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Article · November 2019

DOI: 10.29086/2519-5476/2019/v26n2a8

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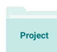

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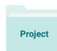

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Disruption by Curriculum Design: Using Steve Biko's *I Write What I Like* as a Tool for Participatory Parity in post-Apartheid Higher Education

Shannon Morreira

Abstract

In South Africa, teaching and learning initiatives put in place by DHET-supported programmes aim, in varied ways, to address historically-based disparities that have persisted into the higher education landscape in the present. This paper reports on one such intervention, an Introductory/Foundation course in the Social Sciences. The paper begins with a description of three levels of theory that were used in designing the course and in assessing its impact: decolonial theory (Mignolo 2011; Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013); work on social justice and epistemic justice (Fraser 2009; Fricker 2007); and Karl Maton's (2014) work on knower and knowledge codes and gazes drawn from Legitimation Code Theory (LCT). The paper also reports on empirical data as a means of assessing the effectiveness of such theory-driven course design. The findings show that the course is very successful on a number of levels in challenging structural constraints. But the use of Biko's (1978) *I Write what I Like* as a seminal text in the course runs the risk of modelling, in Maton's (2014) terms, a (closed) social gaze, rather than a cultivated or trained gaze (which is where much of higher education pedagogy is aimed). The empirical data on student and tutor engagement to emerge from this course thus leaves us, as educators, with a serious question: Where is our ethical imperative as academic development practitioners? Is it 'transformation' and 'decolonisation' of our curricula to improve parity of participation; or is it 'schooling'/ 'disciplining' students into the university environment so that they succeed on the university's terms? Is it possible to do both?

*Alter*nation 26,2 (2019) 161 – 182

Print ISSN 1023-1757; Electronic ISSN: 2519-5476; DOI https://doi.org/10.29086/2519-5476/2019/v26n2a8

Keywords: Foundation provision; decolonial thinking; higher education; social sciences; parity of participation; academic development

Introduction and Background: Post-Apartheid Practices toward Curriculum Change

Over the past two decades policy interventions in South African higher education have focused on shifting historical inequities in terms of access, enrolments, and student composition (Luckett and Shay 2017). The Department of Higher Education and Training (DHET) recognizes historically-based disparities that have persisted into the higher education landscape in the present, and provides, through funding models such as the Foundation Grant, structural interventions into the higher education landscape as a means of progressing towards distributive justice in South Africa. Teaching and learning and curriculum initiatives put in place by DHET-supported curriculum enrichment programmes and foundation provision thus aim to help students transition from school or work to higher education, as well as to improve teaching practices across the university more generally, in ways that allow for greater equity in participation for all students.

Whilst the DHET Foundation Grant provides an overarching framework, the forms that this takes differ institution by institution, and by Faculties within institutions, informed by the particular contexts in place in each space. This paper reports on one course within one such intervention in the Faculty of Humanities[1] at the University of Cape Town: a historically white, English-speaking, research intensive university.

Foundation provision at UCT is enacted through the lens of Education Development, with each Faculty at the University having its own Education Development Unit (EDU), which puts in place teaching and learning initiatives appropriate to the Faculty context. Within the Arts and Social Sciences, the Humanities Education Development Unit offers one such program, with a focus on providing access to first generation black[2] students, and to improving

[1] This Faculty incorporates both the Arts and the Social Sciences.

[2] The term ‘ black’ is used in the inclusive, post-apartheid sense, to incorporate all those who were structurally oppressed by the colonial and apartheid system. It thus incorporates all the ‘non-white population groups’ as used under apartheid: African; Coloured; Indian; and Chinese.

retention and success rates. This is the largest such access program existent at the university at present, with admissions of approximately 200 new first year students each year. The students who are targeted for this intervention are accepted to the University for an extended 4 year BA or B. Soc. Sci undergraduate degree, on a separate program to so-called 'mainstream' students who are expected to finish their degree in a minimum of 3 years. The extended degree includes a foundation year which must include two of a suite of five Introductory courses all of which aim, in varied ways, to improve levels of student preparedness. Aside from these two courses, students take the same courses towards the same majors as students on the three year degree, but receive additional academic support on these courses through augmented tutorials which provide extra time on task, and closer engagement with the materials in a small group environment.

