners who can afford this clothing.

> So that just creates that separation between us. You can see, ok, this one is coloured because he is wearing a hoodie and all this stuff. You can see this one is black because he's wearing things from the township. So I feel that it will make us more equal if we were all to wear uniforms…
>
> (Interview: Sbusiso)

It is clear that learners engage with visible racial markers and differentiate one another based on race. When learners do not know each other, these racial markers create divisions and even act as the basis for verbal or physical fighting in some cases. It is clear that clothing acts as another visible marker of difference, which creates tension and division among learners. This is why learners need common interests and activities to unify around, so as to lessen the effect of these visible markers of difference.

In the case of Bridge Town High School, it seems that many learners do hold racist attitudes and stereotypes. These attitudes are exacerbated by visible racial and clothing markers which signify difference between learners. Prolonged interaction with one another, however, as well as a shared common interest or activity, fosters racial integration and assists in the dismantling of racist stereotypes, which are often acquired from families and communities. The variation in levels of integration among learners in different grades is evidence of this. In my view, the learners at Bridge Town High School need more extra-mural activities which foster interaction, team-work and unity across racial divides.

The Outsider Within

Bridge Town in Athlone was a formerly 'coloured' area under the Group Areas Act of Apartheid. Although this is not the case any longer, I have found through my research that many learners, both coloured and black, feel that coloured people still 'own' this space. This results in some black learners feeling that they are outsiders or visitors in this area, leading to an experience of double consciousness for some black learners. I have found that the issue of symbolic ownership of space is brought up by teachers and pupils in connection with physical and verbal fighting. Coloured people have power within this space while black people are viewed as outsiders; a potentially vulnerable and dangerous position.

When discussing the physical fighting between black and coloured boys at the school, Zanele argues that coloured learners have an unfair advantage as Bridge Town is a "coloured area". This means that if a black boy and a coloured boy get into a fight, the coloured boy can call on his coloured friends in the community to help defend him or pick a fight with this black boy, whereas the black learner, as an outsider in this community, does not have that same support structure.

> I'm a black, because we in the coloured area, and when we go home obviously we are going to be walking there…so when I get in a fight, if I'm black and I hit a coloured child, and then they will…all the coloureds will come and beat me up. And then after school they wait for me outside, and they'll beat me again. And then it's like that so if you a black you can't actually do anything. So they fight about anything.
>
> (Interview: Zanele)

This means that coloured learners have power within this area, whereas black learners experience powerlessness as outsiders.

> So they come to school to pick on children and pick on fights and they know they can't do it to their own, so they'd rather do it to the blacks where no-one will talk for them. So they pick on them thinking that…
>
> (Interview: Zanele)

Mfundo also describes coloured learners' ownership and power within the space. He also feels that coloured learners have an unfair advantage when it comes to physical fighting as they have the support of other coloured people within the Bridge Town community.

> …when you in a fight with a person in like a different race, you will fight, ok, it gets sorted. You go outside, his friends will wait on you…and you'll get beaten up.
>
> (Interview: Mfundo)

Mr Jacobs describes that he has noted a "trend" at the school in recent years. He explains that when new learners enter the school at the beginning of the year there is usually an "escalation in violence". He attributes this escalation in violence among new learners to the idea that new learners need to assert themselves within this space and mark their "turf". Once again, the

idea of ownership of space is linked to physical violence and the perception that there are both powerful insiders within the space, as well as powerless outsiders.

> But it's new learners coming in from outside, because they are probably asserting themselves in the territory or whatever they want to call it…marking the turf type of thing.
>
> (Interview: Mr Jacobs)

Although teachers and learners shared a number of instances of racially-based violence at the school with me, both learners and teachers felt that these cases were in the "minority". In my view, racial violence is not the norm at the school. A minority of coloured bullies use race as a way to single out and antagonise black learners at the school. They take advantage of the vulnerability these black learners experience being in a space which is not their own and in which they are outsiders to some extent. They draw on their power within the space, especially the support structure they have of other coloured friends within the area. Mfundo, for example, when describing the fights at the school, uses the term "bullying". This is an apt description. These fights do not occur on an equal par; a few coloured learners use their power to bully black learners who are vulnerable. Coloured bullies often pick on black children in the lower grades so as to enhance this power dynamic. Zanele describes how coloured bullies try to provoke black learners to start a fight, always picking on the lower grades so that these learners are in a more vulnerable position.

> Ja, because when we pass by the corridors there will be coloured children that are picking on us black children. They always pick the lower grades. They'll pick on us. And maybe if you don't mind them and we walk away, they'll even get angrier, "Why you not talking back? Why you not…?" And like what do you want me to do, because I'm not in…I don't want to fight with you and walk away and then like, "Oh, you got an attitude". Then they'll start.
>
> (Interview: Zanele)

The incident which Sbusiso described on Valentine's Day, in which one of the coloured learners shouted out, "Black people are stupid!" in the bathroom, is characterised by this unequal power dynamic. Sbusiso was in grade 9 at the time, the coloured boy was in grade 12. As is clear in this case, coloured bullies often refer to race directly and use it as a justification of the bullying. Chiara describes one incident in which a coloured boy in grade 8 hit another black grade 8 boy and said, "No, you Xhosa and we don't socialise with people like you". Even when race is *not* explicitly used as a justification, coloured bullies are aware of black learners' powerlessness within the space and use it to their advantage.

Through my interviews and observations I found that, while physical fighting and bullying is engaged in by a minority at the school, a more underlying and latent racial tension is common. During my time observing the classes at the school I noted very apparent racial divides within the classroom. In most classes learners would seat themselves within racial groups, very rarely mixing or communicating with learners of other races. The very few

interactions I did see between learners of different races were generally tense or openly hostile.

In one of Mr Jacobs's classes I noted two instances of tension between learners of different races. Just after the class was dismissed Mr Jacobs asked a coloured boy to distribute notices to each member of his class. He handed one to a black girl, which she took without looking up, acknowledging or thanking him. In the same class, a number of pupils stop to look at a notice up on the wall as they are leaving the class. A black female is in front of the wall looking up at the notice when she steps back and mistakenly bumps a coloured female learner. The coloured female accuses her of pushing her and says, "I will smack you", then walks away.

In another of Mr Jacobs's classes there is an instance of racial tension between a coloured boy and a black boy. While not physically violent, this exchange is more openly hostile. The exchange happens before the class starts, as everyone is getting seated. The coloured boy is sitting with two other coloured male friends at one table and is speaking to the black boy who is seated at the next table by himself. The two learners seem to be discussing the money that the black boy owes the coloured boy. The coloured male says, "If I don't get my four tigers, there will be four holes in your body". The black male smiles and says, "Hey, there is a lady in the room". I assume by "lady" he is referring to me, as I am clearly within earshot of the conversation. I am not certain how serious this threat is as the black male smiles and does not appear visibly shaken by the comment. Once again, there is an unequal power dynamic. The black boy is sitting by himself while the coloured boy has the support of two friends. As I am obviously within earshot of the conversation, the coloured boy may also be trying to openly assert his power over the black boy in front of his friends and myself. Lucy describes her experience of the more understated racial tension and hostility at the school in the following manner:

> It's like everyone's always fighting, but in silence.
>
> (Interview: Lucy)

In my view, the ownership of space by coloured learners, as well as the marginalisation of black learners in their designation as outsiders, contributes to black learners forming a 'double consciousness'. Many authors have explored and expanded upon Du Bois' (1903) concept of 'double consciousness', describing the contradictory identities black people often have to negotiate within a racially divided society. Fataar's (2007) conception of "translocal cultural citizenship" in which youths are able to negotiate and perform contradictory identities between their homes and schools, is especially relevant to black and coloured learners in post-apartheid South Africa. These learners are able to negotiate and crisscross between racially and culturally dissonant spaces (Fataar, 2007). Within the same vein, Battersby (2004) describes the process of "code switching" or "identity performance" in which black or coloured students actively acquire cultural capital in their schools so as to gain acceptance from peers and teachers. It is clear that their position of acceptance is not guaranteed or unproblematic at these schools, it has to be actively fought for through assimilation to dominant norms and practices.

A number of the black learners I interviewed at BTHS expressed these sentiments of having to negotiate between contradictory identities within the confines of the school, and then within homes and communities. Mfundo describes that after their initiation ritual has been completed, black South African males expect to be more respected by peers and elders due to their recent rite of passage. He says this newfound respect is not granted within the school. It seems that the school setting does not incorporate this aspect of his culture into its processes or activities, which he finds unsettling and confusing. He feels that this rite of passage should ensure that he is deserving of greater respect and should be treated like a man, which does not materialise within the school setting, especially among fellow coloured pupils who may not understand the meaning and importance attached to this ritual. I noted this tension first hand during my observations in one of Mr Jacobs's classes. During this class Mr Jacobs asks a black boy, in front of the class, why he was absent the previous day. Before the boy has a chance to respond, another coloured boy shouts out, "The bush!" A few other learners laugh at this statement and Mr Jacobs does nothing to address this outburst. This coloured learner shows a lack of respect for his fellow classmate's sacred cultural ritual, which is also not problematized by the teacher. Black learners may find it unsettling to find themselves in a school setting in which this core part of their identity is not seriously acknowledged or respected.

Sbusiso is quite vocal in his view that many black learners at the school actively engage in 'code switching'. He explains that many black learners at the school, especially those from Khayelitsha, change how they behave when they come to school so as to fit in with their friends. He says that they behave very differently when they are at home in their communities. He uses the example of smoking, saying that many learners, who would never smoke at home due to how they were raised, smoke at school so as to fit in. He even goes so far as to say that these learners have "two characters that they have to play". He describes how learners are forced to "juggle" between their two characters; one which they portray at home, and the other which they portray at school. He describes the identity formation of these learners in terms of a performance in which they "portray" certain characters so as to gain acceptance by their peers.

> I think they have two characters that they have to play. Whenever they put on their uniform and come to school they have to portray a different character, and when they take out their uniform, they are at home, they are different characters.
>
> (Interview: Sbusiso)

Throughout his interview he seems to imply that the character which the learners enact at home is their authentic self, while their character at school is one which they have to portray in order to fit in.

Bridge Town is still viewed by many learners as a coloured area in which coloured learners have power and support, while black learners are portrayed as outsiders. The coloured learners who use verbal and physical violence to assert their power within this space often use race as a basis to target vulnerable black learners. Racially-based physical violence at the school, however, is not the norm and only a minority engages in this. Racial tension at the

school is generally a great deal more subtle and covert. Black learners often develop ‘translocal cultural citizenships’ to negotiate between the ‘coloured-owned’ space of the school and their homes and communities. This process of negotiation and ‘code-switching’ enforces black learners’ positions at the school as the ‘outsiders within’.

Conclusion

This report has explored the ways in which institutional culture manifests itself in Bridge Town High School, and how this institutional culture is experienced by its learners. These instances of institutional culture, in my view, act as impediments to meaningful and substantive racial integration at the school.

The manner in which race and culture is constructed and reinforced in the classroom setting is predominantly a multi-cultural approach. Race and culture are essentialised and represented in a stereotypical manner as consisting of a few key, unchanging characteristics. Teachers at the school have different approaches to these topics resulting in varying responses from the pupils. Learners at Bridge Town High School seem to respond well to a classroom environment in which the stereotypes relating to race and culture are openly discussed and picked apart. Teachers at the school often conflate race and culture in an attempt at 'racelessness'. Race, however, is clearly a concept which still has a great deal of meaning and relevance for learners in the way they define themselves and others. Race needs to be openly acknowledged and discussed.

Language is a key channel through which institutional culture is constructed, experienced and reinforced. Although Bridge Town High School is an English-medium school, Afrikaans forms a significant part of the school's institutional culture. Not only is the language common in informal conversation, as an academic subject it also experiences a more privileged status in comparison to the recently introduced isiXhosa subject. Language acts as a unifier at the school among pupils of the same race, while acting as an impediment to meaningful integration across racial lines. A learner's primary school education clearly forms an important foundation for their proficiency in language in their high school career. Proficiency in language is a key source of cultural capital for learners. The disparity in cultural capital between one learner and another is something which needs to be acknowledged at the school.

A number of learners at Bridge Town High School possess racist and stereotypical attitudes, often acquired from family and community backgrounds. Meaningful interaction among learners over time contributes to the rapid dismantling of these attitudes. The school, however, does not provide learners with many opportunities for meaningful interaction in which a common and shared interest is created. In my view, extra-mural activities, especially sporting activities which encourage team participation, provide opportunities for this meaningful interaction. Learners at the school are very aware of visible markers of difference, such as race or uniform. Extra-mural activities, in my view, will shift the emphasis from what is different among learners to what is common and shared.

Bridge Town is still viewed as a coloured space in which coloured learners often play the role of powerful insiders, while black learners are powerless outsiders. Coloured bullies are able to use this dynamic to their advantage to single out and antagonise vulnerable black learners. While there have been a number of instances of physical fighting between learners of different races at the school, much of the racial interaction at the school is tense and hostile in a more subtle manner. Integration among learners of different races is quite limited, the few interactions between these learners often being hostile or aggressive. As powerless outsiders, many black learners have constructed two different identities to negotiate between the more

comfortable spaces of home and community and the space of Bridge Town, in which they are excluded in many ways. Many learners engage in a performance and enact a certain character when they are at school to adapt to this unfamiliar space. In this sense, many black learners at the school play the role of 'the outsider within'.

Bridge Town High School is an institution with a very distinct history and institutional culture. The desegregation process at the school has created a major transformation in the composition of the student body. Desegregation, however, does not equate to substantive integration. Institutional culture manifests itself in many ways at the school and is reinforced by the staff; a staff body which has changed very little in comparison to the substantial changes in the student body over the years. Institutional culture is experienced by learners through space, language, academics and various other factors. This is an institutional culture which often privileges and caters to a coloured experience while marginalising and excluding a black experience. As an insider it is often hard to step back and acknowledge the ways in which this seemingly invisible culture plays out in the day-to-day, lived experience of learners. The purpose of this report is to highlight the ways in which institutional culture manifests itself within Bridge Town High School; making the invisible, visible. Once identified, this culture can be consciously and actively transformed. Through the case of Bridge Town High School I hope to share findings which may be useful and relevant to similar South African schools in the post-Apartheid era, illuminating the ways in which institutional culture often acts as an impediment to meaningful racial integration.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Teacher Interview Guide

- Background: When did the process of **desegregation** start at the school? Why did it start? How has that process been?
- What, in your opinion, are the main **barriers** to racial integration at the school?
- What have been your **personal challenges** at the school?

Appendix 2: Pupil Interview Guide

- **Intro** questions: What grade are you in? Where do you stay? Which primary school did you attend?
- Do you feel **primary school** prepared you for high school?
- Do you feel **comfortable** at the school? Do you feel like you sometimes have to change certain elements of your **personality** or **behave differently** to how you do at home to fit in at school?
- If you don't feel comfortable – what is it about the school's structure, traditions, culture, teachers, other pupils that makes you feel uncomfortable?
- Do you think there is **racial integration** at school? Do you feel comfortable with students of other races? Why or why not?
- Have you experienced any **language barriers**? What do you think of the English and isiXhosa classes at the school?
- Do you feel comfortable with your **teachers**? Do you feel like you can go to them when you need help?
- If it was up to you, what **changes** would you make at the school to make it better?

Appendix 3: Observations

Day 1: Monday 21 July

Observations made during the Administrative with Grade 10 pupils (Mrs Dlomo)

Mrs Dlomo is the only black teacher on the staff and was employed at the start of this year to implement the introduction of isiXhosa as a First Additional Language for the first time in BTHS's history. This first period is an admin period where pupils come in to collect their reports. There is a mix of learners in this class but there is very clear segregation between races and between genders. There is a group of about 10 coloured boys who congregate together at the front of the class, as well as a group of black girls of the same number who congregate together in the middle of the class. There are about 3 black boys who sit silently at the opposite end of the class to the teacher and the coloured boys. Two coloured girls come in – the one visibly chewing and blowing bubble gum - and join the group of coloured boys; however the black pupils remain segregated by gender. It is a very informal and rowdy environment with pupils walking in and out of the class, there is no order and most are standing around chatting. The black boys sit silently while the black girls chat loudly, but do not communicate with the teacher. The coloured boys, on the other hand, swarm around the teacher and are quite loud and disrespectful to her. The one boy pats her hair while another mocks her accent. When the teacher tells the boys that assembly will be held after school as opposed to in the morning, a coloured boy tells her this is a "junk school". The class is very informal and the pupils do not seem to have much respect for the class or the teacher as they walk in and out, stand around talking, and are rude and disrespectful, as mentioned above.

Observations made during the isiXhosa class with Grade 9 pupils (Mrs Dlomo)

Every single pupil in the isiXhosa class is black and Xhosa-speaking. As the pupils come in, a few of the black female pupils come up to the teacher and give her a hug, as it is the first day of term and they have not seen her in a while. Once again, the black pupils are voluntarily segregated by gender. The girls group together on one side of the class and the boys also group together. The girls are very loud and talkative whereas the boys are quite quiet. Another group of girls comes into the class late and sits on the opposite side of the class to the other girls and does not greet them. The class is quite loud and rowdy before the lesson starts but as soon as the teacher greets the class and begins the lesson, everyone is quiet and attentive. The teacher does reprimand pupils when they talk during the lesson and then they keep quiet. Throughout the lesson they participate confidently and the majority of pupils seem quite eager to get involved and offer answers. For the most part the class is well behaved and actively engages in the lesson. The whole class is conducted in isiXhosa. There are significantly more girls than boys in the class, and the girls are a lot more interactive in the lesson. One of the topics discussed in the lesson is HIV and AIDS, which ignites a great deal of class discussion.

Observations made during the isiXhosa class with Grade 8 pupils (Mrs Dlomo)

This is a bigger class than the previous one but, again, all pupils are black and Xhosa-speaking and the class is conducted in a similar fashion to the previous lesson. The class does not seem as gender-divided – possibly because all the seats are full so pupils cannot

congregate in smaller groups. I can see some of the pupils talking about my presence in the class, they say the word 'umlungu' (meaning white person) which I assume refers to me. The students are very responsive and engaged in the lesson and seem eager to learn. A black female pupil is asked to read for the class from the worksheet provided. She reads quite confidently but struggles to pronounce some of the words, even though it is her own language.

Informal conversation with Mrs Dlomo between classes:

Mrs Dlomo began teaching at BTHS at the beginning of the year with the introduction of Xhosa as a First Additional Language at the school, for the first time in its history. She says that it was quite challenging for her to take up this position as the subject had never been taught at the school so she had to start from scratch. Mrs Dlomo said that all pupils taking isiXhosa are black isiXhosa speakers. The majority of black students at the school decided to take this subject when it became available this year and were very excited to be offered a chance to be taught in their home language. It seems that most black pupils struggled with learning Afrikaans, and many failed, as they had never been exposed to the language before. She describes BTHS as an Afrikaans school – even though English is the medium of instruction at the school. She, however, seems to think that it is traditionally Afrikaans, and this is why many black students struggle, and often fail. From my observation in the staff room it seems that many teachers are first language Afrikaans speaking, and speak to one another in Afrikaans. This could account for the Afrikaans culture she perceives in the school. She did state that a minority of black pupils at the school decided to stick with Afrikaans as a First Additional Language as they had never studied isiXhosa before. It may be the case that these learners were in higher grades and it would have been very difficult to swop at this late stage – however that is my own speculation. Mrs Dlomo did say she has heard rumours that the school will offer isiXhosa as a home language and English as a First Additional Language.

