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Privileging knowledge, creating knowers: an analysis of a formal programme for university lecturers

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Introduction

In the preceding chapter we presented an analysis of the way in which the pedagogic device of the Postgraduate Diploma in Higher Education (PG Dip (Higher Education)) offered by the Centre for Higher Education Research, Teaching and Learning at Rhodes University has evolved over the last decade or so. From this analysis as well as the evaluation data that we have gathered over the years, it is evident that the pedagogy of the programme is sound, and that it has enabled us to contribute to the development of academics as scholarly teachers.

However, as our knowledge and understanding of the field of higher education studies (HES), academic development and the higher education context has progressed, we have experienced the need to change the programme to be more in line with our emerging notions of our field of practice. We believe that, over the years, we have endeavoured to strengthen the epistemic spine of the programme by making the underpinning knowledge base of our curriculum more coherent. In this chapter we explain what we teach and why we teach it, using two sets of Maton's concepts: specialisation codes (comprising epistemic relations and social relations) and semantic codes (comprising semantic density and semantic gravity). These concepts will be explained as the chapter unfolds.

The epistemic device of the programme

In the previous chapter, using Bernstein's model of the pedagogic device, we analysed the principles and processes of the programme. In this chapter the focus

shifts to an examination of the knowledge base underpinning the PG Dip (Higher Education). In keeping with a social realist perspective, we believe that knowledge is real and has real effects on knowers. In order to analyse the knowledge base of the programme, we employ Maton's extension of Bernstein's model as the epistemic-pedagogic device (EPD). This enables an examination of the nature of knowledge and knowers in a field and its associated practices. Both the pedagogic device and the epistemic device are useful lenses for investigating the ways in which curricula and pedagogy operate.

The EPD refers to the way in which a field constructs and legitimises knowledge and knowers and the relationship between them. Maton distinguishes *epistemic relations* (ER) between knowledge and its objects, and *social relations* (SR) between knowledge and its subjects, actors or authors. Each may be more strongly (+) or weakly (-) emphasised, giving a series of possible *specialisation codes* (ER+/-, SR+/-). Here, stronger epistemic relations reflect an emphasis on explicit knowledge, skills and procedures, while stronger social relations reflect an emphasis on the dispositions of knowers. These concepts can be used to analyse the knowledge base from which curriculum developers draw, as well as how specific kinds of knowers are cultivated in a particular course. For example, in the formal programme, SR refers to the way in which the programme facilitators encourage participants to use knowledge reflexively to examine and develop their identities as teachers. The form taken by epistemic and social relations is dependent on the nature of the field as well as the context in which a course is offered. Bernstein (2000) and Maton (2000) maintain that educational practices 'specialise' or put differently, 'shape' the identities and ways of seeing the world of those who participate in them. The relative emphasis on ER and SR in a curriculum and pedagogy points to how these social practices are constructed to shape knowers in particular ways. An analysis of the programme illuminates the kinds of knowledge and ways of knowing that the curriculum privileges. In our analysis of the modules of the programme, we examine the relative strengths of ER and SR. Doing this has enabled us to gauge if and in what ways the programme does or does not achieve its stated purposes.

Epistemic relations of the knowledge base of the programme

In every field there is always knowledge and there are always knowers. Every field aims to teach specific knowledge and/or to develop specific knower dispositions. For example, the kind of knowledge and the kind of personal characteristics needed to be a doctor are very different to those required to be an accountant. In the teaching of some fields, explicit attention is paid to developing both knowledge and knower

dispositions. This means that in such fields both epistemic relations and social relations are strong (ER+SR+).

However, if a field privileges knowledge practices and downplays the development of specific kinds of knowers, then epistemic relations are stronger (ER+). For example, in Chemistry the primary object of study is chemicals, their properties and interactions, and the methods for studying these objects are generally uncontested. Furthermore, a chemist's knowledge and expertise in his/her field is paramount, whereas the kind of person s/he is, is not as important for success in the field. If, on the other hand, the emphasis in a field is on shaping particular types of knowers, then social relations are stronger (SR+). This is often the case in disciplines from the humanities, the social sciences and professional fields such as education, psychology, engineering and so on. In the field of education generally, and in the PG Dip (Higher Education), epistemic relations tend to be weaker (ER-). As a growing number of studies using Maton's Legitimation Code Theory are showing, the resulting specialisation codes of practices have effects on all kinds of issues in education, including educational achievement, appropriate pedagogies, and how they develop over time (see for example Luckett 2009; Hlengwa 2010; Shalem & Slonimsky 2010; Shay 2011; Vorster 2011).