As an access program, the 4 year Humanities degree at UCT is only open to black students: such racialised marking, however, is often perceived by the students as 'ghettoization'. The wider context of UCT thus matters to the ways in which the process of racialization is perceived. The University intends such a move as positive discrimination, using the DHET Foundation Grant to provide a space through which to ensure better access and throughput for students from backgrounds that it perceives as disadvantaged. In this, University policy is in keeping with wider inherited institutional approaches to education development, in that the language of education development programmes often remains based on assimilationist models and hegemonic norms (Luckett *et al.* forthcoming; Luckett this issue) which position black students as 'disadvantaged', 'underprepared' and in need of development. This places the onus on black students to 'catch up' and overcome their structurally induced educational and cultural 'deficits' instead of recognizing the multitude of strengths such students bring with them such as, for example, multilingualism. It also removes the responsibility for change from the university itself. Such institutional positioning has not gone unnoticed by students or staff: UCT has been described by one of its Professors as 'a European greenhouse under African skies' (Nyamnjoh 2012:33), and was the campus on which the #RhodesMustFall Movement emerged in 2015 in protest against the continued coloniality[3] of institutional culture. The space of

[3] For a more detailed discussion of coloniality/modernity, see 'Theoretical Framework' below.

foundation provision at UCT is thus politically contentious. Within UCT, Education Development Units have at times acted as a focal point for dissatisfaction with university-wide teaching and learning issues within the context of racialised inequalities.

The foundation course being reported on here was designed with an awareness of this national and institutional context, and with an aim to provide careful, theoretically informed curriculum design and pedagogical intervention in light of it. The course is framed around Steve Biko's (1978) *I Write What I Like* and draws out social science concepts (for example, socialization; identity; race and gender) from this example, for further analysis. The first point to note is that Biko's work is not conventionally academic: *I Write What I Like* consists of a series of political essays, aimed at raising an ideological, race-based form of consciousness, in direct opposition to the material and ideological policies of apartheid. This is very useful in terms of exemplifying abstract concepts in ways that are familiar to students: notions of socialization, identity or race, for example, are easily located in Biko's work through concrete examples drawn from daily, familiar scenes in South African life (it is a telling indictment on the conditions of post-apartheid South Africa that much of what Biko described of black township life in the 1970s is still relevant today). The course does not leave it there, however: students also closely read a series of different disciplinary readings of Biko's work – how Black Consciousness has been used by political scientists; sociologists; historians and social psychologists, as well as literature on the core concepts employed by each discipline – in order to make disciplinary conventions unambiguous to the students. Rather than implicitly cultivating disciplinary gazes, as is usually the case in the social sciences (Maton 2014), the course thus seeks to make the ways in which those gazes are constructed explicit to those students who are most disadvantaged by the hidden curriculum.[4]

This paper reports on the pedagogical effectiveness of the above strategy in a foundation course, and in so doing it aims to intervene in current debates around foundation provision in two ways: firstly, by discussing the theory that underlies some of the teaching praxis that has emerged in foun-

[4] The course also incorporates other forms of innovative pedagogy that are beyond the bounds of this paper. For a discussion of the use of translanguaging in the course (both in teaching and in students' written submissions) see Hurst *et al.* (2017).

dation provision in light of the complex context discussed above; and secondly, by providing some concrete discussion of the intended and unintended outcomes of such a turn. In order to fulfill this second aim I draw on empirical data collected from student and tutor feedback on the course between the years 2014 and 2017, as well as from essays submitted by students in the 2017 cohort. Data was collected as part of an ongoing project within the Humanities EDU to evaluate its teaching interventions. Ethical clearance was obtained for the project through the UCT Centre for Higher Education Development (CHED) Ethics Board, and data only collected from those students and tutors who had given informed consent to be participants in the project.

Theory to Think With: The Theoretical Framing of the Course

The course is informed by social theory operating at three levels: the macro level of societal organization and the hierarchies of persons and knowledge forms within society; the meso level of the forms of structural intervention that can be made to respond to such hierarchies with an aim to improving social equality; and, finally, the micro-level of social practice, and how knowledge is organized in a curriculum, or in a particular discipline. In what follows, I begin at the macro, and then focus in. Whilst this section is primarily concerned with laying the theoretical groundwork on which the course was based, at times it has been necessary to move between theory and a description of the course itself.