Mrs Dlomo has found teaching isiXhosa at the school quite a challenge as she said many learners had never been taught it before, even though it is their home language. She had to start with the very basics of pronunciation with the class. This could explain why the girl reading out for the class in Period 2 struggled with the pronunciation. It could be the case that she is a fluent speaker but has not had much exposure to the language in written form.

Mrs Dlomo has a close bond with many of her students. She explains that when she first came to the school many black learners expressed how relieved and happy they were that they now had someone they felt comfortable talking to and who could understand them – and many pupils have come to her with personal problems. As she is the only black member of staff at the school, black learners often go to her when they need guidance or help with a problem. Mrs Dlomo refers to herself and the black students as a collective. She says that most couloured teachers do not understand what "we" go through and "our" issues. Mrs Dlomo says that many black pupils at the school come from far off areas, such as Khayelitsha, and have to take very early busses to get to school on time. She states that, even though it is a long journey, pupils are eager to come to school every day as there is a school feeding association which provides them with free meals, which they would not have access

to at home. Even though there are many schools in their areas, in the township, it is her opinion that parents do not want to send their children to township schools for fear of the gang violence that occurs there. When I asked her if she thinks that black parents think this is an academically good school for their children, she agrees. Mrs Dlomo is of the opinion that the school would benefit from employing more black, isiXhosa-speaking teachers as this would make the black learners at the school feel more comfortable.

Observations made in the EMS (Economic & Management Sciences) period with Grade 9 pupils (Mrs Davids)

Mrs Davids is very strict with the students – she makes them line up outside the classroom before coming inside, and then they are asked to stand and greet her. She does not tolerate any interruptions so the class is very quiet and not rowdy. There is a great deal of absenteeism in this class – approximately 40%. From my observation it seems the pupils are allocated seats according to their surnames on the class list, so there is no segregation in the class in terms of race or gender. There are fewer black pupils in this class, and most are coloured. The class representative, however, is a black female. In this lesson she is teaching the subject of trade unions. The class is well behaved and quite responsive to questions. Many learners have not brought their textbooks to class. The classroom does not have a projector screen so she projects her notes onto a number of white papers stuck to the blackboard. During the class, an announcement is made over the intercom (there is an intercom speaker in every classroom so that teachers may make announcements during lessons). The announcement is regarding a rehearsal for a concert during break. The teacher on the intercom (coloured male) uses an Afrikaans phrase – "stiek uit" – at the end of the announcement.

Observations made in the EMS (Economic & Management Sciences) period with Grade 9 pupils (Mrs Davids)

In this class there are only a handful of black learners – I counted 7. As the topic is trade unions, the teacher asks if any pupils in the class are members of the school's student representative council. Two pupils raise their hands – a coloured female and black male. When she asks them what their responsibilities are, the black male speaks first and gives an answer, nobody in the class comments on this. Then the coloured female, who has very fair skin and green eyes, gives an answer. Two or three other coloured females laugh at her answer and look at each other. In the course of the lesson two black male pupils volunteer answers to questions, nobody in the class laughs at their answers, even though they made a few errors. A few pupils walk in late and are reprimanded.

Observations made in the EMS (Economic & Management Sciences) period with Grade 9 pupils (Mrs Davids)

This is a very small class, approximately 20 pupils in total – more than half the class is absent. Most pupils in this class did not bring textbooks. A few pupils (both black and coloured) walk in late and are reprimanded. Mrs Davids uses one Afrikaans sentence in her lesson and also uses an Afrikaans phrase – "skelling out". In this class, as in all the others I have observed so far, the pupils' uniforms are inconsistent. Many of them wear jewellery and

piercings and their own jerseys and hats. A dress code does not seem to be implemented at the school.

Informal conversation with Mrs Davids after class:

Mrs Davids gives me some information regarding the school and its problems. A major issue at the school is funding. School fees are R900 per pupil per annum. She states, however, that in her estimation between 35-40% of the students are exempt from paying the fees due to lack of funds. As it is a government school they do receive government funding but this is not sufficient to effectively run the school. She points to her lack of a projector screen as an example of the lack of funds. She also states that the school is short on paper. The government provides the school with enough textbooks for every learner. The learners are, however, expected to return the textbooks at the end of the school year so that they can be distributed to the following year's class. Some students do not return these books and the school is then expected to purchase the remaining textbooks themselves.

Mrs Davids seems to have quite a pessimistic outlook on the state of the school and its pupils. She says that many of them are rude, disrespectful and abusive. She mentioned one pupil who has sworn at her in the past and walked out of the classroom. She says that she and the other teachers feel they are teaching "empty seats", as the students are not eager to learn and many will be proud of failing a subject. In her lessons she often expresses her negative view of the pupils of the school and their rude behaviour. Absenteeism is another major issue at the school. Mrs Davids says that in the first week of term as well as the last week many students do not attend class, even though their parents have been called in in an attempt to address the issue.

Day 2: Tuesday 22 July

Observations made in the Life Orientation class with Grade 12 pupils (Mr Jacobs)

In this period the class is quite segregated in their seating arrangements according to race. There are two tables where there are just black females seated. One table has a mix of coloured males and females, another with just coloured males and one with only two people – a coloured female and the only black male in the class. As I have observed in other classes so far, the coloured males and females seem to sit and socialise together whereas the black males and females do not. It also seems that there are a lot fewer black males than females at the school – they seem to make up the minority. The teacher is relatively strict in terms of demanding order and silence when the class walks in, however he is very interactive with the class, jokes around with them and chats to many of them in an informal, friendly way. He especially enChiaras chatting and joking around with the black females in class. He is a very energetic and funny character and the class responds really well to him and are keen to interact in class.

The topic of this life orientation lesson is ill health, disease, crisis and accidents. The pupils are asked to look for definitions of these terms on their smart phones. This lesson is structured as a class discussion with various groups reporting back on their findings. During

the time when the groups are preparing what they will present amongst themselves, Mr Jacobs goes to the group of 8 black females to assist them with preparations. The topic they have been given is a discussion on how culture influences ill health and disease. Mr Jacobs suggests that they could give examples of different crises in the "black culture", the "coloured culture", and so on. He then reminds them that culture is more than simply the colour of one's skin and also involves "religion" and other factors. He then leaves their group to discuss. When the black females speak amongst themselves they speak in isiXhosa but do use some American slang in an American accent. One girl says "Dayum girl" in an American accent.

The interactions that I have observed in this class between black and coloured pupils are quite hostile. Firstly, before the class starts, a coloured male is having a conversation with a black male which I assume is regarding the money that the black male owes him. He says, "If I don't get my four tigers, there will be four holes in your body". The black male smiles and says, "Hey, there is a lady in the room" (I assume he is referring to me as I am clearly within earshot). I am not certain how serious this threat is as the black male smiles and does not seem too upset by it. Just after class is dismissed, a coloured boy is asked to hand out a notice to each pupil in the class. He hands one to a black girl, she takes it without looking at him or thanking him. A few of the pupils look at a notice up on the wall as they leave the class. A black female is in front looking at the notice and she moves back and bumps a coloured female. The coloured female accuses her of pushing her and says, "I will smack you".

Observations made in the Life Orientation class with Grade 12 pupils (Mr Jacobs)

This is the same grade but a different class. There is slightly more integration in this class in terms of seating patterns. At one table, for example, two black boys and four coloured boys sit and socialise with each other. There is also a table with two coloured girls, three coloured boys and one black boy. Once again Mr Jacobs enChiaras joking with the black girls in particular. He addresses one black girl and teasingly and playfully comments on her new hair style and new glasses. The teacher asks, in front of the class, one black boy why he was absent the previous day and where he has been. One coloured boy shouts out, "The bush". The teacher asks in a joking way if the black boy is coming from Gugulethu. The class has a very lively discussion about the same Life Orientation topic. Once again, the teacher is very friendly and informal in his interactions with the pupils and they respond well to this, especially the black girls.

Day 3: Thursday 24 July

Observations made in the EMS (Economic and Management Sciences) period with Grade 9 pupils (Mrs Davids)

Once again, the topic of this class is trade unions. The class is well behaved and quite responsive. Black pupils are a minority in this class, about 25% of the class. In discussing the history of trade unions in South Africa, the teacher mentions the history of apartheid. She discusses homelands, passes and the 1976 riots. The learners are quite captivated during this

discussion and do not seem to know this information already. She does discuss apartheid mainly from a black perspective and emphasises how black people were discriminated against. She does not really mention discrimination against coloured or Indian people. In discussing homelands and passes she describes how black people were treated as "guests in their own country". In response to this a few of the black pupils say "yoh" out loud and seem quite shocked. When discussing the 1976 riots, she says she has a lot of personal stories from this time but does not want to get off the point. At this, one coloured girl says, "No Miss" and is visibly disappointed that she is not continuing the story. The class is very interested in the apartheid discussion.

After class a coloured girl comes to talk to the teacher and says that the reason one of the other girls in the class has not attended class yet this term is that she is pregnant. The girl says she is also already 18 in Grade 9.

Observations made in the Accounting period with Grade 12 pupils (Mrs Davids)

This is a very quiet and well behaved class. There are a few black pupils in the class, maybe 5 out of 20, and one black boy. The black girls sit together. One black girl sits in front of the class and offers up most of the answers.

Informal conversation with Mrs Davids between classes:

Mrs Davids warns me to watch my possessions and not leave anything unattended as there has been quite a great deal of theft at the school. One teacher's lap top was stolen in her class while she was there. When I ask her why these learners steal, her opinion is that the biggest factor is drug abuse. She says this is a major problem at the school with many pupils taking drugs. She says that quite a few of the learners at the school are involved in crime, often in support of a drug habit. She describes a few incidences when the police have actually come to the school to arrest one of the pupils. She said that she has overheard pupils talking to each other about stealing from people in Rondebosch and Claremont and also about hijacking cars. She thinks that they actually come to the school to hide after they have committed crimes.

I also ask why there is no uniform code at the school, as I have observed pupils often wear their own clothing as well as jewellery and nail polish. She says that during winter they allow the pupils to wear their own jerseys and hats but many pupils also cannot afford the uniform. Many pupils wear things they should not and do not listen when reprimanded.

Observations made in the Afrikaans class with the Grade 11 pupils (Mrs Pretorius)

Almost half the class is made up of black pupils. The class is quite segregated in terms of seating, with most black pupils sitting in the same area. The teacher conducts her class in Afrikaans but clarifies certain things in English. When the pupils are given an activity to do individually, the teacher comes to help many of the black learners and explains things to them in English. Most black pupils in the class communicate with each other in isiXhosa. When she addresses the class and asks them questions, many learners respond in unison with an answer. These are mainly coloured learners, who actively participate, whereas most black learners sit silently. The pupils are quite rowdy and misbehaved. There is some interaction amongst black and coloured students. I do notice that one coloured girl gets up to help a black

boy with the activity. When the teacher takes the register she struggles in pronouncing an isiXhosa name and asks the pupil to pronounce it for her. One of the black girls in the class has been absent for three days and the teacher asks her, in front of the class, where she has been. She says she was in the Eastern Cape, another black boy close to her says quite loudly, "abortion", and laughs.

One thing that struck me about this language class as opposed to the isiXhosa one is the involvement of the black learners. It is a different grade and different learners so other factors may account for the change, but I feel that the language being taught has a significant effect. During the isiXhosa class the black learners were very responsive and eager to learn. In this class the black learners are generally quite silent and unresponsive and the coloured learners make most of the responses. I do not see the interest in the subject and eagerness to learn amongst the black pupils, as I did in the isiXhosa class.

Observations made in the Life Orientation class with the Grade 11 pupils (Mrs Pretorius)

This is a double period so it is the same class as previously but the subject has changed to Life Orientation and the medium of instruction to English. They are discussing the job shadowing experiences the pupils were supposed to have done during the holiday. Many have not done it, most of which are black pupils. As part of the assessment the pupils need to submit a typed copy of their CV. I assume this may be an issue for some learners without access to a computer or printer. This class is very badly behaved and talks incessantly.

Informal conversation with Mrs Pretorius after class:

I asked Mrs Pretorius the reason for many pupils not completing their job shadow experience. Her view is that it is a result of laziness and the fact that many could not find the position that they wanted. I ask her about her experience teaching Life Orientation at the school. She remarks that the most controversial topic during lectures is the topic of sex education and pupils are very vocal about the topic. I then ask her about her views on racial integration at the school. She says she has noticed that during break isiXhosa learners prefer to stay in their own groups and not mix with coloured learners. She says a major challenge for her is that when she reprimands black learners they accuse her of racism even though she feels that she reprimands all pupils in the same manner. She feels there is still sensitivity amongst the learners regarding the issue of race.

She feels that a major barrier to racial integration at the school is the issue of language. She explains that most of the isiXhosa learners struggle a great deal with Afrikaans and many failed the recent exams. She says that many barely understand the language at all and this is why she often explains things to them in English so that they will understand at least part of what is covered. She also says that they do not have an eagerness to learn the language and resent having to do the subject. Unfortunately the learners in Grade 11 this year do not have the option of switching to isiXhosa as it is too late for them to start another matric subject. Only the Grade 8 – 10s have this option. She explains that their parents were made aware when they joined the school that isiXhosa was not offered. She does comment that Zimbabwean learners generally do quite well in Afrikaans. The teachers at Bridge Town High School have actually been in the process of requesting an isiXhosa teacher for the past

three years. Unfortunately the WCED simply takes the number of learners at the school and uses that to calculate the number of teachers required. BTHS was not allocated the funding to hire an isiXhosa teacher until this year, even after the teachers at the school made a number of appeals to the Department for these funds, due to the fact that so many isiXhosa learners were struggling with Afrikaans. As Mrs Pretorius says, the Department does not look at the unique needs of the school so as to determine how funds can be best allocated.

Day 4: Friday 25 July

Staff Meeting in staff room with all educators – 08h00

The principal is not present and, as he usually runs these daily staff meetings, one of the coloured male senior teachers takes over. He makes a main announcement in English but then makes a shorter, more rushed announcement in Afrikaans. During the meeting he describes every day as a "challenge" at the school. They also discuss suspensions resulting from absenteeism and disobedience. There is a list of 8 suspended pupils on the board.

Observations made in the isiXhosa class with Grade 10 pupils (Mrs Dlomo)

While walking through the halls a few black girls greet Mrs Dlomo and chat informally for a few moments. This is quite a small class of learners – approximately 18 learners. Mrs Dlomo says that it is supposed to be a big class but most learners are absent due to the rain. More than half of the class walks in late and most do not apologise or seem worried about being late. Two of the boys walk in only 5 minutes before the lesson ends. One girl is asked to read for the class. She struggles quite a bit with pronunciation, especially with certain click-sounds. The teacher makes a lot of corrections and is quite critical of her reading, more so than she was in other classes with the younger grades.

Observations made in the isiXhosa class with Grade 10 pupils (Mrs Dlomo)

There are only 5 girls in the class of black learners; 4 sit together at a table and 1 sits with a boy. Most of the boys sit together. There is clearly a gender divide in the class once again. One boy walks in and says out loud, "There is a white person in the class", referring to myself. The group of boys is not very respectful to the teacher. One boy is sucking a lollipop in class which the teacher grabs and then throws away. The teacher also shouts and reprimands a few of the learners during the lesson. Once again, many pupils walk in late. There are photocopied pages in a row on the floor which the pupils must collect and staple as they come in.

Informal conversation with Mrs Dlomo after class:

Mrs Dlomo says that there are no isiXhosa textbooks at the school as they were ordered late. This is why she has to distribute photocopied pages of her own book to the pupils. As so many pupils are absent I ask her what the disciplinary process is for absenteeism. She says that discipline at the school is not really enforced in this regard. She does say that the school

generally deregisters pupils if they are absent for more than 10 consecutive days without an excuse.

Observations made in CAT (Computer Applications Technology) class with Grade 12 pupils (Mr Adams)

The CAT class takes place in one of the two computer labs at the school. This main lab has 36 computers and is accessible to pupils during break time and for a short period after school. Mr Adams tells me the other computer lab, which has 24 computers, is used for research, but is kept closed most of the time.

This computer lab is in very good condition. The computers are new and modern as the lab was built this year. This lab also has a whiteboard unlike the other classrooms I have seen which have blackboards. The lab is also stocked with headphones which the pupils may use during the lessons. This is quite a small class. Three coloured boys sit together and socialise, as do two pairs of coloured girls. There is one black pupil in the class – a black boy – who sits by himself and does not really socialise with the others. The pupils interact with the teacher on a friendly basis. One of the girls wishes him a good weekend as she exits the classroom. The tone of the lesson is quite informal with the pupils working on their own tasks and asking for the teacher's assistance where necessary. The topic of this lesson is excel graphs. The work they are doing is relatively advanced. I have a look through their textbook and exam paper and the level of work there is also quite advanced. They cover Microsoft excel, word, website construction as well as social media. I ask two of the coloured girls whether they have computers at home. One does and one does not.

Observations made in CAT (Computer Applications Technology) class with Grade 10 pupils (Mr Adams)

In this class there is quite an even split between black and coloured learners. The seating in the class is quite racially divided but some of the black girls do chat to the coloured boys during the lesson. The class is quite disruptive and there is quite a bit of chatting. This seems to be a free period in which the class can look for what they wish on the computers. The teacher distributes quite a long and detailed description of their assignment for the term. When he says they need to read 9 pages of this description for the next class they seem quite shocked. Two of the coloured boys have a small verbal outburst in class in which the one boy tells the other to, "shut up".

Informal Conversation with Mr Adams before and after class

Mr Adams tells me that many pupils at the school do not have access to computers at home which makes it more difficult for them to do well in his subject as it is a subject which requires additional hours to the class work. He says that many learners choose his subject in Grade 10 but then drop it shortly after as they find it too difficult. These learners could possibly be those without access to computers?

Mr Adams has a long history with BTHS. He has worked there for many years and was actually a pupil there when he was a child. He says that after 1990 many pupils at the school and from the area were sent to Model C schools by their parents and BTHS started receiving

pupils from townships. He implies that pass rates at the school went down after this transition as many strong pupils left to Model C schools.

When speaking with Mr Adams it becomes clear that he has quite a bleak and pessimistic view of the school as well as his job. He tells me about the numerous failures at the school and describes how the WCED's process works with regard to failures. He says that most pupils do not meet the academic requirements to pass in the lower grades but are either pushed through or benefit from the general raising of marks. He says that the WCED only lets learners fail a year a certain number of times before they are promoted to the next grade, regardless of whether they have met the academic requirements or not. It seems that weak learners have less motivation to improve as it is a given that one will eventually be promoted to the next grade. He also says that children from this school have so few prospects as it is – a situation which is exacerbated by poor school marks. He shows me the pass rates for each grade which range from 8.2% - ±35% depending on the grade. He says that he and the other teachers predict a matric pass rate this year in the 60%'s to 70%'s. He shows me that the oldest learner in the matric class was born in 1990.

Mr Adams describes his disillusionment with the school and the teaching profession. He says that while teaching used to be his "passion", it has now become just a "job". He tells me he plans to retire early if possible. I ask him if this is due to the pupils and he says that it is a small part of it but his main issue is with the WCED. He says that the Department simply asks for results from the funds they are injecting into the school without looking at the unique needs and circumstances of the school.