The design of the course was firstly influenced by the work of decolonial theory, as seen largely through the work of Latin American scholars such as Walter Mignolo (2012) and Anibal Quijano (2007); and as applied to the Southern African context by Sabelo Ndlovu Gatsheni (2013). Decolonial theory argues that the present world order, with regard to persons and to knowledge, is structured in a way which prioritises particular kinds of persons and particular ways of knowing, and minimizes the importance of, or even silences, others. Decolonial theory maintains that whilst the temporal age of colonialism may have been and gone, the epistemic logic of coloniality remains entangled in the present day. There is thus an important distinction to be made between decolonisation – a largely political and territorial project - and decoloniality – a largely ideological and epistemological one. Decolonial thinkers argue that one product of modernity has been the creation and maintenance of a ‘colonial matrix of power’ (Mignolo 2012, ix) consisting of

interrelated forms of control such as patriarchy, racism, knowledge, authority, and the economy, which underlie Western civilisation. A key concept in decolonial theory is that of the inseparability of 'modernity/ coloniality' – meaning that because colonialism was constitutive of modernity (its 'darker side', in Mignolo's (2012) terms), the two concepts must be held together to describe a single power system that historically has served the demands of capitalist accumulation and the interests of Europeans (Quijano 2007). Modernity/coloniality continues in the present through a set of intersectional social hierarchies that privilege Western, hetereosexual, capitalist patriarchy. Such hierarchies also work in universities (both in the North and the South) through the domination of knowledge production by the North. In keeping with this thread of thinking (although strictly speaking not a decolonial theorist, but a Southern one), Raewyn Connell (2017:10) has argued that 'Contemporary universities are powerful institutions, interlinked on a global scale; but they embed a narrow knowledge system that reflects and reproduces social inequalities on a global scale.' In Southern Africa, Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2013) has applied the decolonial lens to universities to argue that there is a need for a suite of creative cultural shifts with regard to university practice. These shifts should encompass more than just the content of courses: he thus calls for 'a package of transformations in teaching, research, epistemology, curriculum, pedagogy and institutional culture, aimed at reanchoring higher education within African and the liberation trajectories of African people' (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2013:179).

Course design was thus informed by a recognition that the set up of the modern university hierarchises persons and knowledges in particular ways. In a university that often saw courses designed with an imagined white and privileged South African student as the ideal learner, I set out to imagine how we might design materials to privilege a different kind of learner, and to validate other kinds of knowledge. The next level of theory that informed the course design was thus concerned with the ways in which persons are able to participate in the structures and hierarchies that we have inherited in present day South Africa. The starting point here is the recognition that the knowledge and cultural capital that first generation students bring with them to the university may not be recognised as valid forms of knowledge and as valid forms of cultural capital, particularly for those first generation students in research intensive, historically white, English-medium universities. For example, speaking in class in a mixture of English and a local language, as is

common in much day to day interaction in South Africa, is largely unheard of in most UCT learning spaces[5], which are English-medium (and often a particularly academic form of English at that). Students who attempt to translanguage in spoken or written work, then, find themselves at a disadvantage in the academic space: even though such a skill is clearly advantageous in social life outside of the university.

The philosopher Miranda Fricker (2007) refers to such unequal participation in the legitimated system of shared meanings that constitutes culture as instances of 'epistemic injustice', while Nancy Fraser (2009) terms it 'misrecognition.' It is worth taking a look at each theorist in turn, as each brings something slightly different to an understanding of social relations in the postcolony, which can be applied to the classroom setting, particularly for classes based on DHET foundation provision.

Fricker's (2007) notion of epistemic injustice essentially posits that a person can be treated unfairly in their *capacity as a knower*: which is to say, in addition to social or political injustices, categories of people can face injustices with regard to the ways in which they can be heard, or their knowledge recognised as legitimate. Fricker differentiates between two kinds of epistemic injustice: testimonial injustices, where a person's position means it is impossible for their claims to be recognised as valid, because the speaker has a deficit of credibility; and hermeneutical injustice, where it can be literally impossible for someone to make a claim because people lack the shared social resources to put a label on the experience that makes it 'knowable.' Fricker uses the example of sexual harassment in the workplace to unpack these ideas: prior to 'sexual harassment' being a recognised term, women could find such harassment impossible to report, as the category wasn't known or knowable (a hermeneutic injustice); and even once it had become a valid, shared concept, women may still struggle to be believed when they report harassment, due to a deficit of credibility by virtue of their very position as women (a testimonial injustice). Examples more relevant to contemporary South African higher education can also easily be found: student protesters highlighting, for instance, that the emotional weight of black pain was not recognised as valid exemplifies a hermeneutic injustice; and the fact that it is not enough for a

[5] This is beginning to shift in some few spaces at UCT, particularly those influenced by Education Development practitioners (see Hurst *et al.* 2017; Madiba 2014).

student to lay claim to such pain, but rather that medical certificates are required by universities to attest to the experience before it can be heard as legitimate, would constitute a testimonial injustice.

Fricker's work is thus very useful in making sense of the forms of silencing that can occur in higher education. She goes on to argue, however, that *individuals* need to cultivate epistemic virtues in order to counteract epistemic injustices – a reflexive awareness of the sorts of positioning that occurs in society. Hermeneutical injustices, however, are structural problems. While it is useful for lecturers, for example, to attempt to cultivate epistemic virtues, at a curriculum level structural, rather than individual, changes need to be implemented to counteract structural injustices. In thinking through this in relation to Foundation provision, the work of Nancy Fraser (2009) has been extremely useful.

Nancy Fraser (2009) pushes further than Fricker with regard to social justice, to argue for the conditions that need to be in place for parity of participation to occur. By this, Fraser means the structural conditions which allow all social actors to participate in social arrangements on an equal footing. For Fraser, this is the ultimate goal of social justice. Fraser suggests a three-pronged structural approach, arguing that we need to meet the conditions of redistribution, recognition and representation if we are to achieve participatory parity. Fraser argues that recognition is cultural: individuals may be consistently misrecognized, or not seen as equal peers, because of societal status inequality. In this, Fraser's notion of misrecognition is similar to Fricker's idea of hermeneutical injustice. Individuals are not able to participate as equals, or cannot be heard, by virtue of their social positioning. Unlike Fricker, however, who leaves the work of counteracting misrecognition or hermeneutical injustices to the individual, Nancy Fraser recognizes another two structural categories that also need to be fulfilled before participatory parity can occur: redistribution, and representation. Redistribution is an economic category, in that people cannot take part in social arrangements if they don't have the resources. The final category Fraser argues for is that of representation. Here, she focuses on political and social belonging, with regard to who can make claims for social justice and how those claims are read. For Fraser, all three of these dimensions are entangled, and the work of social justice needs to be towards all of them if parity is to be achieved.

How might we use such theory to inform our practices in higher education, and specifically in foundation provision? To start with, Foundation

programs are structured by redistributive logics: the DHET Foundation Grant attempts to redress historical imbalances through redistribution of resources within the university and, from here, to wider society. Justice, as imagined here, is distributive. But student protests against 'ghettoization' into redistributive programs show us very clearly that redistribution is not enough. The work we do also needs to address recognition and representation, allowing for forms of being and belonging to be cultivated in the classroom and wider university space that aim towards parity of participation. As has long been clear in Education Development, physical access, then, is not enough, and there is a need to work creatively towards deeper forms of epistemic access (Morrow 2009; Muller 2012). Where decolonial thinking and Fraser's ideas take us further, however, is in a recognition that even more than epistemic access may well be necessary: rather than simply training our students in ways that allow them to enter into the discourses of the disciplines, we may well need to be thinking very seriously about how to shift the terms of engagement such that the epistemes of South African higher education are more receptive to different ways of being. Justice as it is imagined in decolonial thinking, then, is more than distributive, and is concerned not just with reversing historical wrongs or undoing prior transactions, but with widening the forms of knowledge that are considered legitimate and valued in the present. Thus far we have considered two levels of theory: the globalized matrix of power that structures knowledge and universities in a particular way; and the meso-level of forms of participation and recognition available to students as knowers within such structures. I turn now to a final theoretical consideration: that of a micro-analysis of the ways in which knowledge itself is organized, in order to analyse the work that is done by the key text used in this course. To do this, I present one particular element of Karl Maton's (2014) Legitimation Code Theory (LCT). LCT in its entirety is complex and theoretically dense: located within the paradigm of social realism, and extending upon the work of Basil Bernstein, it seeks to provide a theory for investigating the forms of knowledge structures at play in higher education, and the roles available to knowers within that. Much of the complexity of LCT is beyond the scope of this article: I wish to focus in here on Maton's discussion of knowledge and knower codes, and, more specifically, on the kinds of 'gazes' that occur within such specialist codes.

LCT posits that fields of knowledge are composed of social as well as epistemic relations. While the epistemic relation concerns what can be known,

and how it can come to be known or developed, the social relation is that between such knowledge, and the person/s or agents making the knowledge claim. In other words, Maton's social relation reflects *who* it is that can legitimately know, and the power relations that legitimate such knowledge. For Maton, then, agents are viewed in relation to one another and to the structures that exist in a field of relational struggles. Maton does not see social and epistemic relations as a dichotomy, but rather proposes that academic disciplines can be analysed in terms of the relative strength or weakness of the epistemic and social relations, along a Cartesian plane. Disciplines can then be placed within this topography on the basis of the strength or weakness of their epistemic and social relations. Where epistemic relations are stronger and social relations weaker, one gets disciplines composed of *knowledge codes* where the object of study matters more than does the attributes of the social actor doing the studying (for example, in conventional Natural Sciences). Where epistemic relations are weak and social relations strong, one gets disciplines composed of *knower codes*, where the attributes of actors matter more than does the specialized object of knowledge (such as in standpoint theories based on, for example, gender).