Appendix 4: Notes from Informal Interview with principal – Mr Philander

Informal Interview with Mr Philander (Principal of Bridge Town High School)

Location: his office

I asked Mr Philander what his main expectations and desired outcomes were for the research.

His main request is to gain an outside perspective of the issues occurring at the school. He wants those issues to be identified and explained from an outside perspective, as he said it is often difficult for himself and the other teachers to gain a more objective stance as they are so involved in the school. Secondly, he would like any possible recommendations to be made which may arise out of the research.

I ask him whether the Western Cape Education Department ever sends a consultant to do research or interviews at the school in order to determine what the unique needs of the school are so that they can allocate funds accordingly.

He says no. He tells me that the Department only sends subject advisors, but even these advisors do not provide a satisfactory service in his opinion. He tells me that, as the school has introduced isiXhosa for the first time this year, he expected that the Department would offer guidance and assistance regarding how to teach this new subject. The Department, however, only sent an isiXhosa subject advisor to the school on one occasion this year. He feels that the school is lacking valuable assistance in how to teach this subject.

Mr Philander seems very frustrated and exasperated when discussing the Western Cape Education Department. He tells me various things regarding their inefficiency and unprofessionalism, especially in securing teacher contracts and payments. He says he has hand-delivered documents to the Department before which they have lost. He describes long, bureaucratic processes with forms and deadlines which are fundamentally inefficient. He says the department has an inability to look at individual cases and provide assistance which meets unique criteria. He tells me a story in which the school recently had a broken drain. He sends a message to the Department, asking for assistance in repairing the drain, and they send back an official document listing the different things which constitute an emergency repair, but do not provide any real assistance. He also provides another example of the Department's lack of knowledge regarding what is actually going on in the schools under their control. He says that the Department recently raised the pass mark in grade 8 for a learner's home language from 40% to 50%. The Department then asked him why the pass rate in English had gone down.

Mr Philander also complains that the Western Cape Education Department does not understand the other social factors which contribute to failures and absenteeism at the school. He gives the example of a female learner, who lives in the township, coming to school in the morning to try and explain the absenteeism and lateness at the school. He says that due to high crime rates the learner cannot walk from her home to the taxi rank until it is light for safety reasons. Once she arrives at the taxi rank, she has to wait until the taxi is full before it leaves, which is unpredictable. Once the taxi has begun its journey, it is very likely that the traffic police will stop it, which will take up more time, leading to the learner being late for school. He says that the Department does not understand these social issues but still expects punctuality, attendance and high academic results. Once again it seems that the Department is out of touch with the lived reality of its learners and teachers.

Appendix 5: Transcript 1 – Teacher Interview – Mr Jacobs

Transcript 1

Teacher Interview

Mr Jacobs (coloured male)

31 July 2014

Staff Room at Bridge Town High School

I: So, you said you have been here for 10 years now?

R: Mm, 10 years plus, ja.

I: So, can you tell me about, at your time at the school, the process of desegregation that you've seen, and how it's worked at the school?

R: I think when I first started out it was very segregated. I mean it was polarised, you could see the coloured learners hung out with one another, the…the black learners hung out with one another. Um… But I think as the years progressed, certainly latter years now, later years now, there seems to be an integration in the playground. Although in classrooms, if you allow them to sit, they just gravitate towards each other and I think it's not only necessarily because of colour but it's just because of some…language. They speak the same…

I: Ja.

R: Most of the classes are very integrated. However I notice when there are incidences which happen out in the playground, especially amongst the boys, then they would say, "No, it's the coloured learners", "No, it's the black learners", you know?

I: Ok.

R: Now I find that very odd. I mean there are other occasions when something happens and they just stand together and do whatever they need to do and whatever and, you know?

I: Ja

R: So it's a strange mix. Sometimes I don't know what ticks them off and suddenly, "No, it's the coloured learners" or suddenly, "No, it's the black learners". Um, I certainly try to integrate as…as much of the things that I do as possible. So I decide in my classroom, for example, I decide where you sit.

I: Ok.

R: Um, except with the Grade 12s because they've been coming together since Grade 8. If I look at the Grade 12s as compared to maybe the Grade 8s or the Grade 9s – vast differences in integration. But in my Grade 10 class, I would tell you where to sit. But if you would go to like the 10A class or maybe the 10C class that I teach, I think they sit together, they are very integrated but in 10C, for example, there are fewer desks…ah no, fewer learners in the class that tend to sit there where people like…of similar language.

I: Ja. So younger learners coming in it's not as much of an issue anymore?

R: Not as much, no. Not as much of an issue anymore. Um, I think also because of the systems they come out of.

I: Ok.

R: But I also know there is lots of mistrust still – underlying mistrust. And certainly there were days earlier in the year that there were… In the beginning of the year when new learners come into the school there tends to be an escalation in violence.

I: Ok.

R: Little fights on the school premises or whatever, or after school. It happens…and I've noticed this trend now every year. But it's new learners coming in from outside, because they

are probably asserting themselves in the territory or whatever they want to call it…marking the turf type of thing.

I: Ja.

R: Um, but like now from September onwards, after the second term's holidays they used to the way the school operates and so things just simmer down completely. But in the beginning there's like lots of tension because it's new learners. And they look if it's a new black learner or a new coloured learner, and then they sort of gravitate around that and say, "No, no, no".

I: Ok. Um, and then you said the systems that they come from? What do you mean by that?

R: When I talk about systems…maybe in schools that they come from may not be as integrated. Um, and also communities.

I: Ja.

R: An older community, like Bridge Town, the kids, the learners here are a lot…many of them have derogatory names when they speak about.

I: Ja.

R: Ja, when they are talking about different cultural groupings. I certainly, when I speak, I try to speak about isiXhosa, as opposed to black.

I: Ja.

R: Ah, and, ja, I always tell them in class and they laugh, I say, "I'm not coloured, because coloured has a certain connotation and a certain look and blah, blah, blah…". And so we talk about it. And so they have that, you know, "coloured" and "black" and they talk about "they" and "us" and "them".

I: Ja.

R: Which you try to steer away from. Um, but it surfaces from time to time.

I: Ok.

R: And I think…ja. This is an older community, in terms of a more established community, and so people still have those stigmas. Certainly around election this year it was, you know, polarised, around colour, ja. DA is white and ANC is black and EFF is…EFF are the upstarts.

I: Do the pupils get involved in that kind of conversation, even though they can't vote? Well most of them…

R: No. Many of them don't even…you know when you talk about it…I mean we had discussions in class, even with the Grade 12 group and many of them said no they not going to vote, they not interested. There's just a whole lot of apathy towards getting involved and talking about politics and things…

I: Ok. So that doesn't really come up as an issue?

R: It doesn't spark…I know there was one learner who was very vocal about supporting a certain political party, um, but he was just allowed to be. One day he was in his EFF hat and stuff but he was just allowed to be.

I: So they didn't make a big deal of it?

R: No they didn't make a big deal about it, no.

I: Ok. And then I wanted to know, because I know you teach Life Orientation. So do you deal with the whole cultural, racial topic in it?

R: Yes. Yes, um more so lower down when you tend to think they are a bit more polarised. So then we do exercises when we talk about…and I break them…I split them up into racial groupings.

I: Oh really?

R: "What do you say", "What do coloured people say or what do black people say and we are going to test if it's the truth or if it's a myth".

I: Ok.

R: And that's how we deal with that.

I: That's interesting. So what happens in those classes?

R: And we talk openly. They say…and we talk, and that's when we talk about stereotypes and things like that. And then after that then life carries on.

I: Ok.

R: Ja they don't….they certainly hasn't been a racial fight or racial, ja. A racial fight or whatever, or racial violence as a result of racism.

I: Ok. So in those classes they…do they kind of realise where these stereotypes are coming from and just address them?

R: Yes! And I think we stop at…we look at, "Is it a myth? Is it a truth?". And we first look at how do we tackle, how do we test, if it's a truth, is it a myth. "What is a myth? What is truth?" And then we start talking about it. And then they start shouting, "But that's stereotyping" and, "That's gender oppression" and all those types of things. And that surfaces. And then we talk about it and then hopefully things change. Certainly when, by the time they leave here they are very different from when they arrived here. You know, they get along very well with one another. They become inseparable, joined at the hip. You look…you'll start seeing that now with the Grade 12 class towards the end of their Grade 12 career, they start gravitating towards one another and…ja.

I: Ja. So do you encourage like very open conversation?

R: Mm! And we call a spade a spade, you know. We…when we do that lesson and we speak about the, uh, the racial terminology and the strong words that they use to describe one another, we talk about it. I certainly have open dialogue and open, ja, conversation with them.

I: And do you think people in the class ever feel kind of, uncomfortable or sensitive about the topics?

R: I'm not too sure because I think they, they respond to me because they respond to my personality.

I: Ja.

R: So at the very start of the year I make it about who I am, where I come from, what I do, and they know I say what I think. I call a spade, a spade.

I: Ja.

R: And, um, and they then interact with me because they've got all my contact numbers, Facebook, Twitter, the works, they've got my phone number and I make it very clear to them, "If you are in trouble, even if it's at home, after school, give me a shout, we'll talk about it and try and sort it out". So they interact with me on that level and I think that's how we gain trust.

I: Ok.

R: And so I don't really have issues with that regard, you know. And if trouble…if little damp spots arise we deal with it then and there and then carry on.

I: Ok. So do a lot of students come to you if they do have personal problems?

R: Yes! Oh, gosh, yes. Sometimes at the end of the week I'm just like, "Oh thank the good lord this is the end of the week".

I: (laughs)

R: It can become…ranging from, "I think I'm pregnant", to, "Somebody got shot", or whatever, whatever.

I: So, the students that come to you, does it vary?

R: Ja, from Grade 8…anybody. From Grade 8 up until Grade 12.

I: Ok. And a variety of races? It's not just…?

R: Ja. Different people. Um, although, although….ja, no, definitely different people…if I think about it.

I: Ok.

R: Initially those learners who don't interact, or who have never been in my class, they tend to keep their distance and that's like, so you know to build trust, and that's normal. But once

they've been to…been in my class, with English or Life Orientation, then it's a different ball game. They feel free to come and chat or say, or talk.

I: Ja, I did notice your class, they are like, they respond to you very well and…

R: Mm.

I: And you know they feel like they can be open with you.

R: And that's nice. And they call a spade, a spade. And they throw a comment in my direction and I throw it back at them and we laugh and we carry on and…

I: Ja.

R: (laughs) The one boy walked in…an isiXhosa learner, and the other learners arrived and he said, "Ai, ai, ai, these black people, hey, they forever late".

I: (laughs)

R: I said, "Ja, ja, ja", talk to them, talk to your brothers and sisters. We Africans, we don't know time, we don't respect time." And so when I, so I can…I can use the word, um, "black", and say, "Hey!", you know. And they respond to that because they know it doesn't come from a place where I'm discriminating against them. It's a word that we use to describe one another. And they say, "Hey! You brown boy, come here." Because sometimes they call me brown boy in class. They say, "Brown boy". (laughs). And I go, and we talk. Um, but that's just the fun that we have in class. There's certainly no racial undertone…from either side.

I: So you just trying to kind of desensitize them…

R: Desensitize them to the words! And make them realise it's just a word, there's no connotation attached to it. It's got nothing to do with the way you live, the way you look. It's just, "That's a colour, that's a colour…". And I'm trying to think if, in the years that I've taught if anyone has ever used the word, "kaffir" or "kaffer", in the class, and not once has it come up…even for me to deal with.

I: Ok.

R: You know, in a conversation on the playground, you wouldn't hear anybody speak to one another, or about one another like that, which has been very pleasant.

I: Ok. So do you think it's more a case of, there's not racial tension, but there's sometimes more a lack of integration, so we just going to not speak, but we don't hate each other.

R: Ja! We get along… Ja! And I think it also comes from the way the staff interact with the learners as well.

I: Ok. What do you mean?

R: We…if the learners get into our space and…I mean there are many learners here who many staff members get them toiletries, or whatever, because they come from very poor backgrounds. Um, toiletries or whatever and help them along, they have…you know…supporting them with school fees and stuff like that. We deal with learners very differently and I like the way we operate. And we helping one another, and we covering one another's backs. What really helped in the last few years is that we had isiXhosa-speaking educators at our school…two now…three now, so far.

I: On the staff?

R: On the staff. Well, not on staff now. One, now. It's been one, one, one, but it's helped to change the perception previously from when I first started. There were no isiXhosa teachers here. And the first time we have isiXhosa as a learning area, this year. So it's also helped to break the perception, the skewed perception that you know…because if you look at our demographics, I think there are more isiXhosa learners than coloured learners.

I: Ja. So, do you think it's kind of helpful for them to have someone senior that speaks their language, that they can kind of connect with, on that level?

R: Sometimes. Sometimes…but isiXhosa learners will just choose who they are going to speak to. If they don't speak to me they go speak to somebody else. But eventually we speak to one another and we get to find out and we get to deal with the issue. So, ja it just depends. I don't think they just target that all the isiXhosa learners will now go to this one educator and the coloured learners will come and go to another educator, no. They go to with whomever they comfortable.

I: Ok, I see. And then it terms of what personal challenges have you had at school? What are your main challenges, day-to-day, just in the school environment?

R: If I had somebody to do my administration, my admin…and it's got nothing to do with racial integration. That would help me free up some of my time to teach completely, and then also to just troubleshoot social issues, and areas, and discipline that arise. Or, alternatively, if I had like a teacher assistant in class, so if everybody had a teacher assistant in class, it would be great. Um, so then the classes would then be more manageable, in terms of discipline. I don't have a serious discipline issue in my classroom where people get up and challenge me, and be rude and walk out and things like that.

I: Ja. But it's a general problem in the school?

R: I think…ja it would become…maybe it counts in my favour that I'm male and there's more respect. But I would go to the learners, for example…I mean I caught many people smoking dagga already and the first few times I would say, "No, no come, let's try and deal with this, let's try and get you counselling, let's try and work through this before I even go and report this. Let's get this done first, then if you don't respond then you obviously now blatantly disregarding me. Then there's one boy…I would always like the one senior boy I would go and say, "Listen, that young boy needs some guidance there. Can you just have a word in his ear. He can't continue like that in the class. So I use the learners themselves to go and talk to other learners.

I: Ok.

R: Like I would do when I referee. I'd tell the one player, "Please just have a word with him there, he's close to getting into trouble with me so…" So then I do go and I can say, "Remember so and so came to speak to you, and we've spoken about this before?"

I: Ok. So you think maybe it's your personality that kind of encourages discipline?"

R: Mm! I think so.

I: They respect you because they can kind of relate to you and…

R: I think so. But I also think it takes a lot of effort to do that. Um, and also, my wife often tells me sometimes I don't know where the boundaries are. My boundaries are very blurred. I'll allow them into my space and I'll be in their space. Where there are other educators who keep the learners very…you know, "You're the learner, I'm the educator and the two…the two ships shall never meet."

I: Ja.

R: But I operate differently. So I'll make time. And they respond to that. So I think it does boil down to a personality but I think it also can be learnt, it can be taught.

I: Ja. Ok, and then, do you guys have a school counsellor?

R: I wish!

I: You don't have one?

R: I wish. That would solve so many issues.

I: So the teachers have to take that…

R: We do all of that, ja.

[At this point a pupil comes to speak to Mr Jacobs and the interview is paused.]

I: Ja, so it would help to have a school counsellor?

R: Oh, definitely. Ah, sjoe… I think if our classrooms could have been smaller…I mean some educators…sometimes I have…I mean 10As…51 learners in a class.

I: Ja, that's a lot.

R: And that impacts on discipline. If the classes were smaller, we had more educators, it would be more manageable.

I: Ja.

R: You wouldn't have so many issues.

I: Ok.

R: People leave tired, very tired.

I: Ja. So you guys kind of have to take on all that responsibility?

R: Mm! And we do extra-murals if there…that's why we have very limited extra-murals but we try and do something. And it comes back down to us again.

I: Ja. Which extra-murals are you involved in?

R: I used to be involved in football but not…I'll go and watch and support, yes, but I won't…I'll be too tired and I've got other things…other responsibilities that I do now. So that's the only thing…the only extra-murals that happen at school, at the moment, is now the band that's being…they involved with, and I'll help out there, I transport learners. And football, and cross-country. And then athletics at the beginning of the year. Other than that we'll do little tournaments, inter-class tournaments…and I'll get involved there with that as well so…

I: Ja. And then do you think those sporting and cultural activities, that helps…unify…

R: Definitely! There's always a place for sport and culture to unify people. I mean we've seen it nationally. It definitely helps to bring people together.

I: Ok. And that's also part of your life orientation component?

R: Mm!

I: Does it help there as well?

R: Yes. We play…we play a lot together. We play…um, we dance…ja.

I: Ok. Um, and then, what else…

R: You can come to my class next week….we dancing next Tuesday…oh, no we playing next Tuesday.

I: Oh, nice. That's interesting. Um, ja, is there anything else that you think is relevant? Maybe things the school could change…to kind of promote more integration?

R: I don't see…ok, maybe in terms of more integration, if we have more activities which encourage people to interact more with one another…socially.

I: Ok.

R: As opposed to in an academic environment. So if we did more…cultural stuff.

I: Ja.

R: As a school group…you know people see you differently, you interact differently.

I: Ja. I got the impression that a lot of…there are a lot of things that could be improved but it's always a limit with the education department and their funding…it's just a nightmare.

R: Yoh! Oh the red tape and the…I mean before we used to, and it was amazing. I remember, four or five years back, we went as an entire school, we took the day off and we went to…I can't remember, it was a place where there was a pool and braai facilities and etc, etc. The entire school went. The owners of the place came back…and all the staff went, and they were amazed at how well-disciplined the kids were. And there were…many of the times they were on their own. There weren't educators watching over them all the time. The educators they…they hang out, some of us were with some of the learners and stuff… And when we left they said they were very, very impressed with the way…and then that year I remember there weren't many disciplinary issues, because the learners saw us differently. Because we played games with them, we hung out with them, we braaied with them whatever. We got back to school and things…but now the department is, "No, no, only educational stuff you must go do. All the other stuff you must do after school.

I: Ok.

R: Now if you go to another school there they…sports coach with his sports team…and that's a different person to the one who does the education…

I: And now it's all mixed together…

R: Ja. And there's…you know, I can send you…if you have a problem in my class I can send you to the counsellor. The counsellor deals with it. But now there's a problem, if there's a disciplinary problem now involving my Grade 12 class that report comes to me, I must deal with it, you know.

I: So does the department ever send, like, consultants to the school to see how it's run and…

R: No. No ways! I mean we've got a… psychologist assigned to the school that we can only see when we ask them to come. That person is in charge of 15 other schools.

I: Really?

R: And we have social issues to deal with every single day, whether it's truancy or teenage pregnancy or whatever. If I had a psychology department or social work department here, you know, an NGO based here at school, I can just refer the learners there to deal with us…oh brilliant.

I: Ja. Because the thing I kind of picked up is that, um, the education department just sends funds and sees numbers and they don't kind of look at the individual circumstances.

R: Yes! That's exactly what…yes. That's exactly what they do.

I: So do they not ever kind of have a chat with the principal and say, "Ok, what are your needs, how can we allocate funds to you?"

R: No.

I: There's no kind of investigation into that?

R: No. we just get…in terms of your numbers you get assigned so much money.

I: So no person ever comes and actually investigates the situation?

R: I don't know, you can check with the principal. I certainly haven't heard people coming and investigating and checking, "How can we support Bridge Town High to become more efficient?"