Prior to the development of the wider BA and B.Soc. Sci. extended degree curriculum of which the foundation course discussed here is part, Luckett and Hunma (2014) used LCT to map four disciplines within the Humanities and Social Sciences at UCT. In terms of the social sciences, their work took disciplines from two ends of the spectrum: history and psychology. Through analysis of curriculum documents and exam scripts, Luckett and Hunma (2014) showed that while Psychology as practiced at UCT constituted a knower code, history as practiced at UCT constituted a knowledge code, as with many of the Humanities and Social Science subjects. The foundation course being reported on here thus needed to be designed in such a way, then, to allow extended degree students access to very different sorts of disciplinary discourses, and in some instances the right sorts of (often tacit) attributes that would allow success in their wider degrees.

The decision was therefore made to examine different disciplinary positions in the course. In the first incarnation of the course, offered for the first time in 2013, the course was designed in such a way that students spent two weeks at a time on one of a number of various disciplines, starting with a reading that outlined the key concept of a particular discipline, and then moving in to an example of a research article in the discipline. Key concepts

were drawn from this. After offering the course in this way for two semesters, however, it seemed to me not to be working as well as it could, for two reasons. Firstly, it was difficult for students to move between so many positions and theorists; and secondly, the core texts (which were chosen on the advice of specialists within each discipline being explored) were often deeply theoretical, and even the exemplifying research-based texts were usually hard to relate to the lives of extended degree students. In 2014, then, I redesigned the course to respond to these two issues, one of which was, of course, in Fraser's (2009) terms, an issue of recognition. To this end, I chose to introduce Steve Biko's (1978) *I Write What I like* as a seminal text, and to draw out the disciplinary positions from there. We now spend three weeks closely reading three chapters of Biko at the beginning of the semester; once students are familiar with this theory, we then move on to the ways in which different disciplines have mobilized the ideas of Biko and Black Consciousness in their work. We still read the 'dry' theoretical texts that outline the key concepts/positions/interests of each discipline, but we are then able to look carefully at what the discipline chose from Biko's theory as 'useful' to them in order to exemplify that disciplinary position and make the underlying, covert discourse of the discipline more clear.

One final level of theory from Maton's (2014) work is useful in thinking through the course design, and this concerns analytic work he has done at the level of knower codes, as a means of explicating the kinds of knowledge and knower that can be made (or encountered) within knower codes. Maton further breaks down knower codes in terms of the degree of openness of the code to potential knowers. He builds on Bernstein to distinguish between four types of 'gazes: the 'born gaze', which is the most exclusive, and only open to knowers with a particular genetic or biological background[6]; the 'social gaze' is relatively exclusive, based on belonging to

[6] It is worth noting here that Maton is a critical realist, in that he views social relations as historically structured and thus 'real' in their effects. For Maton, knowledge is socially constructed reality; as such, it is a product of social struggles about what should be valued. All of Maton's 'gazes', then, as discussed above are 'social' and speak to processes of socialization rather than inherent dispositions. What Maton is doing with the gazes is to point out the ways in which forms of knowledge are created, presented and, centrally, accorded value, within sets of social relationships.

particular social categories such as race, class or gender; the 'cultivated gaze' is more inclusive, based on forms of belonging and enculturation that can be developed through the right sorts of education; and the 'trained gaze' is the most inclusive, potentially open to all knowers based on training in disciplinary processes and methods. Much of higher education pedagogy in the Arts and Social Sciences is aimed at creating the right sort of cultivated gaze, in terms of disciplinary conventions. Maton's categories are useful, therefore, in unpacking the texts we set, and the work that students produce, in terms of what sort of a gaze is presented in the text, and then what sort of a gaze is reproduced in student writing.

In what follows, I draw on empirical data from student and tutor feedback on the course, as well as student exam scripts, as a means of analyzing the effectiveness of the course as a structural intervention to improve parity of participation. The findings from student and tutor feedback, as well as student assignments which require them to define and exemplify concepts, show that Biko's work provides a locally relevant space to ground abstract social science concepts from across the disciplines, and that it, in combination with other learning interventions implemented in the course, opens a space to challenge structural constraints. But data from student exam essay scripts shows that, for some students at least, using a non-academic text like Biko's runs the risk of modeling, in Maton's terms, a social gaze, rather than an enculturated or trained gaze that would be recognized as a legitimate form of writing in courses and disciplines that students will encounter in their wider degree.

Disruption by Curriculum Design: Implementing Theory in the Classroom

How successful, then, is the course at doing the sort of work it sets out to do, in terms of the above theoretical framing?

At a macro-level, mobilizing a text that has a definite political message, and one that directly addresses issues of racialised hierarchies and the effects of these upon the daily world, is a move that is responsive to the calls made by decolonial thinkers to lay bare the colonial matrix of power as a first step towards dismantling it. Similarly, making the usually opaque conventions of different disciplines clear to students in their first year also upends power relations to some extent. The course has been the subject of a study (Mona 2017) which aimed to examine the ways in which the course

responded to issues of race; coloniality; canonical selection; and cultural capital in terms of its curriculum and pedagogy. After a year of research into the course, including sitting in lectures and tutorials, examining student assignments, and examining course evaluations, Mona (2017:ii) concluded that,

> DOH1009[7] stands as an example of a socio-culturally relevant curriculum. The manner in which the course is positioned in South Africa's local context; the multilingualism; and the cultural sensitivity, among other findings, qualify DOH1009 as a relevant and exemplary case study.

Though not the only important factor, Mona found the use of Steve Biko in the course as a central element to this process of 'decolonising.' He thus further writes that,

> The author selection [in DOH1009] is a political device in that it first shifts power from the traditionally canonical Western authors by prioritising local African authors. Secondly, by so doing, the course suggests that Africa can produce thinkers who are worthy of being placed in the curriculum. Such placement of African thinkers in the curriculum has the potential to elevate the self-esteem of black students who may have been overwhelmed by a largely Western range of thinkers in their other courses (Mona 2017:22).

At the level of responding to macro-issues of coloniality within higher education, then, the course could be said to be successful; and the use of Biko as a seminal text from which to first understand key concepts and then different disciplinary positions has played a large role in that. At a meso-level, in terms of providing a means towards addressing hermeneutical injustice and/or misrecognition, the text is also extremely successful. Student and tutor feedback showed that using this particular text rather than any other as a way of illustrating quite complex concepts like socialization, race, gender and identity, was valued because of the work it did towards recognition. For example, one tutor responded to a questionnaire about their experience of the course design with the comment:

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[7] The course code for the course as used at UCT.

> I think using Biko was really important. Firstly because it was something students in the class could relate to. It was also a more relaxed text as opposed to the unnecessarily confusing texts that are usually used. The language in the Biko text is accessible and deals with stories that the students are familiar with. Once again, the fact that the students related with Biko, whether or not they agreed or disagreed … it is important to them to feel like issues of black identity, inequality are not being ignored in academic life but engaged in great detail.

In Fraser's (2009) terms, the final sentence from the tutor above shows a particular value being accorded to the work that close engagement with such a text does in terms of recognition. It was also valued for the scaffolding work it was able to do in relating abstract social science concepts through familiar examples (which we can argue is also an issue of recognition). Student responses also valued both these elements, as shown in the response below from a course evaluation question which asked what they had valued about the course:

> I loved that we used Biko. Biko brings up many social issues that we have in South Africa, and we can use Black Consciousness as a way of understanding many of the social sciences. I found it useful that we have incorporated Black Consciousness and used it as a base to understand social science concepts. We can also relate to BC.

Both students and tutors, then, highlighted two kinds of work being done by the text, both of which are to do with recognizing student identities in the classroom. At one level this operated with regard to providing contextual examples of global theory through Biko. This can be seen in the comments from students below, given in response to a question in a mid-term evaluation run in the first year that Biko was used in the course, which asked what students had found most useful or interesting about using Biko's work:

- The examples that are used in Black Consciousness provide us with clear understanding of concepts.

- His work is applicable to many genres across the Humanities that are relevant in the course and our majors.

- His style of writing is interesting, it gives us a drive to engage with the chapters because they are understandable and interesting to read.

Beyond the work done in making concepts clear and coursework interesting, recognition was also valued at a sociocultural level: in response to the same question, students wrote that:

- I like that we are reading Biko, who is black, so it shows that current UCT is trying to incorporate everyone (even us blacks) and that it is respecting our heroes. Great work.

And,

- He had brilliant ideas that actually made a change. It matters to me to be learning about that at university. It makes me feel like I can contribute.

While the structure of the extended degree of which this course forms a part could thus be seen as an example of redistribution as a step toward social justice, the use of this particular text gave space for recognition as well. The final sentence of the quote given above :'It makes me feel like I can contribute,' as well as Mona's (2017:22) comment that 'it has the potential to elevate the self-esteem of black students,' also shows that using such texts can lay the ground for different forms of representation in the university, in that it opens the potential for students to feel like full citizens of the university space. I would argue that the use of translanguaging in assignments and some tutorial spaces also contributes to such an aim (see Hurst *et al.* 2017).