I: Ja. Because if…it was with the isiXhosa teacher it was like you didn't have one for three years…but they don't look at the…

R: Yes! At the results…yes. And we had to motivate why many times before we could actually get an isiXhosa learner…uh educator. And we were saying if we had an isiXhosa educator our percentage…and at the end of the day they only want to look at how many people passed…"No, no, no, your percentages are too low." I mean I look at Life Orientation now, I'm being…we have a process called moderation.

I: Ja.

R: Now you get local moderation in your school and then you get the, um, circuit moderation and then you get provincial moderation, before you get national moderation. I'm going to provincial moderation for the second time now in three years and I asked, "Why am I being asked to come again? I know…but why me again? I'm sure there are other Life Orientation educators.", "No, because your average percentage is higher than the norm at the school."

I: Oh, ok.

R: They took all the other learning areas and compared that with the average of Life Orientation because you know the gap is too big. They not asking why. The learners don't do maths, they can't do science, they struggle with that. Life Orientation they find easier so obviously they going to, you know. The results are going to be better, but you can't compare physics…and they don't look at that. They just, oh that's the stats, so we need to go see why that's the case. Because if the learner can get that, then why can't the learner do that.

I: (laughs) It just doesn't make sense.

R: No!

I: It's frustrating.

R: It's very frustrating. I don't know if you heard…it's a pity you didn't sit in on the Grade 12 discussion, I mean last year…I don't know if you know much about how the education system has changed in the last year?

I: In the last year, no.

R: Last year towards the end of the year we got a circular to say that if somebody, in terms of the national…Western Cape haven't really applied it correctly…that if a learner in a phase…now there are different phases…in the one phase, the FET, the senior phase, from Grade 10 to Grade 12, if they fail once in the phase, they cannot fail again. So you have

learners in Grade 12 at the moment, who didn't pass Grade 11. But because they failed Grade 10, they can't fail Grade 11 then and they must go to Grade 12.

I: But in Grade 12 you can't push people through…

R: No! And we can't push…you must write the national examination and now you have a situation where they know that, and these learners are definitely out of their depth. They can't cope with all the demands of Grade 12 because they didn't cope with the demands of Grade 11.

I: Ja.

R: But yet we expect to deliver the same results. Because they will come at the end of the year and say, "You an underperforming school because you got 60% pass rate."

I: But that's because you push people through that shouldn't be there?

R: Correct. Correct. And you dealing with parents who don't support the learners coming to school, etc, etc. And so, what do I do? And what frustrates me about the system, really frustrates me, is that the WCED, at the beginning of the year, has this beautiful ceremony at Tuin Huis or wherever they have, to reward the schools for their matric results. And it's so skewed, in my opinion. Because the schools who have all the resources and everything, they gonna get good results. They have to!

I: (laughs)

R: I would be disappointed if I sent my daughter to Rustenburg, as an example, and she didn't pass, because I expect her to pass because of all the resources that you have. And then you give them a monetary prize and say, "Thank you very much, you guys did well. Well done." And you give them R80 000. Give the R80 000 to the school that's dealt with…that has to deal with poverty all year, dysfunctional learners, broken homes, etc, etc and see how they cope under those conditions and then on a scale or whatever, reward that school.

I: Ja, that just makes more sense.

R: It frustrates…it works, oh! And you know what, you know what, and then people see colour. And people say, "No it's the white schools, so they'll get it right."

I: Ja.

R: And if you look at the list of people who are being moderated provincially, again, all those schools have all these socio-economic issues…I think many in the social…in the education department have this pie in the sky belief that all of us are equal.

I: Ja. But if people don't have the same resources they obviously can't perform at the same level.

R: Can't! Can't. We have a beautiful field here we can't use because we don't have the…the resources (laughs)…to maintain the field and to get people to play out there.

I: Ja, that's frustrating.

R: It is frustrating.

I: Especially if you think of how much money they spend…like…unnecessarily.

R: Yes!

I: And you just need one educator for…

R: Every time, we've been saying this, every time they say you can have this winter school programme, you can have that, we are going to do this…and it costs money. I'm tutoring at another school, for example, in Grade 9, and I'm going to get paid extra by the department to go and do that, but I'm saying take all those little programmes that you have, and employ another person. Put another body there.

I: Ja (laughs).

R: Don't…I mean if you look at these learners who can't cope, who've been put through to Grade 12, in March we had an eighth period after school, right? Which means they end at half past three, something to four. Then we had a spring school where they asked to go to in their holidays. They already have the commitment for Grade 11 but now you placing all these demands on them. By the time we had winter school, I think there were 5 out of the 126 that came.

I: Really?

R: Because they were just bombarded with all these programmes that people felt that these programmes were going to help them.

I: Shame, that's very frustrating. And in terms of the parents, have you had issues with parents? Or how does your relationship with the parents work?

R: I think I've got quite an ok relationship with parents. Um, I do though, um sometimes there are difficult parents but parents they just very co-operative. Except, when we ask them to come to school, some of them, some, most of them, but there are many of them…the learners that we want to see for the disciplinary issues they hardly come. We've now had to shift our parent meeting to next week and, on average, I think if we get 40%, it would be great.

I: So why don't they come? Do you know what their reasoning is?

R: They don't even know that…I mean I'm a parent, I know my learner must…my child must get a report…a report card.

I: Ja.

R: They don't…not even bothered if they don't get the report card.

I: So they don't even notice at all?

R: Now I can't lean on a parent heavily for their support to back me up and ensure that the kid does 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

I: Ja. So is there not a lot of parent involvement in the school?

R: Limited, could be better. I mean we could have parents who are unemployed to come help with the discipline…

I: Or like do sports after school?

R: No. They won't come unless they get paid. They won't come unless they get paid. If you want me to do it you must pay me. And we can't pay, we don't have the money to pay.

I: So they wouldn't just want to kind of assist the school because they know their child's there?

R: At the end of the day they need money for food…for the children. So they won't work for free.

I: Ok. Ok, I see what you mean. Um, is there anything else, any other issues?

R: No, no, no. I'm happy.

I: Ok great, thank you so much for the interview.

R: You're welcome.

Appendix 6: Transcript 2 – Pupil Interview – Mfundo

Transcript 2

Pupil Interview

Mfundo Grade 12 (black male)

1 August 2014

Teachers' Office – Bridge Town High School

I: So I just wanted to get some background. Have you been here since Grade 8?

R: Yes.

I: Ok. And then which primary school did you go to?

R: Heideveld Primary School.

I: Ok. Where's that?

R: It's in Heideveld.

I: Oh, Heideveld, sorry. In which area do you stay in?

R: Gugulethu.

I: Gugulethu, ok. And then, so do you feel like your primary school prepared you for high school?

R: Yes.

I: Or did it feel a bit overwhelming?

R: It actually did.

I: Did it? Ok.

R: Yes.

I: So you felt comfortable when you came here?

R: (nods)

I: Ok. And then, so I just want to get a sense of your experience, um, at school. So do you feel comfortable or…because I know sometimes when you at school you kind of have to change how you act, how you do things, to how you are at home. So maybe tell me how different…

R: Ok. Um, the difference is actually like there are different rules in school, so there are things that you can do at home which you can't do at school.

I: Ja.

R: So like that is the problem for most learners, ja. So like, for instance, let me just make an example of a black student.

I: Yes.

R: So like a black student goes to a ritual of um, um, like initiation. He goes there, comes back. After coming back like, in the community, outside, he's well respected. Like the problem is here in school he's treated as like, he's equal. He's equal so he doesn't want that to happen. That's, that's one of the problems. And, um…

I: So you're saying that when he comes back from the initiation ceremony he should kind of change, like people should respect him more?

R: Yes, that's it. That's what he expects.

I: Ok.

R: But it's not that actually because he can't, he can't expect someone to respect you whilst you don't respect them.

I: Yes.

R: So that's the thing.

I: Ok. And anything else about the school that's very different to your experience at home?

R: Hmm, no, I'm enChiaraing every moment here.

I: Are you? Ok.

R: I'm enChiaraing every moment.

I: And then do you feel comfortable socialising with everyone or do you feel like you stick to certain people or…?

R: I socialise with everyone.

I: Do you? Ok.

R: I socialise with everyone but there are some certain people I don't associate with.

I: Ok.

R: But ja not like I have a problem with them, but I just don't want to sit with them or have a conversation with them.

I: Ok.

R: That's the only…

I: And what is the reason for that?

R: Um…like, I'm very…ok let me just put it like this, I'm going to be open…

I: Yes.

R: Um, I'm very critic when it comes to friends. I don't, I don't socialise with everyone. And I have that, like, intention of, I don't want to socialise with children.

I: Yes.

R: I don't like that. So, that's the thing. But, other people, I have no problem against.

I: Ok. So do you mean like some of the other students are a bit immature?

R: Yes, very much.

I: And you can't like relate to them?

R: (nods)

I: Ok, I understand what you mean. And then…ja, tell me a bit about your experience on the RCL [The school's student representative council – he is a RCL member].

R: Yes. Um, there's like…actually do you know what is the RCL?

I: I don't know what your duties are so you can tell me about what your duties are and what you do…

R: Ok. My duties are like…I listen to um, like the student's complaints about school, like what change they want and what must be fixed and stuff.

I: Ok.

R: So I just list the things and then I just give it over and, yes. That's what I do in general.

I: Ok. And what kind of things do people want to change about the school?

R: Let me just start in, with like immature people.

I: Yes.

R: They want smoking to be legal.

I: (laughs)

R: I have no idea why.

I: Do they think that's going to happen? (laughs)

R: (laughs) It's quite impossible. And, um, like, I had a complaint in which some…a learner said like they want racism to stop in school because they say there is racism. But I don't see nothing. I don't see nothing with that. I have no problem against that. There are, yes there are some learners who have like that kind of racist idea but it's just a minority so, if a minority is like that so they just, everyone just says it's them all. So it just goes like that. But there's not…we not racist here, I could say.

I: So there's a few people that are considered racist?

R: Yes.

I: What kind of things do they do or say or…

R: Um, calling people names firstly, they said, and um, bullying. And…and they say um, like when you in a fight with a person in like a different race, you will fight, ok, it gets sorted. You go outside, his friends will wait on you…and you'll get beaten up.

I: Ok. So does that happen quite often?

R: Yes, and I've seen it.

I: Ok. And why do you think people have those attitudes still?

R: Maybe, maybe like they grew up like that in their society, like maybe that's what they've been told to do and what not to do. So maybe that is the thing but I don't know, I really don't know.

I: Ok. And how do your teachers deal with the race issue?

R: They deal with it very nicely because, like, the teachers are not racist, the teachers aren't…they have nothing against us. So yes, they trying, they trying to like resolve the thing but it won't be resolved unless like the learners want to resolve it. So yeah…

I: Ok. Do you feel like in class you can speak openly with the teachers about it or…?

R: Yes we do. We do.

I: Ok. And then if you, say you had like some issue and you needed to chat to a teacher. Like something's going on, you need advice or like…which teacher would you go to? Who would you feel comfortable with?

R: My class teacher first, Ms Maggot. And my Life Orientation teacher.

I: Mr Jacobs?

R: Yes. I'm quite open to them.

I: So why do you feel comfortable with them?

R: Like…not, not actually like I have a problem with other teachers but quite…I'm just comfortable with them. I don't know why. Just comfortable.

I: Just closer with them?

R: Yes, I could say.

I: And then, um, I wanted to ask you, how does the RCL members…how do they get chosen?

R: Like you, um, you apply to be, um, an RCL member and then you'll need to like prepare a speech to like, to tell like that grade that you in, to tell them like what are you planning to do and stuff. So that's how it goes.

I: Ok. And the students vote for you?

R: Yes.

I: So you were selected by the students, not the teachers?

R: (nods)

I: Ok and then you do Afrikaans as a language?

R: Yes.

I: What do you think of Afrikaans? Has it been challenging? Are you enChiaraing it?

R: It has been challenging. Yes, it has been challenging.

I: Is it a language you don't feel as comfortable with?

R: I am comfortable with Afrikaans because like in primary [school] I used to do Afrikaans. So, but even in primary it was like quite hard because Afrikaans is like my fourth language. So it was a bit hard but I'm just coping with it.

I: So what do you do? You do English…and what other two languages?

R: No we do only two languages, first and additional language.

I: Ok, but I mean you said you speak four languages?

R: Yes. It's English, Afrikaans…no. It's English, Setswana, Sesotho and Afrikaans.

I: Ok, cool. So do you think it would've helped you if you had your own languages to speak at school, to learn them rather than Afrikaans?

R: No.

I: Really?

R: No. I'm quite happy with Afrikaans now. I'm quite happy with it.

I: So do you think it will be beneficial when you leave school?

R: Yes, actually. Yes, because I will be meeting people outside. I will be meeting people so I will need to like interact. Not with like English all the time, but with Afrikaans also because…the country we have a lot of languages and we need to interact like as South Africans, so, yes.

I: Ok. Do you feel like some of your classmates struggle with it?

R: Yes.

I: So do you think it was a good thing that they introduced isiXhosa…

R: To some learners, yes. Because like some learners come from like public isiXhosa schools so they not used to Afrikaans. So it will be better for them if they do isiXhosa than Afrikaans.

I: So you felt like because you did Afrikaans in primary school you can cope better?

R: I can cope, yes.

I: Ok, and then, just in terms of like any other changes that you would like to see at the school. Like what do you think would make it a better place?

R: Firstly, for the school to have a hall. I've always wanted that. And in sports, like the learners don't support the people who do sports at school. For instance, when they like playing a match, the soccer players, they playing a match and no Bridge Town learner goes there.

I: Is it? Why do you think that is?

R: They just don't care.

I: They just not interested?

R: They just not interested.

I: How do you think they could make like a community around sport at the school?

R: Hmm. Actually by like playing soccer in school. Actually they've done that before but it never worked. It never worked but I think they should try it again, and then call like the whole school to go to the field and just watch.

I: Ja.

R: Just for like one interval and then yes, maybe there will be change.

I: And any other changes you want to see?

R: (pauses). No.

I: Ok, so you are quite happy?

R: I'm quite happy.

I: And then what are your plans for next year?

R: Next year I'm planning to do Psychology.

I: Ok, where?

R: At UWC.

I: Cool, and are you excited for it? Do you think it will be difficult?

R: It will be difficult, but yes.

Appendix 7: Transcript 3 – Pupil Interview – Zanele

Transcript 3

Pupil Interview

Zanele Grade 12 (black female)

1 August 2014

Teachers' Office – Bridge Town High School

I: So have you been in Bridge Town since grade 8?

R: Yes, I've been here since grade 8, yes.

I: And what school did you go to before?

R: I went to four different primary schools but the last primary school that I went to was St Agnes in Woodstock, St Agnes Primary School.

I: Ok. And do you feel like it prepared you for school?

R: No…no I don't feel like it did because I only went to St Agnes…I changed schools a lot so I didn't…how can I put it…I didn't, like I didn't…I always changed schools so it was a different atmosphere, different teachers all the time. I didn't grow up with the foundation of one school. So I wasn't, I wasn't…how can I put it…I wasn't prepared for high school. As a result I didn't even, in grade 7, since I changed from schools in grade 6 til grade 7, grade 6 I changed to St Agnes then in grade 7 I didn't even bother myself in applying in high schools or anything. I didn't…I wasn't prepared. That's how I wasn't prepared, I didn't search for schools, I didn't bother about which high school I was going to go. I only looked for a school when it was in January when they were about to open and then that's when I came here to Bridge Town. And this was the only school that accepted me at that time.

I: So did you choose the school? Did your parents choose the school?

R: No, my parents didn't choose the school, I didn't choose the school. My brother's girlfriend was in the school so she brought me here and then I got taken. We didn't plan this. It was something that was unplanned.

I: So you just kind of chose the school because it was last minute?

R: Ja, last minute.

I: So you didn't choose it for a specific reason?

R: No.

I: Ok, cool. And then, which area do you stay in now?

R: I stay in Gugulethu.

I: Ok, cool. And then I just wanted to ask you, like obviously sometimes at school you kind of have to act differently as to how you would at home…

R: Ja.

I: …with your own friends and your own family. So do you find that as well?

R: (laughs). No. Because I'm loud and…I'm a loud person and I'm talkative and I never mind fitting in. I always fit in. It's always people coming to me, instead of me going to them and trying to fit in…and I never experienced that I have to change who I am and act as someone I'm not just to fit in.

I: So with your family and stuff…are you the same, or is there anything you have to change?

R: (laughs). I'm not the same. I'm not the same (laughs). Well, yes I'm talkative at home, but not as talkative as I am at school, because here at school I'm with my friends, I can talk about

anything. At home I have to be respectful and mind what I'm talking and how I'm talking…be obedient and stuff. But my family is also like me…like me, not fun, but we talkative people so…

I: Ja. Ok. And so then do you feel like Bridge Town is quite like a comfortable space for you? Like you fit in here, when it comes to the people and the teachers?

R: Ja, I'm comfortable with the teachers. I know a lot of them. I love…most of them. Because they've taught me a lot and I actually…when I come like since grade 8, or to grade 10, I come to a stage where I can't talk about something. I experience something, whether it's in my life or my family, or anything and I can't talk about it to my friends, I actually go to the teacher and talk to them. That's how much like I love them. They almost like my parents because they've groomed me since grade 8 and now I'm in grade 12 so…

I: So if you did have a problem…which one of the teachers would you feel most comfortable going to?

R: (pauses). Mmm…Ms Bedien [coloured female teacher] and Ms Manuel [coloured female teacher].

I: Ok, and why do they make you feel comfortable?

R: Because they open. Um…they open. And Ms Manuel is a loving person, she always listens to anybody's problems and she's willing to help. And Ms Manuel understands. She's doesn't act like…she's someone you could easily talk to about anything. She's like almost your own friend but now she has experience, she's older. And with Ms Bedien, she is a Christian (smiles), and I'm Christian as well so she gives me good advice about what's right and what's wrong. And also encourages me.

I: Ok. And then you had to do Afrikaans as one of your subjects is that right? Do you enChiara it?

R: (laughs). Well Afrikaans is my favourite subject (laughs). When most people ask me what my favourite subject is I say Afrikaans.

I: Is that really your favourite subject?

R: It is my favourite subject because I went to an Afrikaans primary school. I went to Mamre primary school and I went to Hugenot primary school and I went to Rondeheuwel primary school and they all Afrikaans. All my subjects were Afrikaans. So I got to high school…when I got to grade 7 I struggled with English so Afrikaans was my best subject. I was good and I loved it. I was doing it since I was growing up. And then I got to high school and it is my favourite subject. And I don't mind doing Afrikaans (laughs).

I: But what's your home language?

R: IsiXhosa.

I: Do you think it would have been nicer if you had the option to do Xhosa when you started school?

R: Like primary school?

I: High school.

R: (pauses to think). No. I think it would have been difficult for me to do Xhosa.

I: Why?

R: Um, it's hard (smiles). It's not the same as... It's deep Xhosa of which I didn't grow…in a school that teaches Xhosa or I've never been…My siblings have never been taught Xhosa at their school so we grew up knowing Afrikaans and English so now if I have to do Xhosa at high school it would have been difficult… I would've struggled and I wouldn't have had someone to go to maybe at home where I can ask them what is this and what is that. So I think it's better that I did Afrikaans.

I: Ok. So even though it's your home language you don't feel comfortable with it in like a class situation.

R: No.

I: Ok. Just in terms of your friends at the school, do you feel like you can mix with everyone? Or do you feel like there are people that you don't mix with?