In many ways, then, the theory that lay behind the design of the course has had very positive results. Using Biko's *I Write What I Like* allows for access to a way of knowing that is deliberately positioned within a local geocultural and political context that overtly grapples with ideas of identity and structural silencing. It thus provides a locally grounded space to articulate abstract social science concepts. It also opens up a space to challenge structural constraints: as such, it is successful in teaching students about epistemic injustice.

Analysis of exam scripts and the marks accorded by examiners, however, showed a potential flaw in using a non-academic author for a seminal text. Despite the fact that numerous other academic texts are also used in the

course to illustrate various disciplinary voices, positions and concepts, some exam scripts showed students' drawing upon a particular style of writing in their answers that was poorly assessed by examiners. One arm of foundation provision is to enact academic literacies with students, but at times Biko models a way of thinking and writing that is not endorsed by the academy. The text is emotional, personal, overtly political and contains no academic references to the work of other thinkers (even though it is closely modelled upon the work of other black radical thinkers such as Fanon). If we examine the work being done by the text at a micro-level, then, in Maton's terms Biko's writing is done through the social gaze, which is only open to knowers who belong to particular social categories and, by virtue of this belonging, have taken on a particular set of dispositions. (It is perhaps worth repeating again that such a gaze is, of course, a product of socialization: the social gaze is relatively exclusive because of the influence of social actors and historical configurations of power relations in shaping ways of knowing, being and doing, not because of any inherent attribute on the part of the knower.) Consider the following excerpt from *I Write What I Like*:

> Being black is not a matter of pigmentation. Being black is a mental attitude. Merely by describing yourself as black you have started on a road to emancipation, you have committed yourself to fight against all forces that seek to use your blackness as a stamp that marks you out as a subservient being.
> From the above observations, therefore, we can see that the term black is not necessarily all inclusive, i.e. the fact that we are all not white doesn't necessarily mean that we are all black. Non-whites do exist and will continue to exist for quite a long time …. Black people – real black people – are those who can manage to hold their heads high is defiance rather than willingly surrender their souls to the white man (Biko 1978:52).

For Biko, to be 'conscious', then (or, in Maton's terms, to be a specific kind of knower enmeshed in a web of historically configured relationships with other knowers), is to take on a particular set of dispositions granted firstly by virtue of membership to a particular category – those who are oppressed by apartheid – and then secondly by learning a political identity of blackness in response to that oppression. The gaze here is a deliberately social one.

Using such a political text, then, can run the risk for students of modeling a style not recognized as legitimate by the academy. This is obviously not to say that Biko is 'wrong' to present race in this way, or to write in such a style, but it is rather to comment on the norms of the academy itself, in which ways of claim-making, style and tone matter a great deal to how student work is assessed, such that examiners may mark down work that they see as overly emotional, or that they perceive as presenting race and identity in a particular way without adequate justification. It is of course possible in the classroom to work critically through such ideas as encountered in the text, and, indeed, many such critical conversations around Biko's ideas and style emerge in each iteration of the course (see Morreira 2015, for an example of debates around gender in the course). But an analysis of exam scripts showed that for some students, while writing in a time-pressured situation, forms of writing that are not well regarded by the academy emerged. For example, the following excerpt from a student essay shows the very different writing styles the same student used when writing about the work of sociologist Zimitri Erasmus (2008) on race, versus when writing about Biko on race:

> Race does not exist, but racialization does (Erasmus 2008). In South Africa we are still in a cycle of thinking whiteness is superior. This stems from a history of structural oppression, which impacted upon people's sense of self and culture. Erasmus says that race is a social construct and that race is not fixed, the meanings constantly change. She says we need to unmake race. We live our lives according to social structures and these structures in some cases have flexibility but most of the time it does not allow for progression. For example, a white child being brought up in a household which says you should not trust black people, means that you're going to conform to that normativity because you do not want to be seen as other by your society. But sometimes these structures have also allowed for change in our thoughts and actions; sometimes there is room for agency and for people to act against the norms.

In this first paragraph, the student is taking on and reproducing an academic discourse that is seen in tone and in use of concepts. The following paragraph, however, taken from the same student essay, shows a strong shift in tone and style where the same student begins to write about Biko:

> During apartheid being black meant that you were worth nothing, you had nothing to give society and all you were worth was to be a white man's slave. Black people were stripped of their identities mentally and physically, they were given other names and made to think they weren't capable of anything. The Black Consciousness Movement aimed to produce people who no longer thought of themselves as appendages to whiteness, speak to the black man in his own language, reclaim the black man's identity.

Far fewer academic concepts are used by the same student in the second paragraph: she is mimicking Biko's style, and alongside style has taken on a different discourse around race, that has less emphasis on its socially constructed nature than is seen in the first paragraph. Another example can be seen when comparing the answers of two students to the same short-answer question in the exam about whether the 'natural' hair movement is natural or sociocultural:

> Student 1 (answer given a low mark by the examiner): 'It is social. They are taking back their lost Black identity. They are reclaiming Black culture'.

This student uses a notion of culture and identity, that is similar to that propounded by Biko. In writing in a similar style, however, the student once again bypasses the socially constructed nature of that culture and identity; as such, the answer was read by the examiner assessing the piece as less nuanced. It was awarded a low mark. There is thus a risk of modeling a sort of writing and claim-making that is not endorsed by the wider university. Student 2, by contrast, answered,

> Student 2 (answer given high marks by the examiner): 'It is social. These movements aim to rectify those claims that nice, long hair is best. They are reshaping black identity'.

Here, identity is fluid and contextualized. The student doesn't assume there is an innate black identity, but recognizes shifts over time. The examiner awarded a higher mark.

Using a text with a particular kind of writing therefore does not nece-

ssarily result in the discourse being taken on by *all* students, or even being taken on by the same student in every context. It does, however, raise the likelihood that some students will sometimes take on the discourse. Maton's LCT can therefore give us an interesting way of thinking about the subjective relations of knower gazes and the power relations at play in the forms knowledge takes, including the ways in which varied forms of knowledge are received by the wider academy. Where decolonial thinking argues that modernity/coloniality continues in the present through a set of intersectional social hierarchies that privilege particular ways of knowing, Maton's LCT is helpful in thinking through what forms that privileged knowledge might take in the social sciences.

Conclusion: Towards Parity of Participation

This paper has reported on the theory used to inform the design of a Foundation course at a historically white, research intensive university. In addition, the paper has reported on empirical data collected over three years of offering the course with regard to the effectiveness of implementing such theory in the classroom. I have argued that South African universities as currently constituted are part of a globalized set of knowledge relationships that value particular ways of knowing over others, and that can be experienced as alienating spaces by first generation university students. Foundation provision, as propagated by DHET, provides a mechanism for redistribution but, as Fraser (2009) has shown, such a step towards social justice is limited if there is not also room for recognition and representation. Data collected from students and tutors indicates that the course opens a space for recognition, and puts in place stepping-stones towards students' representation within the wider university. However, a micro-analysis of the gazes presented in Biko's work, and mimicked by some students, shows that some elements of the course run the risk of allowing students to present academic work through a social gaze. If this gaze is not endorsed by other parts of the university – in other courses, for instance – this is turn means students who produce such a gaze can be denied belonging to the wider political and epistemic community of the university, as their work would be marked down. The issues raised within this course thus lead to questions about the ethical imperative of Foundation provision. I would argue that, as education development practitioners, we should be designing our curricula in such a way that we improve parity of participation. But if we do

this through 'decolonial' means that bring new texts and language practices into our classrooms, how do we work with the fact that we are endorsing discourses that are not (yet?) recognized as legitimate by the wider university? Is it possible to balance radical curriculum design in Foundation courses with training our students for a more conservative wider university, or should the role of education development in South Africa shift more towards 'developing' the wider curriculum towards more socially just pedagogies, and providing spaces for alternative ways of knowing to flourish?

I think the data above shows that there is room in Foundation courses to do things differently, with an aim to shifting inherited power dynamics, and that there is great value in so doing on a number of fronts. We are at a particularly enlivened moment in our universities in South Africa currently: a moment that is opening great potential for new pedagogies and, particularly in research-intensive universities where teaching has usually taken a back seat, a moment where pedagogy and curriculum issues are being taken more seriously than ever before. Foundation courses in the Humanities and Social Sciences are not usually linked to any one discipline: as such, they are a rich site for undisciplined practices such as translanguaging or learning academic concepts from emotive, identity-infused texts. The advantages of such moves seem to outweigh the disadvantages: and there are ways of ensuring those disadvantages are minimized. From our various positions within curriculum design and development across universities, education development practitioners are thus well-suited to bring such moves to the university more widely.

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Shannon Morreira
Humanities Education Development Unit
University of Cape Town
Shannon.morreira@uct.ac.za

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