R: There are some people that I don't mix with. Um, but now my classmates are all…I mix with them…since we've been together since grade 8, we know each other and we comfortable with each other. But, with other grades, lower grades and other grade 12s that I don't know, I can't really mix with them.

I: And why is that?

R: Because…(laughs), it's because we never (pauses), how can I put it, we never…we don't know each other. We don't talk to each other. The only time we talk to each other is when we have extra classes and when that happens it's only our class that mingles, not them. And also, some of them are maybe rude or maybe they don't want to talk to you, maybe they don't like you and you don't know what you did to them or something like that. And that's why I can's mix…I don't mix with everyone.

I: Ok. And then a few other people were saying they've seen like a bit of racism at the school and that there are some divisions based on race, in terms of how people socialise. Have you seen that or…?

R: Not in…well there is a division but I wouldn't say in girls, I would say in boys. Because the coloured boys will be one side and the black boys will be another side and they hate each other. When there's a fight, um, the coloured children would get favoured more than the black children.

I: By the teachers?

R: By the teachers. And then sometimes the coloured children will get away with everything they do more than the black children. The black children, they bunk, they smoke, they get caught and then they sent out, whereas the coloured child will bunk, smoke, get in a fight, do anything, and nothing will happen to them, they won't get suspended.

I: Why do you think that is…that favouritism?

R: I don't know, I honestly don't know.

I: Do you think all the teachers are like that or just some teachers?

R: No, no. It's just some teachers.

I: And do you think it's because it's a coloured teacher and a coloured student, they favour them? Or why do you think it is?

R: I think it's…no I don't think it's because it's a coloured teacher and a coloured student. But I think it's…I think the teachers…maybe the teacher knows more than we do, like about the learner, the coloured learner. They feel sympathy over them and there will be sympathy but the black child so…

I: Because they don't know the black child?

R: Because they don't know that black child so they don't favour them, they favour the coloured children.

I: Ok. And then you feel comfortable mixing with other coloured girls? You said the black girls and the coloured girls all socialise…

R: Yes.

I: Ok. And then do the black boys and the black girls socialise? Or is there like a divide?

R: Um…

I: Because I noticed in a lot of the classes the black boys on one side, girls on one side, and like they don't really mix.

R: No, not every coloured guy, coloured child will mix with a black child, like especially boys. No, it's only if they maybe friends, like they really, um, like grade 12 you can say like coloured boys mix with coloured girls, I mean coloured boys mix with black boys. But in lower grades I don't think that happens. I think there's still…um, that division between them.

I: Ja. And you said they fight quite a bit?

R: (nods).

I: What would they fight over?

R: (laughs). They fight about cigarettes, they fight about maybe if…uh, about anything, in classes, about pencils, not girls. They fight about anything. And when they fight if…I'm a

black, because we in the coloured area, and when we go home obviously we are going to be walking there…so when I get in a fight, if I'm black and I hit a coloured child, and then they will…all the coloureds will come and beat me up. And then after school they wait for me outside, and they'll beat me again. And then it's like that so if you a black you can't actually do anything. So they fight about anything.

I: So do you think it's sometimes just finding something to fight about when there's like no reason?

R: Ja, because when we pass by the corridors there will be coloured children that are picking on us black children. They always pick the lower grades. They'll pick on us. And maybe if you don't mind them and we walk away, they'll even get angrier, "Why you not talking back? Why you not…?" And like what do you want me to do, because I'm not in…I don't want to fight with you and walk away and then like, "Oh, you got an attitude". Then they'll start.

I: So they are trying to provoke a fight?

R: Ja, they want to provoke.

I: So do you think those fights, they using race as a reason to fight?

R: They use it as a reason to fight. They use it as a reason to start something against blacks. They use that. Because most of the time…ok blacks are wrong in their way and what they do but they always picking on (pauses)…on us. They always picking…they always picking on the black children for them to do something. They never pick on someone who is their own colour and say, "Hey, let's fight", or something. They never do that and that is wrong.

I: So why do you think they still have these ideas? Obviously you guys were born after…

R: After apartheid and stuff.

I: So do you think they are still sensitive about it, or have stereotypes, or?

R: No. I don't think that. I think it's where they come from. It all goes back to where everyone comes from, their background, their parents, how they are taught and stuff. Because we all come…maybe we don't know everyone's situation and what is…maybe someone does that because they don't get attention at home, they don't get love or anything. So they come to school to pick on children and pick on fights and they know they can't do it to their own, so they'd rather do it to the blacks where no-one will talk for them. So they pick on them thinking that…

I: Ok. So it's because they have that support structure, they have all their friends in the area, and the black students don't?

R: (nods).

I: I see what you mean. So do you think it's also the parents that teach them these like bad attitudes?

R: Ja. A child's attitude is a parent's attitude. If your parents act that way then you also act that way. If you grow up seeing your parent doing something, then you bound to do it when you older. Because if you see your parents fighting and angry, and shouting at you, you take that anger to someone else and do the same thing that they did, unless you have someone to talk to, or someone to counsel you all the time. So if they don't have that, maybe this is the reason they are doing this.

I: Ok. So do you think it would help if your school had like a student counsellor? Or do you feel like it's fine to go to your teachers?

R: I think a student counsellor would be better because, most of the time, children don't…well we learners don't feel like we can reach out to certain teachers. Especially the lower grades, they don't know any teachers yet that well, so they won't talk to anybody. So a student counsellor comes it will be better, to go and talk to.

I: And then lastly I just, like if it was up to you, what kind of changes would you make at the school, to make it better…for you guys?

R: (laughs). Um, to make it better for us. Firstly, the science and maths children deserve better teachers. They deserve hard working teachers that are determined to make us pass, that are giving us (pauses), they must give us their all. Because we as children can't…we can't go home and do everything on our own, we need that support, especially the maths and science because maths and science is hard. And you can't just sent us…come to school and do work and that one period would be enough, no. And the other change is, um, the school…the school grounds. Um, if there were more activities at school then there will be less bunking, smoking, and smuggling maybe alcohol into school. Then they will be focussed on sports and music and whatever they can do in school. They would participate more at school.

I: And so what are your plans for next year? What do you want to study and what do you want to do?

R: I'm applying…for a paediatrician, so I will study at Stellenbosch University and hopefully, god-willingly, I will get it sorted and study.

I: Ok, awesome. Thank you so much.

Appendix 8: Transcript 4 – Teacher Interview – Mrs Davids

Transcript 4

Teacher Interview

Mrs Davids (coloured female)

24 July 2014

Teachers' Office – Bridge Town High School

I: Well I just wanted to get more of a background. So when did the process of desegregation start at the school?

R: Ooh…I cannot tell you when because I started about 20 years ago. There was…there were already a diversity of learners here.

I: Oh, is it?

R: Ja. So that's about 20 years ago. One would say…

I: 1994?

R: 1994, yes. So I would say from then, 1994 onwards. Make it 1990, when we start adding…when they start integrating…From that time onwards.

I: So is that a government-initiated thing?

R: (long pause). Ok, one would say yes. When our departments merged to the Western Cape Education Department, it was first coloured affairs. And then that fell away. Then it became one department called the Western Cape Education Department and from then onwards we accepted anybody who wanted to enrol at our school. But of course we used the vicinity, we used the children first that live in the area and then in the closer surrounding areas, and then we look at the other areas, to fill up.

I: Ok. And then the process, how has it been?

R: Slow.

I: Slow?

R: Slow. It's like they…it's feelers. And then eventually you will find that people want to send their children into schools that are better than their township schools [it is important to note here that Mrs Davids also refers to Bridge Town High School as a 'township school', in some instances]. Usually with the township schools…of course I have been involved with the grade 8's enrolment every year, and I speak to parents and many of them would come from the outer-lying areas, as far as Phillipi and Khayelitsha. Then I would ask them, isn't it wise to leave their kids in the area because of transport problems. Then the main reason why they want their learners at this particular school is because it is a good school. That's all that they say, it's a good school. But all schools to me are good schools. Just the mere fact that they want the children to learn the subjects in English, the main language, and to continue until grade 12 and into the tertiary sector.

I: Ok, and they don't mind that Afrikaans…because before Afrikaans was the only additional…

R: Yes. Right. Afrikaans was a problem. We do have…we do warn them about the Afrikaans language because we don't offer any other language, before this year. This year we introduced isiXhosa for the first time. And we've been applying for the past three years to have that language at our school. Because most of the learners that come to our school have

as a second language as isiXhosa and English as a first language. Now when they enrol at our school we make them aware that this school has…teach all the subjects in English and they have to do a second language in Afrikaans. The parents are aware of it. They either sign an agreement that they will help with the language at home or I actually invite them to another school that do offer isiXhosa in our area, like Pickfield, around the corner that do offer the subject already. And then they do go there to enrol their kids.

I: Ok and then you said…I don't know if it was you who said it or another…they said now that desegregation has taken place, almost half the learners are black now?

R: Yes, nearly half of them are black. And then one would say there's foreigners as well that we have at our school, coming from as far as Rwanda and Nigeria, Kenya, Zimbabwe. And they are eager learners. I find them very eager even though their second language is not Afrikaans and they struggle a little with English but at the end of the day I find them better students because they are eager to learn. We had a Rwandan student, was it last year or the year before, who did not understand a word of Afrikaans, but when she came to this school, she did everything in her power to learn the language, and she came out tops. She was one of our best students in Afrikaans and even better than the coloured learners themselves who has Afrikaans as a home language. So, yes, we do have foreigners that is eager to learn. And they of course get exempt from the second language. They try to study the language, and when they do reach grade 12, they do have the opportunity to be exempt from writing the Afrikaans language.

I: Ok. And what percentage of the students are foreigners?

R: Foreigners…just about 10% I would say. Very few.

I: And what is the process of integrating them into the school? Are there any issues with that?

R: There's no issues with that. The department allow them to integrate into the school system. Once we get the permission from them, because remember their results is different when they come to our school. We have to ask them to go to the department to look at the results to find out if they do fit the right grade. And then they come back and then we get a letter from the department to say the child now goes to grade 8 or grade 9, from whichever country they come from. Because their report is different to ours, and their curriculum here or the curriculum is different to ours. So they do tend to fit nicely into our system.

I: So do they also socialise…

R: They socialise well, yes. Although they start very quietly but then you will find them…but of course we watch them, as I did with one boy yesterday. He comes from Rwanda and he was mixing with the wrong friends and he didn't know so I got him, and one just has to look after them all the time, until they eventually discover who their real friends are.

I: Ok, and then…obviously there are some issues with integration in terms of black and coloured learners. So what do you think are the main barriers to that?

R: It's their cultural differences. Right. Their culture…the isiXhosa learners have a different culture to the Zulus, and there are learners, like from Mpumalanga, and the foreigners, and they have different cultures. To fit in and to adhere to these cultures, um, it's a bit difficult, because they would expect that their culture is that…for instance, the male isiXhosa learners, they have the culture of where they can do what they have to do to a female isiXhosa learner. And we have to warn them that, look, they must be careful of the fact that they might just offend a coloured female learner and that is against the law. There's a law against, if you say, sexual assault…We had an incident where a male isiXhosa learner he smacked a learner…an isiXhosa female learner, and we had the parents in. And the parent of, especially the father of the boy, stated that it is normal…why do we make such a big fuss about it. And then, yes, and then the female's parents accepted it and didn't want to take the matter further. But then I had to tell them, "You must remember that's in your culture, if you touch another culture, it will be different, because you may not lift your hand to anybody, it's assault". So in the coloured culture, perhaps if you touch a coloured learner, that parent might take the boy to court and there will be consequences.

I: Ja.

R: So I have to explain, or rather they have to learn different cultures, that you see in Life Orientation, we have that subject to teach the learners to respect each other's cultures. So we do have that cultural differences at the school, so we find many times we have to curb that…

I: Ok. And do you think there has been more integration, like getting better at all, or…?

R: Yes. It's getting better.

I: Why is that?

R: The reason is that the learners…many of them have gone to primary schools where there is English, Afrikaans and isiXhosa and they haven't been in their township schools, so they are actually integrating with other cultures from primary school already, you see what I mean? So the learners that we have now in our high school today, this year, have had that education in the primary school, and have been integrated already, you know. They are moving towards that.

I: Do most black learners do their primary school in township schools or is it a mix?

R: Most of them do it here, in the township, yes. But I mean the township in the coloured areas, yes. You know, they come out of their townships…

I: To do primary?

R: To do primary and high school.

I: So do you think if they coming from, maybe a school in Gugulethu, they are going to have…it is going to be more difficult for them to adapt to this school?

R: To adapt, yes. Because their schools do offer isiXhosa and they have isiXhosa lessons there, you know. So when they come here they have a second language as Xhosa and they

struggle in high school. They haven't had primary school in the same area. So, you can say about 80% of Bridge Town High black learners start in the primary school in the same area.

I: Ok, so they used to…

R: They used to the mix, yes.

I: Ok, and then just in terms of yourself and the other teachers, what have been your personal challenges with trying to integrate the different learners at the school and try to…

R: That's the race issue, you know. They still bring up the race card. When you pick on them then they will stay say, "You are racist". Although I put my foot down there and I say no. We teach a child, we don't teach a race. So if a child is out of line, we have a duty to put the child back in line, you understand? So we don't look at race. So when a child starts using race card then we tell them to cover that up. And then we chat to them separately and we tell them, "Look, it's not racism. What did you do? Explain what you did wrong in the class." and then he will tell you, or she will tell you, "I did that Miss." You see, it is wrong. So we tell them it is wrong. Ja, that is the main thing, it's when they use the race card and then…But not all of them do that. Not all of them.

I: So do you kind of discourage them from talking about race?

R: Not really, because most of the subjects do sometimes use, um…how can I say, the race. Because we have to use in tourism. In tourism there is a lot of ethnic groups and the culture groups. So if you are going to teach tourism you have to tell them, "This culture, you have to, if you get a Chinese person coming and greeting you with his hands folded and he doesn't want to shake your hand it doesn't mean it's rude. In his culture, bowing is his way of greeting, you know. So we should learn each and everybody's different way of cultural greetings. So, and then in South Africa, we do have domestic tourism where different cultures come from different provinces and then we have to respect their way of culture as well. So if you want to draft an itinerary of this person, you have to know the person's personality, where he comes from, so that you can suit the attractions, the tour to that particular person's culture. And yes, it's not a race…racial issue, where we have to know which race they are. It's just to protect the culture, if we are going to offend them, we have to…if it's a Muslim for instance and you are going to book them into a hotel that don't offer Halaal food, you know what I mean. So you need to know their background. So, yes, we do tend to touch on those issues. But then I told them you take your blinkers off, and you think openly.

I: And then is it in Life Orientation at all…that you speak about that?

R: Yes. Yes, in Life Orientation they need to speak about it. In fact I had a career day…not a career day, somebody speaking about the careers in the army. And I had a lieutenant coming in and we had a presentation for the grade 12's. And the first thing he did was, he said if you want to belong to an army, everybody congregate in one room, and he mentioned the race or the cultures. And then he would say, "Now everybody fight yourself out, because in the army you are one, because you are going to look after your person in front of you. So it's not going to be an issue of race, it's going to be an issue of you're going to protect a South African now." So he said, "In this case the army is one, there is no race. So fight it out now." And I

looked at him and I thought, wow. I wish I could do that in my classroom and say, "Ok fine, close the door, coloured, blacks, whoever you are, stand here. Right start insulting each other now because after this we are going to be one." You understand?

I: Ja.

R: So that is the army. So you one, let's fight it out now. Any grievances, and then we going to bottle it. So that was quite nice of him to say that. And the grade 12's looked at him like, wow. (laughs).

I: What's the actual syllabus for the race issue in Life Orientation?

R: Um, it's an open syllabus. It's quite…it's just a discussion but the curriculum you can find by Mr Jacobs. And then they have a lot of discussions in the class. It's almost like, fight it out, you know. And then we put it all on the table and we will throw it out and then say, "Ok, we have come to a solution. And we all can be friends." But for me, look we have to move forward. When I teach that you notice it's also in EMS [Economic and Management Studies], the history of trade unions, the history of, what was that one, it was last year…but we had to know how the economy works before 1990 and after 1990. Then what I normally do…(long pause), I've got so many things on my mind now (laughs).

I: (laughs)

R: With that racial issue…oh, wow, I just went blank. (laughs).

I: (laughs). No, that's fine. You do encourage them to be quite open about it…

R: Yes.

I: And talk openly?

R: Yes! If I want to find out about your religion, I wish to learn, it's not converting. You know what I mean? And we learn from each other. We do have children that snigger and laugh and…you know? Then I will tell them it's not nice to laugh, but I mean we all learn from it. We need to know each other's cultures. And, oh yes, what I wanted to say is, with that apartheid, and the race issue, you are not born in the era of apartheid, you are born in the era of democracy. So you don't know what happened, you are supposed to be…you are supposed to be sitting next to each other and not see colour at all, you know? Because you move forward and you don't carry that chip on your shoulder because that is the heavy burden that is going to keep you back from moving forward. You're a child of South Africa, you move forward. And that is part of my teaching in EMS about South Africa. So that's…because look I teach my children at home, when they were born…ag, when they were little, they used to run around and used to meet friends in the road, neighbours' friends, and it was of different cultures, it was, I had a boerenhondjie, then I had a black girl, and a coloured girl, they were all different. And the boerenhondjie spoke Afrikaans, my children spoke English but it's amazing they understood each other. And they mixed. And surely they didn't know each other's colour until my daughter went to school. She came home one day and she says, "Mom, who am I?"

I said, “You are Melissa.”

And then she said, “No, my teacher wants to know who am I. And then everybody says I’m white. And everybody says no, you’re not. Mommy, what is that?”

So then eventually I said oh no, here it goes, I so want my children to grow up knowing that they are human beings and not a colour issue. So we sat down and we actually explained the whole scenario with them and said, “No we are coloured, you know.”

She said, “Oh, what is that actually?”

I said, “Ok, that is now a race. It’s a different race. But in any case, you’re coloured and…”

Because she is fair they thought she is white but the teacher was confused. So they had to fill in the forms and I forgot we do have stats and need to fill in that we have so many black and coloured and white in the classroom. And the teacher was confused what was she. And then I told her, “You’re coloured and you have to tell your teacher you are coloured.” And then we had to explain it to her, what is black, what is white, what is coloured, which is actually sad. Because I would like my children not to know that because they were mixing with people and they didn’t even know it was a black and a coloured. They didn’t ask, “Why is your skin darker than mine?” So I try to bring that here in my teaching, that you move forward, and you have friends, you mix with that friends. Don’t listen to what…if your parents say don’t mix with them because of that, it’s your choice. So if you bring home a white, you bring home a coloured, you bring home a black, that’s your choice. So that is how I bring my children up, whoever they bring in the house, whether it’s a Muslim also, or a Christian, or an Atheist, to me, that’s their friends. So they move forward. And I try to bring that here. You can see amongst certain learners they do have gripes against a certain race and I try to wipe that out. And the nice thing is you pick it up from parents. When you have a parent meeting, you know, and you can see the way the parent talks and their reaction to you. And I had many confrontations with parents saying I victimise the children and I said no, I don’t do that. And with the expulsion of one child as well, and then the parents stared using the race card. So of course with the expulsion of the child it was a sexual assault and that’s serious, physical assault. So, therefore, we are busy with that case at the moment. But then the parents start using the race card, you know, just to protect the child. But he has already done such a lot of damage to the school and we can’t leave the child here otherwise we might have a serious injury of another child at our school.

I: Ja.

R: Though, yes, teachers on our staff try to teach that here.

I: So you think that sensitivity probably originated with the parents?

R: The sensitivity with some of the parents, yes. But I mean most of our parents are not, um you can see…of course they weren’t born in that era. These are the young parents and they have children already at a very young age. We have pregnancies here at our school. There is a 13 year old child that is…

I: Wow.

R: 13 years old. So she's going to be a mommy to a child and she's still a child. So the parents that we have probably came from that teenage pregnancies, you know.

I: And then also one thing I noticed when I was observing the classes is that often like coloured boys and girls will sit together and it's fine, but then like with the black students, the girls will sit together, they won't socialise with the boys. I was just wondering why that is?

R: It's a bit difficult, you know sometimes I would try to change that scenario, you know. I did mention it in the beginning of this year sometime and I said, "Why don't you sit with the coloureds and why don't you mix with them?"

They said, "Miss, we do! We do! In intervals."

Yes, I do see them doing that at interval. You know, they talk to each other. But I think more for security's sake. They feel that they feel more secure sitting with each other, um, I think mostly for language barriers. When the teacher explains and they would chat to each other in their language and maybe converse.

I: And then, because like the black guys and girls don't socialise. I wonder why that is.

R: Oh you mean the black guys and the black girls?

I: Ja.

R: Together?

I: Ja.

R: It's their culture. That's the…Maybe I should say that the black boys, when they reach manhood, you will find that by grade 11, grade 12, they've gone, that's their tradition to go to the bush. And when they come back, you don't see them now, they'll usually have a blanket around, that's their tradition, they must carry that still after coming from the bush. Then they a man. And if a woman tells them to do something, it is actually them telling the woman to do something, you understand? So the girls would not mix mostly with the boys, because most of the boys are men, and then men would find that…I don't know, it's just a cultural thing, you know. So we just got to accept that cultural thing where the man is dominant and the woman must do what the man says.

I: Does that also affect with teachers how the black boys…?

R: Sometimes. But I would find that many of them that go to the bush and come back as a man, they have so much more respect, even for the teachers. Because I mean, look, their manners and attitudes have changed so we don't actually scold them because there's no reason, because they do what they have to do. And their respect is there, you know, you can see the difference in them. And the girls will also have that respect for them, you can see that. But ja…I think they more children…boys will stick to boys, and soccer and playing in

intervals and so on. And then you will get one or two that will be a couple (laughs). You know walking around and…

I: Ok, that's interesting. I just noticed that. And then also, are there fewer black boys than black girls at the school? Because I've noticed in class there will be a big group of black girls but then like 2 black guys.

R: It's more black girls. Now that you speaking about it, yes. Yes, there are more black girls here. I don't know, maybe it's just more girls (laughs).

I: No, I was just wondering.

R: I hadn't noticed, ja. Can't say why the black boys don't want to come to the schools, maybe it's just more girls in their community. I haven't noted that, but now that you say…

I: Cool, I think that's all that I wanted to find out.

R: What you can also do is look into their cultural history. You can go onto the internet and you can read about their cultural history as to why the men are so dominant in their culture. And you will find the modern children have moved slowly away from their culture. If I can move away from Bridge Town High and I can look at my daughter's friends, the…um, blacks that they mix with, you know, they are more modernised. If you speak to them and tell them, "Don't you speak isiXhosa?"

They will say, "No! We don't understand that."

And I said, "Excuse me, weren't your parents speaking to you in isiXhosa?"

"No, my parents want me to speak English."

So they are brought up with English and they lost their culture, you understand? So you have those parents that don't want them to be in that culture anymore, you know. And then, shame, they lose their culture, which I find quite sad.

I: So that's actually part of the reason for sending them to a school like this?

R: Yes!

I: They want them to speak English?

R: Yes! They've lost their culture. And they speak English or Afrikaans. And I would also ask them questions, and they don't mind answering because I'm very inquisitive as to how they were brought up. Then I ask, there's this one boy, he's now in Joburg, but he came out to study at UWC, and I used to ask him, "Why don't you want to have…where's your black girlfriends and your black boyfriends?"

(puts on a snooty accent) "No, no, no. I don't like to mix with them because they are so funny, they different. I just want to mix with Melissa and this friends here."

And I find that quite strange. He said he can't fit in their culture when his mother takes him to the township. Then he says he can't seem to mix with them. Because he's brought up differently and, shame, they've lost their culture. And I find that…I tell my girls in my classroom, "You must be proud of your heritage, you know, because that is your heritage."

I'm proud of my heritage and I'm not going to regard that as oppressed or embarrassed. You must be proud of where you come from. And it's sad to say that many of them have lost it.

I: So in what ways do you think they kind of adapt to this kind of English, Afrikaans environment?

R: Um, they quite…they would regard them as…shame I had one student, and that's years ago, and they had to fill in a form for me that they black, white or coloured or Asian, or Indian, or…And then I got this page back and then I looked at the name, called the child and I said, "You put a cross here by 'white', um, you put the cross at the wrong block."

And she said, "Yes, it is the right block."

I said, "My dear, are you sure that you white? Because you black."

She says, "No, I'm white."

Because she was brought up in…she doesn't know the isiXhosa background, you understand. So her parents brought her up in a school with just English and Afrikaans. So she doesn't speak isiXhosa and she has no clue. So I told her we need to have the stats, like when my daughter came home, you know. So I told her, "Please speak to your parents."

And then she says, "No, I'm black."

So, again, can you see there? So they brought up in a culture where their parents tell them that this is where you come from. They lose their heritage, and that is sad. I mean that's just off the topic, that is my daughter's side. The parents are trying in their township, trying to lose that isiXhosa and Zulu culture.

I: Ja.

R: And you know it's sad because it's almost like losing the rhinos. They are becoming extinct. But we must make sure that the rhino is still there.

I: Ja, I also noticed that in the one Life Orientation class, and then there's a group of black girls and they are having a discussion and they use like a lot of American slang and American accents.

R: Yes!

I: And some English words. Like it's not pure language, like they use all different elements.

R: I mean the same with the clothing. I, in my accounting class, I use the example of the clothing. You are a South African. Why can't you be a true South African? Why do you have to be like an American? You wear your pants down here, you know. So I said, "Let me give

you a history of the pants down there. It originated in the jails in America. So if you want an invitation, I'll wear my pants down here." (laughs).

So instead of having to say, "Listen I want it now." No, here's my invitation, I'm ready. (laughs). And then the class realise, wow, is that so Miss. Wear your pants down here because it's an invitation for something. So why do you have to wear a big pants that wear down here? Be a South African, a true South African. The tourists that come into South Africa wants to see a South African. He don't want to see himself again. Johnathan Butler, his music was similar to George Benson. And in his…one of his interviews, George Benson said, "Why do I have to want to come to a concert and listen to myself? I need to listen to your play of music. Not to listen to you imitating me."

So that is what George Benson said to Johnathan Butler, because Johnathan Butler started using George Benson's style of music. And then he said, "I don't want my copy, I want to see South African, pure South African music."

It is true what he said. I don't want to see myself (laughs).

I: Ja, that is very interesting. I did notice that.

R: Ja, it's a lot of people that imitate the style of music. And they don't have their own music, or their own genres. So when you compose something, compose your style, don't copy another person's style. So the same with children. Why don't you be your style? Yourself? You want to copy somebody else. You want to be like somebody else. You want to be like Beyoncé. Unfortunately advertising is bad. They advertise slim girls and beautiful faces and so on. And then the girls tend to think, I want to be like her. Let's be like her. I can't be myself. That's difficult in today's world. Competition is high. Peer pressure is high. So, unfortunately I don't care how I look like, what I am, as long as I'm neat and tidy and polite. Many times children would say, "Miss, can you do this?" Putting my hair one side because this part is standing up. I said, "Listen here, I don't have my daughters here." (laughs).

I: Ok, ja. That's very helpful.

Appendix 9: Transcript 5 – Teacher Interview – Mrs Peterson

Transcript 5

Teacher Interview

Mrs Peterson (coloured female)

31 July 2014

Interview Room – Bridge Town High School

I: So I just wanted to talk about your personal challenges at the school. I know a lot of the teachers have said that the students…it's been a bit overwhelming.

R: Ja. The main thing for me is like the overcrowding of classrooms. If we could at least work with 30 per class, that would be fine. But like, for example, the mathematics class in grade 10 that I'm dealing with, they over 50 learners in a class so it's a struggle every day, and it's noise and it's, you know, all those other things come into play. So it's really a challenge.

I: And discipline…

R: And discipline is also a problem, like I struggle with that from time to time. But ja, sometimes things work, like detentions, but with the type of kids you get today, they don't…they not feeling threatened by that…

I: So you guys do do detention? Do you do that once a week?

R: Mm (nods). Depending on how many times learners come late to class, and so on.

I: So do they attend the detention or…

R: Some will attend but majority won't even bother coming.

I: Is it? And then is the next step suspension?

R: Mm (nods).

I: Ok. And then which subjects do you teach? Maths and…

R: Maths and Maths Lit (Maths Literacy) and Natural Sciences, grade 8.

I: Ok. So do you deal with grade 8 to 12 or just…

R: No, at the moment I'm only up to grade 10 level.

I: Ok, and then just in terms of racial integration at the school, what do you think are the barriers to racial integration?

R: I really…(laughs), I don't know at school why they would…because I mean they not born when it was apartheid and all of those things. But I think, for me, the way some of them speak and go on, I think it's an influence at home and they bring that with them to school sometimes. But I think…at this school it's quite ok. It's fine, it's not as bad but I mean it could be better.

I: So how do you think it could be better? What could they kind of implement?

R: Like, you know…maybe the staff could sit down at the end of the year…but I mean there's also the other challenge of how much…how many learners are here and who's only applying next year. But I mean sit down and try to mix the classes fairly well so that you won't have that. And even like have seating arrangements in class where they are forced together, instead of building their own groups and so on.

I: Ok. So right now do they kind of choose their own groups?

R: They choose, yes. They choose.

I: So they are never really forced to interact at all?

R: Yes, like in my class I don't believe in that. I make it clear to them, here we are all going to work together, whether you like it or not. And in most cases if there is group work, I will choose the groups. But I give them an option but if I see there's unfairness I will choose.

I: Ok, I see.

R: To me it's important that everyone gets along.

I: So then do you kind of try to get groups from different backgrounds, that people don't usually…

R: Yes! Yes.

I: Ok. And how does that work out? Do they enChiara it?

R: It works well, ja. They enChiara. But there are some who will now refuse to do the group work because of that. They feel more comfortable with their own, in their mind, with their own friends and so on.

I: And then, like during breaks and after school, is it also very separate and segregated.

R: Mm…yes.

I: And do you guys do a lot of sport activities?

R: I know there's soccer and so on. That's one thing…that's actually a good one because at sport, they are forced to work as a team. But if we could get more sport, like into our school system and so on…but then of course there's the other thing we are struggling with transport issues and finance to get the equipment for the different types of sports. And then, also, we don't have a swimming pool so we can't have swimming. It's all those barriers and challenges that makes it a bit difficult for us also.

I: Is it mainly the soccer?

R: Ja, soccer, like with the boys now, I've noticed that in the first like…at the beginning…if you look at the grade 8's now because they new to the school, so maybe by the second month of school now the grade 8's, they are forming now their own groups and so on, now what I've noticed is with the boys, like the races, there's no issue there because they all play soccer, so the conversation is…they have something to talk about, something in common, besides school work and school now. So that's a good thing. I think sport is a very good thing to bring that together.

I: Ja, definitely.

R: Like most of the fights will maybe be with the girls, because some of them are not interested in soccer and whatever sports there are. But maybe we should come up for something with them, something that they like, find out what they like also.

I: Ok, so they not really lots of sports for girls to do?

R: Ja, like there's soccer and netball, but not everyone wants to participate in sporting activities so…I remember last year we had like a couple of students going to the radio station and that's how they also got to mix, they formed new relationships with each other the more activities you set in place for them.

I: So what did they do at the radio station?

R: They had to basically advertise themselves to stand a chance to be on the radio. But it was different schools so out of the different schools, only 2 or 3 were picked. But they got to interact with each other and so…

I: And then what other cultural activities does the school offer, after school? Is there like a choir, drama?

R: There's drama, yes. There is drama but the person to speak to about the drama part is Ms Hendricks. She's in charge of that. And there's a band at school so they play together. And there isn't really a choir at the moment. There isn't really a choir. But then there's X Academy [cannot make out the name of the Academy] where they come in and they tutor grade 8's and grade 9's after school for Mathematics so they also kind of mix, and so on.

I: So like the older grades will teach the younger grades?

R: No, it's outside people that come in.

I: Ok, where are the outside people from?

R: They from Woodstock, somewhere there, Salt River, that side. It's like an academy that comes in and tutors them and they do pilot studies on them, like how they perform. They have their own set of tests but we just include it into our examinations and so on.

I: Ok. So how do pupils get chosen for that?

R: At the beginning they have to fill out a little survey and that's how they get picked, based on what they have written there.

I: Ok. So in terms of like after-school cultural activities…is there also a lot of mixing there?

R: Ja. And there's also…like today there will be peer education after school, and there's also like…they mix nicely there together and they get to speak about these things also. It's a good thing.

I: Where do they speak about the things?

R: They come to…there's also people from the department coming in in person, but it's for the grade 10's and the grade 9's only. So they will come in…that person will come in and she will have them in my classroom, and they will just sit and discuss and talk about various things and so on.

I: So is it more kind of a Life Orientation thing?

R: Ja, it's more…ja.

I: So is it any topic or do they have specific topics?

R: I think they have specific topics, you know, like sexuality and all of those.

I: But they also talk about race and cultural issues?

R: Yes, they speak about that. Because I mean that's part of the Life Orientation topics. If I now think back…So, ja, they speak about that.

I: And do you know if those conversations are…or how they go? Do people get angry, flustered, or is kind of open and relaxed?

R: No, there are times where they get frustrated and angry but at the end of the day they manage to work through that. Like basically they are entitled to raise their opinions and so on.

I: Ja. And then Mrs Davids…I chatted to her and she was saying that some people are still very sensitive about it, like in her class she gets accused of being racist.

R: Yes.

I: Do you also find that?

R: No, I don't think they sensitive, that's my honest opinion. I don't think they are sensitive. You know how kids are, they look for various ways not for them to do work if they really don't want to be there. So if, like for example, there was one year…two years ago when I started here, so I was busy explaining something on the board…but now it's maths, so how can I be sensitive, how can I be anything, or how does the race fit into any of that? Like, so if I would say, "You must take out your books, and there are still some people talking in class." Then they would stand up and someone would say, "Miss, you racist." But my statement was nothing to do with race. I just said, "Some people are still talking."

I: Ja.

R: So you see they try to…I think they using this whole race thing as a way to escape certain things. So I think they using that. And they know it's a sensitive topic. So, I think, in that way they also trying to see whether the teacher is feeling sensitive towards this or is she just going to blow it off. Because I think they intrigued by the fact that if teachers get upset, they like that. They want you to get upset. But I think if you handle it well and then they won't say stuff like that. But I think they using that as like a scape goat for them (laughs).

I: Ok. So you mean like they not actually personally sensitive about it but they want to use it because you are maybe scared to say something?

R: Yes!

I: Ok, I see now. And also I wanted to ask about the education department. I know a lot of teachers were saying that they have a lot of struggles, like with getting funding and the education department doesn't really know what the school's needs are. They just send money and expect numbers. So have you had experience of that or what's your opinion about the education department?

R: I basically agree with that. And I can't really say that I've had bad experience but being in school now for 3 years, I can relate to that. Because I mean we need a hall. And we were taken off the list and there was no reason given. Ja, there was no reason given. So something must have gone wrong. So, like with the education department there's a lot of things that they are not able to answer. And my thing is like, I feel if they are…especially with the curriculum, it should be people that have at least been teaching for a minimum of 10 years. It shouldn't be people that, you know, just came out of university and now they part of setting up the curriculum. Maybe other things like structures, but when it comes to things like the curriculum and the content and how it should be taught, I think it should have been set up by educators and not people straight from…because I mean there's different challenges and they need to look at how is this teacher going to explain this topic in a class where learners are over 50. Some classes it's 60 in a class and so on. Is it possible to cover all the topics. So, I just feel when it comes to curriculum they should re-work that also. And, ja, there are other things that they could better also.

I: So do you feel like the content in the curriculum is not kind of up to scratch? It's not presented in the right way?

R: It's not where it should be. We can have all the…how can I call, the skills we have been taught at university – projectors, PowerPoint presentations, posters, all of that. But you come to school and it's difficult to find a poster or a piece of chart that you can use for a poster, or even projectors and things. Like I know here at this school there's 2 projectors going around and some educators have to use that thing every day, especially for Biology because you need to show the different diagrams and things like that. So it makes it difficult for the next person. So that has to rotate amongst almost 30 educators, and by the time it gets to you, you have to now look for alternative ways to get your lesson through.

I: Ja.

R: Like I've been taught with a projector and posters and all of those things at university. But when I got here I saw that that's a bit difficult to incorporate or to include in my lesson because the periods are short, learners take forever to come to class, and you have to catch up, so there's no time for you to basically set up even. Maybe, admin [administration period] has now changed to the end of the day, so normally during admin, if I did that, I would set up during admin and so on. But now it's changed to the end of the day so I have to just chalk and board, like in the old days. So it's difficult, man. Again, the government comes in where, if

they could provide smart boards for all schools and, you know, lap tops and projectors and things. But I mean, if you have a smart board, you don't even need stuff like that, a projector or whatever, you just need your lap top, but ja.

I: So does the curriculum that the department gives you, do they kind of expect that with that curriculum you have all the different tools that you are going to use, like projector screens and all that kind of thing?

R: You know, they will have…if you must now, in your file, in your educator's file, you must have like a lesson plan and so on. And then they ask maybe in the lesson plan, what resources did you use. The only thing I can say at this moment is my board and my chalk and my textbook, but I can't really say a poster. And I think the children here, the learners at this school, they are so used to, you know, you come in, you must have textbook, and chalk and board, and that's it. And then further on we do sums on the board, if it's now maths, we do it together and so on. I try to do that because then I at least know I'm somehow going to entertain them and make them link it to everyday life, so that they can understand. But if I come now with a poster, it's going to be weird for them. They are going to be fascinated about the colouring on the poster, instead of the actual things that they are supposed to be learning on the poster. So it's out of the norm for them. And even if we have our projectors here, like I have my own one, if I bring it to school and stuff, they will say, "Miss, rather put on a movie."

I: (laughs).

R: But they not interested in if I'm going to show them something about animals and how they live. Like I had recently, like at the beginning of the year, we did photosynthesis, and I had like the trees and the leaf and all of that, but they…some were interested with that and some just weren't interested, they just want to write and do activities, and then go on to the next period.

I: Ja. Ok. And then how do you know if…like does the Western Cape Education Department ever send like consultants to your school, to actually talk to the teachers and see what the school is like and kind of know how to give proper funding based on what the needs are?

R: Not that I know of. There was never someone that I now know of that came to speak to the whole staff, I don't know if someone came to the principal maybe, but not to the whole staff.

I: Ok. So maybe that's an issue as well, that they don't know how to allocate their funds properly, so they kind of expect all these things from you but they don't know what's going on.

R: And most…the other thing that I also realised is that, as an educator, you must be willing to take out of your own pocket, in order to buy resources and things like that, if you really want to make your lesson interesting and get that message across. Sometimes you are forced to get chalk also because there wouldn't be. Paper is always a problem.

I: So have you had to sometimes purchase those things yourself?

R: Ja. In order for them to roll off activities, assignments and things like that, because the paper that we have is so little that you can only use for exams.

I: Ok, I see. But they have like their own writing books and stuff?

R: Ja, they do.

I: If some families can't afford it, they can't afford to buy them books, what do they do in that situation?

R: They would either not write that day (laughs) or they will spin me a story that their book is at home, but I will always say, "Now take out a page." But then that also won't benefit because they will have all these loose pages laying around. In some cases I actually gave books to kids. Yes, I always keep books in my class if I see this book can still be used, then I will keep it and give it to them, just tell them to cover it nicely and so on.

I: So does that…that's another challenge, that the students can't afford the resources…

R: Yes. And the big challenge that I also have is calculators. And for me, personally, if they have the latest calculator, for example the Casio FX Plus 1, I think it would make mathematics so much better for them, because then they learn how to use that latest technology also. So when they go on eventually to university, they used to that calculator.

I: So do they just have the basic one?

R: They don't even have the basic one. They borrow from each other. That's the other thing, they don't have tools and things.

I: So then when it gets to the exam and they don't have a calculator, what do they do?

R: They borrow. So then they ask the educator to ask like, some educators will say no, you must have your own tools, but I think that's a bit harsh, because I mean some of the kids can really not afford calculators. And then they will ask me, "Miss, can you ask that person to borrow me his calculator?" And I will say ok. But they are not allowed to get up and walk around so I will go fetch the calculator and bring it to them.

I: Ja. But then are those then usually the basic calculators, not scientific calculators?

R: Most of it will be basic.

I: So do they not need the scientific calculators for exams?

R: They do. Because like especially the grade 10's, from grade 10 onwards, they use cos and tan, and in Mathematical Literacy class we need to know the value of pi or how else are we going to find it? Someone can't remember. So if they had that calculator they could have just punched it in on the calculator.

I: So their marks suffer because of that?

R: Yes. Of course their marks suffer because they don't work sometimes. But I mean that's a challenge. The less challenges they have as kids, the more easier it will become for them. Because I mean we don't understand, like as a child now, like your mental ability is not like as an adult. You don't understand that, listen here, I need to have this thing, you know.

I: Ok.

R: That's one challenge.

I: And then in terms of the difference between Maths and Maths Literacy, do most students take Maths Literacy or is it an even split?

R: Most will take Maths Literacy.

I: And then the ones who take Maths, do they struggle quite a bit or are the marks good?

R: No, they struggle. But they struggle because they don't do homework. They don't do homework at all. I can give them something today and the next day…because I mean that's something you have to practise every day. I have extra classes, I've been burning myself out, but I mean if they not prepared to go the extra mile then there isn't that much I can do. I have extra classes. I will always consult with them. Like this term, I asked them at the beginning of the term, before I started with any work, we had a discussion, and I asked them, "What can I do to assist you guys?" And they asked me that if I give them an exercise, I must give them an example, do it on the board so that everyone can understand, I do that, and then if I give them the exercise, they must have a chance to complete the exercise. But the next day when they come in, we must do all of the sums, or at least one or two or three, or all of it together on the board. So I've been doing that and I've been seeing that the discipline has been good so far.

I: Ok.

R: Because it's something that they like. Something that they asked me to do.

I: Ok. And then when do they choose between Maths and Maths Literacy?

R: They do that at the end of grade 9. They get a form to complete. Their parents must sign, they must sign, and then they must bring it in before school closes because in that same year we must know where to place the learners. The different subjects…learning areas.

I: Ok. And then are they aware and are their parents aware, like in terms of the plan for university, like whether you have Maths…

R: They are aware. Because I mean they have been doing it from grade 8 already. I remember when I started here, I had grade 9's and grade 8's Life Orientation, and in both grades we must deal with career choices and what are the subject choices for those careers. So they should be aware.

I: So that's part of the curriculum?

R: Yes. I don't know if the parents know about that, but the learners should be able to inform their parents if there is a nice relationship. Like most of our learners here have really difficult backgrounds…most of them.

I: So do you think when they choose their subjects in grade 9, is it mainly their choice, or is it their parent's choice a lot of the time?

R: I think it's mainly their choice, but in some cases you can see that the parents…because some of them will come to me and say, "Miss, I didn't want to be in this class but my parents said I must." But majority they have their own choice.

I: Ok cool. Ja, I don't have any more questions unless you want to tell me anything else?

R: No. Thank you.

I: Ok, thank you so much.

Appendix 10: Transcript 6 – Pupil Interview – Sbusiso

Transcript 6

Pupil Interview

Sbusiso Grade 12 (black male)

1 August 2014

Teachers' Office – Bridge Town High School

I: So, have you been here since grade 8?

R: No, I actually arrived here in grade 9. I was previously in Western Cape Sports School, so I only arrived in grade 9.

I: Ok, and then which primary school did you go to?

R: It was in Khayelitsha, Impendulo Primary School, I used to be there.

I: So do you still live in Khayelitsha.

R: Yes, I still do.

I: Ok. And then did you decide to come here or did your parents decide?

R: No, actually in Western Cape Sports School we were given a short notice that we will be leaving the school, so after searching for a school, I finally came here with someone from the community, who used to come to the school. So she showed us the school and stuff, and they actually accepted me. I was actually with the other guy who went to the same previous high school.

I: So did your parents see the school at all? Did they have a part in deciding?

R: Yes, they did, but mostly I made the choice because they were not here, it was just me and that lady from the community who came to the school. So after being here, and it was January and everyone were just in search…in desperate search for a school so we came here.

I: Ok, and then…so do you feel like your primary school prepared you for high school? Or did you feel like when you came here it was a bit overwhelming?

R: I would say they have prepared me for high school, though before I came to high school, coming from a community whereby we were taught every subject in isiXhosa, it was at first kind of difficult to settle in and communicate comfortably with other learners from, who can speak English, so it was a challenge to speak English, although we were able to write it down and listen when someone is speaking in English. But when it came to communicating with other learners who don't understand, especially isiXhosa, it was a bit of a challenge, but after some time I managed to adapt and now I'm comfortable.

I: So, before you weren't as comfortable with English, was it a bit more difficult to like make friends that are English-speaking?

R: Yes, it definitely was because in order to make friends with someone you definitely need to communicate with them, and communication it was something that was challenging for me because when you try and speak, because your accent is quite different from the others, they would just laugh if you maybe mispronounce a word as you are not used to communicating in English fluently. So it was challenging to make friends, so most of the time we would just speak to those who know they can understand isiXhosa.

I: Yes. So you mainly made friends with those people who spoke the same language as you?

R: Yes, I did.

I: So you do Afrikaans now?

R: Yes, I do.

I: Do you find it challenging?

R: Yes, I do find it challenging, it's because I didn't get the whole foundation from grade 1 to grade 7. So it's challenging for me because it's like a third language, because isiXhosa was the language I used to use to communicate, write, so when I came to high school, English was also new to me. So when I also had to take Afrikaans in grade 9 because from the previous high school I used to do isiXhosa as a second language, so when I came to this school we had to do Afrikaans as a second language. So I felt like I missed out on a lot of things that other learners in my class had learned about in Afrikaans, so it was definitely difficult for me, as it's still challenging now, but I'm willing to try and work hard.

I: So do you…because now they've just introduced isiXhosa as a subject for the lower grades, but obviously you guys can't do it. So do you think, if you had had that option to do it, it would have been helpful for you?

R: I definitely think so. I always felt that in my report it's the only subject that keeps me down or makes my report to have a slightly disadvantage over other students from other schools. I feel like if I had the opportunity to do isiXhosa from any grade, I mean even this year I tried to speak to the principal to take it as an extra subject but unfortunately it was too late. So I feel like if I had the opportunity to do it in any grade, because it's a language that I used to speak…I mean I'm fluent in isiXhosa. In the community I speak isiXhosa. So I feel like if I had the opportunity to do it, it would have been awesome for me.

I: Ja, it would've helped. Ok, and then, just in terms of…some students find that when they come to school they kind of have to change the way they act and they behave to fit into this school, and make friends and that kind of thing. So have you also felt like you have to change the way from how you behave at home to how you behave at school?

R: Ja, I mean when you arrive at high school, there are almost challenges everywhere so you have to…if you from where you were raised up you were taught things, like you moral values, your beliefs. When you come to high school, if you are not strong enough as a learner, you might lose some of them because there are many people who are doing as they please. So it's quite difficult for us as learners to be ourselves because there's so much peer pressure around us, from other students, and luckily for me, I'm not the kind of person who lives to accommodate other people but I do what I like, what makes me feel good. So when I arrived at the school there were people who were trying to maybe change the way I speak so that I speak similarly to them, changed the way I do things so that it also may be the same as what they are doing. I always feel like it's easier to just join the crowd and just do that, but it takes someone with bravery to just be yourself and stand your ground against all these things. So, ja I do feel like it's challenging to come to the school and stand your ground and be who you are because there are so much people doing this thing that you don't believe and you are taught not to do. For example, I will point out smoking. When you come to high school I mean there are many people who come…I've seen many people, especially from Khayelitsha, who were raised up and told not to smoke, but after they arrive here at high school, they change who they are because of their friends who do it, they also want to do it. But I, as an individual, I feel like I've managed to stand my ground and I…I still don't do things that other people are doing just to satisfy them. If I feel that it's not what I believe in and it's not right for me so I will not do it because it's not right for me. But for other students and my peers, they feel like it's a challenge, but I always try to tell them that it's always important to please yourself more than others, because you can't please everyone, so others will not like you, others will like you. So you must just choose to do whatever that's going to please you.

I: Ja. So then like those people that you know from Khayelitsha and then they come here and they're smoking and doing those things, do their family and their parents know what they doing, or do they only act like that when they're here at school?

R: Most of them they just act like that when they are here at school because it's…they are not doing it just because they want to do it, but it's because the others are also doing it so they feel like, in order to fit in with the crowd, they should also do it. But when they go back home they be who they are. They stop being…I think they have two characters that they have to

play. Whenever they put on their uniform and come to school they have to portray a different character, and when they take out their uniform, they are at home, they are different characters. So I feel like it's only for that certain period when we are at school, but after going home, back home, they change who they are and be…but others they end up starting to fit in to this character that they are at school and maybe also bring it back to the community. Others they just manage to juggle between the two, others they just maybe adopt the character from the school and bring it back to the community.

I: So do you think it's also, not just peer pressure, but in terms of the culture and the traditions, the things that you have at home that your family teaches you, can you not really do that here?

R: I mean I feel that if you bring that to the school, then everyone will look at you as if you are sort of outside the crowd because people here, they come here and lose their values and act like they don't know anything or they have not been taught any sort of thing. So when you try to bring it here, you will be like a loser or a nerd or someone who's just from outside. So people they just prefer not to bring it to here, to school, what they have been taught at home, and just use whatever others are using here at school. So they lose their…who they are, the person that they are and just to satisfy other people.

I: So you can't really fit in if you have like a different way of doing things to other people?

R: No. There's no way that you can fit in if you don't do what others are doing. But it takes someone who's brave, as I think I am that person, because I don't like doing things that others are doing, if they make me feel uncomfortable. So I don't do them at all. You can call me names and do whatever that you want to do but I'm not going to change the person I am just to accommodate you for how many hours, just for a few hours, before I go back home and now I have to change and be the person that I really am. So I just believe, and it works for me, it brings a lot of respect from others because others are also inspired by me because I don't change who am I for other people. So, ja it's like that.

I: Ok, and then…because of that do you feel like there's some people that you don't really want to socialise with, that you don't want to hang out with?

R: Yes. There definitely are. I mean it works for me because when you are with certain people they are going to bring up these topics that maybe you don't like or you don't believe in them or they don't represent who you are. So it's much better to just stay away from them and just to maybe search carefully. I believe that you cannot just be the only one who's doing this, there are but you just have to find time and search carefully for those who believe in exactly what you do believe in. So to stay away from them it's…it plays a huge role in maintaining who you are at school. So if you avoid getting to speak to them, you can maybe just greet them and walk on. But if you going to spend a lot of time with them, you definitely going to feel outside the crowd. So it works for me to just avoid being friends with those people that don't represent who I am and believe what I believe in.

I: Ok and then some of the students and the teachers are also saying that a lot of the issues with people mixing is based on race, and they've had some like racist situations. Have you witnessed that? Do you think that's true and an issue?

R: It is an issue because I believe that whenever there's different people from different cultures there will always be that tension between because they are not used to each other. And me, personally, I have experienced some racist things being forwarded at me but…

I: What kind of things are those?

R: Like black people are stupid…actually I remember I was in grade 9 when someone said that. It was Valentine's Day and we were in the toilet, it was one of the grade 12 students at the school. He was…I don't know why he said that but he just burst it out loud and just said, "Black people are stupid!"

I: Was that a coloured learner?

R: Ja, it was coloured learners. He just said that. And there are also others, although now I can't remember clearly but you do find those people who just think of black people as outsider or foreigners and you also find some black people who are also racist towards others who are maybe from a different country, like Zimbabwe or Zambia. Then they also feel that they are upper class than them. And the coloureds feel sometimes that they are in a higher class than both the blacks and the foreigners. So there is that racist tension, but I feel like it's there for when you are still new to each other, like from grade 10…sorry from grade 8, grade 9, grade 10, maybe there, but as you grow older and go to different grades and start knowing more about other people, I feel like now as I'm in grade 12, my classmates they are…although there are those who still believe that maybe they have been taught at home that black people are inferior, and they are superior. So there are those who still believe but I feel that the majority of my classmates, they are really…we have, we believe that we are all equal and we treat each other fairly and all this stuff.

I: Is that just because you've gotten so close, and you've gotten to know each other so now you feel comfortable with each other?

R: Yes, I definitely do think so because of the time we have spent with each other. So the more you spend, you start to know more about other people – what to say to them and what they believe in and all this stuff. And you start to understand the person more, and when you do you know what to say to that person and you know what not to say to that person because of maybe their cultural belief or religious belief. So because of the most time that we've spent with each other, we have managed to build a bond with one another, so we understand each other much better than we used to.

I: So do you think maybe the problem is that children taught something by their parents, like they get taught these like racist attitudes, but then, once they at school and they mixing with everyone, then they can kind of see that these aren't true, they are just stereotypes?

R: Ja, I definitely do think so because most…racism is…I believe that no one is born racist. When you are racist it is something that you have been taught by someone or something that

has been grinded into your mind and you've been told many times, "No don't talk to these people because they are from a lower class and you are in a higher class. Don't do this. They are like this. They are stupid, they don't know how to do this and this and that and we are superior and we are from higher class than them."

But I think most learners, as much as their parents maybe have taught them that, when they actually meet with black people, they start to see that, no man, this is not true. We are all equal because we are, at the end of the day, we are all human beings. They start to see that it is true, what their parents have taught them is maybe not right. But there are some, those that still stick to what their parents have taught them. But most people, as they meet other races, they start to interact with them and know more about them, and they see that, no man, this person is the same as I am, it's just the colour that is different.

I: Ok. And then in terms of like your teachers, do you feel comfortable with all your teachers?

R: Yes, I definitely do. I mean I will be lying if I can say that there's one teacher that I don't feel comfortable with, talking to. At this school, I can't see any teacher that thinks that black people are stupid or all this negative stuff. They do, personally to me as an individual, they do make me feel equal to any other student, and they do treat me fairly. I've never experienced any sort of racial abuse from them and, ja, that's all I have to say about them. They have never put a foot wrong against me when it comes to those racial stuff.

I: Ok, and then, so say you had like a problem at home or dealing with something and you needed advice or help, which teacher would you go to?

R: Um, I'm a person who likes to keep my stuff to myself, but if there were to be a situation like that, there is one teacher from this school, which is Mr Matthews [coloured male teacher], my Maths teacher. I feel like he's the one person, the one teacher that I'm really close with. So he understands who am I and he actually does give me time to sit down with him and listen to me. We share a strong bond and if there were to be something like that, I mean I think it will definitely be him.

I: Ok. And do you think it would help if you had more teachers that are from, like maybe from Khayelitsha, who speak your home language. Would you feel more comfortable with them, to talk to them, because you have certain things in common?

I: Ja, I mean it will be much more easier when we had more of them because we would also benefit from their…they will also benefit teachers who are from coloured areas, as sometimes learners can say stuff in isiXhosa and they don't understand. If there's no Xhosa teacher who can translate what the learners are saying, I mean it's definitely works against their advantage, the coloured teachers. So I feel if we had maybe more Xhosa-speaking teachers in this school, I mean it will definitely be a good thing because there are actually a lot of black students who speak isiXhosa at this school. So, I feel that as there is only one teacher who speaks isiXhosa at the school, that's not enough when you can look at the numbers of black people who are here. So I mean if there were more maybe Xhosa-speaking teachers, it will be a good mixture of teachers at the school, so it will be, it will make learners who are also

maybe problematic, more comfortable when they speak to the Xhosa-speaking teachers as they understand how they have been brought up in the township and all that stuff. And they understand what's going on there, so they can maybe meet the learner halfway, and understand what's the problem, what's the cause, from the learner's behaviour.

I: Ok, and then, so if it was up to you, what kind of changes would you want to see at the school, to make it like a better place for the learners?

R: For me, I think the changes that I would like to see, I would like to see more strict policy on wearing uniform because that's where it starts. That's where you start to see…because I feel like the school is not enforcing enough discipline when it comes to wearing your school uniform because people they come here wearing their hats and then their hoodies…

I: Ja, I noticed.

R: So that just creates that separation between us. You can see, ok, this one is coloured because he is wearing a hoodie and all this stuff. You can see this one is black because he's wearing things from the township. So I feel that it will make us more equal if we were all to wear uniforms, and what that one wears, that one doesn't and all that stuff. So if we were to do that change, I feel that most people will maybe start loosening up and start seeing us equally because others believe that if you come to school wearing a Nike boot or takkie, and you see a black person or any other person wearing maybe a Tuffies, then you think, ah, my family is much more richer because I can afford to wear these at school and that person can't or doesn't. So I think if there was one thing that I would like the school to implement it will be that, to see more children obeying the rules of the school and being just disciplined toward teachers.

I: Ok, and then the last question, so what are you planning to do next year? Are you going to study or what do you want to do?

R: Ja, I am planning to study. I'm actually applying for a BCom Accounting in UCT. So I want to study and become a chartered accountant. I'm also applying at various places, like Tsiba and Northlink. And I will also be applying at CPUT. I will also be applying at UWC so that I can have many options, so to have sort of like back-up plans. So I will be…I don't want to be one of those learners who just pass grade 12 and just sit there and wait for a job. I want to further my knowledge from what I've gained from the school, and start becoming a better person and maybe also giving back to the community from what I've learnt from university and also inspire more people from my community to show them that even if you were born in the townships, you can still make it and go to the highest point, which is university. I want to acquire my degree and after that go work as a chartered accountant, and after that maybe start my own business.

I: Ok, ja that's good.

Appendix 11: Transcript 7 - Pupil Interview – Chiara

Transcript 7

Pupil Interview

Chiara Grade 12 (black female)

4 August 2014

Teachers' Office – Bridge Town High School

I: So which primary school did you go to?

R: I went to prep school and then I went to a primary school. I went to Plumstead prep, and then I went to John Graham.

I: Ok. John Graham is also in Plumstead?

R: Yes.

I: And do you feel like primary school prepared you for high school?

R: Yes. I'm not quite sure, not emotionally, but study-wise…

I: Academically?

R: Yes. They did very well.

I: And then where do you stay?

R: I stay here in Langa.

I: Ok cool. Is it quite far for you to get here in the mornings?

R: No, actually it's like ten minutes' drive or so, it's not far.

I: Ok. Ja, then I just wanted to get a better understanding…obviously sometimes when we're at school we feel like you have to kind of change certain elements of what you do or how you act to how you do at home with your friends and your family, just to kind of fit into the school and adapt to the school. So do you feel like you have to do that?

R: Not at all. I don't think so. I think it also goes with the values and morals you have and the way you've been raised.

I: Mm.

R: That you don't even feel pressured or like moved to actually want to fit in or something. Maybe it's because of my values and morals that ensure that I don't want to change or want to fit in.

I: Ok. And so do you feel like your life at home with your family is very similar to how you are here?

R: Yes.

I: Ok. Ja, and then just your experience with language…are you doing Afrikaans?

R: Yes.

I: And what's your home language?

R: Xhosa.

I: Ok. So was it difficult for you to do Afrikaans? Would you prefer to have your home language?

R: I don't think so. It was a challenge in grade 8 because it was my first time doing Afrikaans and where I came from in John Graham they offered like Xhosa classes and stuff, and when I got here I had to change. But it also had to start with me accepting that I had to now do Afrikaans and I had to go the extra mile because I did not know the subject. Though it was a challenge, sometimes I wouldn't do my homework because I wouldn't understand…but just because of the educator that I've had from grade 8 to now, she's been persistent and consistent and always wanting to help and I felt like, for me as a Xhosa student, Xhosa girl coming from Langa, it has been a challenge up until grade 10. And then in grade 10 I did very well, like I'd get 50s and above, or 60s and above.

I: Ok.

R: It was ok.

I: It's just a matter of practise?

R: Yes.

I: Ok, and then do you feel…so you wouldn't have wanted to do, if isiXhosa was offered as a subject…

R: I don't think so, because from what I've heard from other schools, Xhosa is very…it's like a difficult subject.

I: Even though it's your…

R: Even if it's my home language it's very difficult and there are students who are doing Xhosa now at some other schools and they are failing Xhosa. So for me, I felt like Afrikaans was something better for me to do because I pass Afrikaans, I've never failed Afrikaans.

I: So have you found at the school…I know some other students were saying like issues with racial integration and that some groups don't mix…it's a bit like, ok, these people are sitting here and these people are sitting here, there's not a lot of communication. Do you find that as well or what's your experience?

R: I do…I would say I've seen it but I'm not quite sure with me experiencing it. Um, I think there is racial issues but when…obviously it comes with us students, because I've never witnessed or seen maybe an educator having racial issues with another learner or something like that, but it's always with us students that we now realise that, no, you black and, no, you

this. And, truth be told, it's so funny that these racial integrations and stuff, like issues, always come with the coloureds and I…it's so odd. It surprises me and shocks me that coloureds still have this mentality that you black, and I'm coloured and you white, or whatever, whereas we don't take it in that manner. I've never experienced it but I've seen it happen, even in the grade 8s, this other time I've seen this boy hitting the other one and telling him, "No, you Xhosa and we don't socialise with people like you."

I: So that started a fight?

R: Mm.

I: And where do you think like those perceptions come from?

R: I think those perceptions come from home. We all come from different backgrounds and different homes, and some families have not even gotten over the fact that our country is now a democratic country or something like that. They still have that perception or that stigma, if I may say, whatever that's still stuck in their brain. And for now they raise their children in certain ways that you do not handle this learner this way or whatever. I'm not quite sure because, yes, I honestly think it comes from where we come from, where we all come from.

I: Ja, and then so how did your family kind of deal with that issue? How did they teach you not to make it such an issue?

R: I think it…I was taught to treat everyone equally from primary and even from the primary school that I come from, we were taught to love one another, accept one another, because we're unique and stuff like that. At home we have never had it being a big deal or something. Like we don't even discuss it or something. But maybe here and there when there are those like June 16 moments, and then we'll share things that had happened and all of that and it all comes with now forgiveness. Forgiveness within our parents who experienced it, because we did not experience what had happened. Them telling us that, "I have forgiven and forgotten what had happened, it happened and now I accept it and now I want to move on."

And now once you hear your parents saying such things then you come to understand that it's nothing that I have to hold against what had happened then, because I was not there and stuff like that. So, yes.

I: Ok, and then you personally, do you have friends from all different races?

R: Yes, I do.

I: So it's not an issue for you, just for some people at the school?

R: No, I'm not quite sure. For me it's not an issue at all.

I: So do you think it's just the stereotypes that are holding them back? Do you think if people got to know each other on a personal level they…

R: And I also think to that extent that it's fear. And I don't know where it comes from but it's one of those things that most human beings have, like challenges. People don't want to be

challenged. So when a new challenge or something comes up, they get scared and they fear of the unknown, I don't know what's the fear. Because I've discovered that some people don't want to socialise with other races because they feel that their race maybe is better than that race or because of cultures, different cultures or something, I'm not quite sure. But for me it has been like a lovely experience to experience some people's culture, besides mine, and to even share what I come from and my culture and stuff like that. So I'm not quite sure, I would not say or like pinpoint and say it's actually this or that, I'm not quite sure.

I: So you feel quite free to share your culture and your stories with other people?

R: Yes.

I: And also in class?

R: Yes. I'm the type of person, they always know that whatever they want to ask, I'll be able to answer. I think it's because I love to talk a lot (laughs).

I: (laughs). Ok. And then…ok say you had some issue at home or some personal issue and you wanted to speak to one of the teachers about it. Which teacher would you feel comfortable going to, and chatting to?

R: My Afrikaans teacher, Mrs Bedien.

I: Ok. And why is that?

R: Because, um, I think she's the only educator that I've gotten to that level with, to that comfortable level, in the sense that she was my grade 8 teacher, and up from then she's been teaching me Afrikaans. And some other teachers it's maybe that I've met this teacher in grade 10 or grade 11, whereas with her it has been from grade 8 and also basically it is because of her personality and the way she handles things and the way she like reaches out to us as learners and stuff. It's like comforting, she's always there and it's so weird but it so happens that even though she doesn't know everyone, but she's always able to pinpoint that you're not ok, what's happening with you, and stuff like that.

I: And then, ok if it was up to you, and you could decide, what kind of changes would you make at the school? What do you think would make it better for students?

R: Um…I'm not quite sure but what I've realised here at school is we don't have a lot of activities, in a sense that we don't…I'm not sure if it's because we don't have educators to help or things like that, because from my primary school I was a very sporty person and I did basketball and tennis and I also started ballet and stuff like that. But then here, when I got here and then I realised that there was no sports, and if there was sports it was always netball and soccer, it was never cricket or something else, because not everyone likes that certain sport and there's no…we do have like moral support and stuff but we don't have that…I wouldn't say our school is very balanced, in a sense that we don't have extra-murals, we don't have debate classes, we don't have chess, like things like that, like a mixture of it to make school fascinating, to make school something that you wake up in the morning and be like, oh later on I have a match or, oh later on we have a debate class or, oh later on we have

to go research and do this because we have a project coming up and we need to host for the school. I've never in my life, even in grade 9, I thought that would change because they started a RCL group [student representative council] and then I was the secretary and then everything was going very well, we started, we wanted to like improve the school and everything, up until the teacher that was leading us, Mrs Belters, had to go because she had cancer. And then she came back, but when she left nobody else now gave us direction and was like now somebody who was going to lead us into doing what we wanted and then that failed. And then I don't know now this year, but then after that I wasn't interested anymore because I felt like, ok, we not going to be heard anymore and like it always seems an issue when we come up with these things that the reason why you find these boys smoking around or doing those things, that's because nothing that keeps them interested other than just smoking. Do you get what I mean? There's nothing else. So if there were things that we could substitute those things then maybe they wouldn't be doing those things that they are doing and it has made my school life, my high school life, boring, I would say. My high school life has always been about books, books, books, that's it and nothing else.

I: So do you think if there were options a lot of people would want to get involved?

R: Yes, of course.

I: Ok, because when I was chatting to a teacher I asked them about that because it seems like there's a lot of activities and they said, you know, a lot of people aren't really as interested.

R: No, but how are we going to be interested when the educators themselves don't seem interested? Because the thing is you can't say that I want to lead a netball team and not be interested in it and not be devoted to it. And ensuring that you're not going to waste your two hours or one hour every day after school with these learners, and being persistent and consistent with them, like please come and there's no support in that manner. So I really think that learners are…they would love for these things to happen but they're not happening and now it's like, I don't know, I'm not quite sure but, for me, I for one I really know that if there were those like opportunities where I could play basketball again, I'll go.

I: Ok, and do you think that would also help in terms of like students getting closer with each other and getting to know each other, and bonding as a school?

R: Yes! Yes, of course.

I: Ok, and then just to go back quickly, did your parents choose this school for you?

R: No.

I: Who chose it? Did you choose it yourself?

R: I…it's not a matter of choice, in a sense that when I was in grade 7 my father got retrenched and my mother lost her job. So what happened is I applied in Plumstead High and then I also applied in Gardens and then, um, after applying we discovered that we are going to have some financial problems, so we needed a school that was closer, first of all, and also a school that now was cheaper than what we used to pay. And then my cousin who came to the

school said that I could come to the school. It wasn't…I didn't have a choice, basically. I didn't have a choice that this is where I wanted to go, it was a matter of the circumstance and the situation at the time.

I: Ok, and then lastly, what are you planning to do after you finish matric? Do you want to study? What do you want to do?

R: I want to do a degree in Bachelors in business admin.

I: Ok.

R: That's next year.

I: Where do you want to do it?

R: I want to do it in Tsiba Education.

I: Ok, and do you think you will be prepared for that? Do you think that…

R: I'm actually excited about it. When I started researching about it, I thought I was going to do accounting and then I started researching about accounting and I speak to other students who are doing accounting and stuff, and then I felt like I don't think this is really for me. Not that I didn't want the challenge, but then I felt like, no, this is not me. And then I started speaking to this other lady at church and she told me about business. Then I started researching about it, I went to the school and I felt like, ok, this is really what I want to do and stuff like that.

I: Ok, awesome. Is there anything else you wanted to tell me that you think is relevant?

R: In which sense?

I: Just in terms of the school and your experience.

R: I'm not quite sure. I think I've said everything but for maybe, maybe for the future or something, they could like try and put more activities because school is really exciting only if there are things that are keeping people to come, like it's almost like business or it's almost like Shoprite, or Pick n Pay, they have to ensure that the brand that they selling is attractive. It wants people to like look at it and be like I really want that and stuff like that. So that is also school for us learners. How am I going to be able to wake up in the morning if I know that all that I'm going to is just learn and break, and like boring stuff, and the only thing that keeps school very interesting is the things that are happening besides books and stuff like that, because I've noticed that we don't all have the same talent or the same purpose in life. And some are good at maths and some are not, and some are really good in debate but they not good in English, things like that. And how are we able to see our strengths and our purposes if there are no such opportunities at school?

I: So you don't get a chance to develop the other skills…

R: And to see what you actually good in…

I: And you also need some more…do you think maybe some leadership from students in implementing these things?

R: Yes.

I: Ok, awesome. Ja, I think that's all I need.

Appendix 12: Transcript 8 – Pupil Interview – Lucy

Transcript 8

Pupil Interview

Lucy Grade 12 (coloured female)

4 August 2014

Teachers' Office – Bridge Town High School

I: So you have been here since grade 8?

R: Ja.

I: And which primary school did you go to?

R: Erica Primary.

I: Ok, where is that?

R: That's in Belhar.

I: Ok, and did you feel like primary school prepared you for high school?

R: No, it prepared me for high school, just not this one (laughs).

I: Oh, why is that?

R: Because everything is lower.

I: Lower? What do you mean by that?

R: Like the primary school I came from was very strict, but the high school I came to is completely different.

I: Ja. So do you feel like the discipline is not as much…people can get away with things?

R: Yes.

I: Like what kind of things? Like smoking?

R: Smoking and bad behaviour, basically back-chatting teachers, that sort of thing.

I: So people back-chat teachers. Do they get in trouble then?

R: Basically the teachers just drop it.

I: Really. So is there anything that they take really seriously in terms of discipline?

R: Well I think the teachers take it seriously; it's just not getting through to the children.

I: And do you guys have like detention after school…

R: Ja, but that's unsuccessful.

I: Ok. Why is it unsuccessful?

R: No-one shows up (laughs).

I: Really?

R: Ja.

I: Ok, and then is there suspension after that? Is that the next measure?

R: Ja, but then the kids come back to school.

I: But if you suspended and you come back, how do they…do they just kick you out again or what is the process?

R: Some teachers will kick the children out of the class but they still just go through.

I: Ok. So they don't really take the discipline seriously?

R: Not at all.

I: Ok. And do you think that kind of has a negative effect for other students who are more serious about wanting to be here and wanting to learn?

R: Ja.

I: Ok. And then where do you stay? Do you stay in the area?

R: Milnerton.

I: That's quite far.

R: Yes.

I: So why did your parents decide to send you here if it's so far away?

R: Because at the moment we were moving but we weren't sure. And my mom's a teacher at Blossom…it's a school just down the road.

I: Ok. And then do you feel like you are kind of comfortable at the school or do you think there are certain things you have to change about yourself, like to how you behave at home with your family and your friends to when you come here?

R: Hm, no.

I: So you quite yourself…

R: Yup. I'm quite myself, it's just everyone else is just weird.

I: Is it? (laughs)

R: Ja, I don't speak like them.

I: Oh, really. So what is kind of weird and different about them?

R: Well here they use this languages that's very strange.

I: Ok, like what? Just like swearing or…

R: Ja, like slang and stuff.

I: So you don't like the slang?

R: Ja and the attitudes of the children sucks. Like I saved a bird from getting beaten up, I think it was last week.

I: Really?

R: People were beating it with a stick.

I: That's not good. So do you feel like a lot of the people here you can't really get on with, they not the kind of people that you want to associate with?

R: Ja.

I: And are there some people that are kind of similar to you that you can get on with?

R: Ja, there are a few.

I: Ok, but it's mainly…

R: Mainly just those.

I: Ok, cool. And then with you doing Afrikaans as a second language, have you been fine with Afrikaans, has it been ok for you, has it been a bit difficult?

R: No, I think Afrikaans is fine.

I: Ok, so did primary school prepare you for that?

R: Yes.

I: Do you speak English at home or…

R: I speak English.

I: Ok. And then in terms of your teachers, do you feel very comfortable with the teachers here or have you ever had any issues with the teachers?

R: No.

I: Ok. If you had an issue, like a personal problem, or something going on, and you needed someone to talk to, would you go to one of the teachers?

R: No.

I: Ok, why is that?

R: Well if I had a problem I would generally just speak to myself.

I: Ok, so don't you feel like you can talk to the teachers openly, or is it just your own personality?

R: Ja, basically my own personality.

I: Ok, but have the teachers been very open to the learners, kind to them…

R: Ja, I'd say there's about three teachers that I know that children actually confide in.

I: Ok, and why do you think the kids are comfortable to confide in them?

R: Because the teachers, they have this thing about them where they just go to the child's level. Like buddy.

I: Ok, so they relate to them?

R: Ja.

I: Ok, and then some of the students were saying there's been issues with kind of racial integration at the school, and there's been kind of a divide. So some people will just stick together and not socialise with other people. Have you noticed that as well.

R: Definitely.

I: Ok, and why do you think that is?

R: Because everyone has like their own view on things, like some people you just can't converse with. Like you got those people that come from that area, and we have some decent people. It's like everyone's always fighting, but in silence.

I: Ok, I get what you mean. So there's like tension?

R: Ja.

I: And do you think…what do you think caused it?

R: I'm not sure I'm a very racist person, it's a bad thing, but I'm not bad.

I: Ok, so for you, in your experience, do you mix with everyone…

R: Ja, I mix with everyone.

I: Ok, and then…what do you think is holding other people back from mixing? Is it like their family background or is it their own kind of stereotypes?

R: I think it's their own kind of stereotypes.

I: Do they get that from their parents or…

R: I'm not sure. Like if you look at my classroom, we're very diverse. Everyone gets on with everyone, doesn't matter your colour. But once you go to another classroom, I mixed with 12C, you'll see it's like…

I: Very separated.

R: Ja, and you can't speak to them either.

I: Why is that?

R: They just rude.

I: And then just in terms of…like say it was up to you, what kind of changes would you want to see at the school to kind of get a better experience for the learners?

R: I'd change a lot.

I: Like what kind of things?

R: Like most schools has events, ours has none. Our sports…we have sports, but it's not a big thing. So definitely, I'd do something.

I: So more after-school sports and cultural activities?

R: Ja.

I: Like what kind of things would you like to do? Like what kind of sports or cultural activities?

R: Generally any extra-mural activities, anything to get the kids involved. Like at Milnerton High, my sister attends there, they have this thing called 'Interact', where after school on Wednesday or whatever, they just go out there, to the neighbourhood or whatever, just to get people together.

I: Ok. So do you think that would help people kind of mix and get to know each other, and create more of a bond with people?

R: Ja, because everyone wants to join in something, but there's nothing to create that bond.

I: Ok, and I know…I was speaking to some of the teachers and I also asked them, because I noticed they don't offer a lot of extra-mural activities, and they said it's often because they will try to launch something but the kids don't really get involved. So is that true?

R: That could be true.

I: Ok, then how would you kind of encourage people to get involved so that it is accessible?

R: I think I would just start small, with the lower grades at first, because I think once they start in grade 8 and they see nothing's actually happening, they don't bother.

I: Ok.

R: Ja, like we've had talent shows, a few people pitched, but in all it was good.

I: Ok, so maybe if they start off with the lower grades, then it's kind of an expected thing that you do extra-murals, they become a habit.

R: Ja.

I: Ok, and do you think those kind of activities should be student-led, so students should take responsibility for organising things and taking responsibility, or do you think it should be the teachers that are influencing it.

R: I think it should be half half. Because if a student wanted to do it, it wouldn't actually happen, and if a teacher had to do it, it would be a bit…

I: Like they forcing it…

R: Ja.

I: Ok and do you think that would be the only kind of thing you would want to improve or…

R: And definitely the discipline.

I: Ok, so implement stricter discipline so everyone is on the same page?

R: Ja, and I would maybe limit who comes to the school.

I: Ok.

R: Like you want to know exactly who they accepting.

I: Yes.

R: And just checking their level of education and maybe their manners as well.

I: So you think they would need to have a certain academic standard before they are let in?

R: Ja, and maybe a bit of respect would be nice. (laughs).

I: And then what are you planning to do after school? Are you going to study or work?

R: Ja, I have a field right now, it's either journalism or movie production.

I: Oh, nice. And then where would you want to study?

R: UCT.

I: And do you think Bridge Town has prepared you? Do you feel like you would fit in well at UCT? Do you feel like you would be up to scratch on academics?

R: Ja, I'm not sure about that. And once I leave here I am gone. Ja, I won't look back on my school career.

I: So you just want to look to the future…

R: Ja.

I: Ok is there anything else you wanted to tell me about the school or…

R: No, I think I've complained enough.

I: (laughs). Ok, ja, I think that's all.