The knowledge base of higher education studies emerges from multiple disciplines including psychology, philosophy, sociology, linguistics, politics and economics, and is produced from a range of paradigms, orientations and research traditions. Furthermore, the field has several objects of study such as students and learning, teachers and teaching, curriculum, assessment, the educational context and so forth. The various objects of study are intimately connected. For example, the social contexts within which learners have been raised and schooled, have an impact on the literacy practices they develop, and whether their literacy practices are appropriate for the specific educational context. Thus in trying to understand how to structure successful pedagogic processes for students from diverse economic, social and educational backgrounds, it is necessary to understand how social contexts affect literacy practices. Furthermore, knowledge of how to teach in a way that will develop the kind of knowledge practices of particular disciplines, is required.

Our aim is to offer participants of the programme opportunities to acquire the kind of knowledge that will allow them to make the most appropriate pedagogic choices for their contexts. These pedagogic choices should enable them to design curricula and teach in ways which will make possible epistemological access to their disciplinary fields for most students. In addition, this knowledge should empower programme participants to influence practices in their own disciplinary, departmental and institutional contexts.

Each of the subfields of HES draws on a range of disciplinary knowledge bases and their associated research orientations. CHERTL staff members bring to their work as academic staff developers knowledge from multiple disciplines such as linguistics, sociology, fine art, psychology, literature, mathematics education, music and computer science. This diversity is also evident in the contributions to this volume, which include work within a social-realist framework (Quinn; Vorster & Quinn); a social-practices orientation (Mostert & Quinn); a social-constructivist paradigm (Southwood), and a post-modern orientation (Belluigi). It could be argued that this range of epistemological and ontological assumptions could limit agreement among programme developers on the principles proposed in this book. It could, however, also be argued that this diversity is enriching, given the complexity of the field of higher education.

Choosing programme content

The diverse nature of the field has created challenges for the developers of the programme in selecting appropriate curriculum content. We will use the Learning and Teaching module[1] as an example to demonstrate the scope of the challenges faced by programme designers. A core purpose of this module is to introduce participants to learning theories, in order to offer them ways of understanding how students learn and why many students find it difficult to access the important knowledge of the discipline and associated disciplinary practices.

The major challenge for us is that the field has not developed a coherent set of theories for explaining student learning in higher education. Historically, courses for lecturers have drawn on three sets of theories: psychological theories of learning; adult learning theories, and approaches to learning theories[2]. Each of these, we would argue, has limitations.

Psychological learning theories are largely based on how children learn, and tend to privilege stage theories of learning (for example Piaget). In addition, these theories are about learning in general and have limited explanatory power for the higher education context. When these theories are used to explain learning in higher education, they tend to focus on the attributes of individual students, such as intelligence, motivation and attitude. These concepts depend on a notion of the student as having a fixed, consistent identity (McKenna 2004) thus tending to focus on individual student deficits without paying attention to the broader context.

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1   See Chapter 4 for a list of PG Dip (Higher Education) modules.
2   See Haggis 2009 for a more detailed overview of the historical development of theories about student learning.

At the start of the learning and teaching module, we introduce participants to some of the key ideas from psychological learning theories. This is mainly to situate current theories historically, while acknowledging aspects of these theories which can usefully contribute to building knowledge of learning in higher education. Thereafter we move away from psychologised theories of learning to socio-cultural theories of learning, which draw from psychology, sociology and socio-linguistics. The latter encourage critical interrogation of the impact of the socio-cultural context on students' learning, such as home and school backgrounds of students; the culture of educational institutions; disciplinary differences; the assumptions underpinning curricula, and particular teaching and learning methods which tend to favour students with the cultural capital valued in higher education.

The more critical approach taken by theorists in the field of adult education to *adult learning* in informal contexts and in the workplace has also influenced the curricula of staff development courses over the years. For example, because it was recognised that students learn in different ways, Kolb's experiential learning theory (1984) has been used to explain why and how this might be the case. However, while this theory focused attention on student diversity and alerted lecturers to the value of adopting diverse teaching, learning and assessment strategies, it did not provide a satisfactory explanation for the challenges faced by many students entering universities. Other ideas from the field of adult and professional learning, such as 'critically reflective practice' (for example Schön 1983 and Brookfield 1995) have remained useful in staff development courses if underpinned by sound educational theories. In general, though, much of the focus of adult learning research has been on informal and workplace learning and is not directly relevant to building our understanding of student learning in the context of formal higher education.

The phenomenographic research into ways in which students approached reading tasks conducted by Marton and Säljö in the 1970s has been taken up by higher education researchers such as Ramsden and Entwhistle, Biggs, Prosser and Trigwell (in Haggis 2003). The findings of this original *approaches to learning research* have been extended to account for student learning in general. Phenomenographic research has also been used to explain students' *conceptions of learning and knowledge*. As a result of the paucity of research into learning in higher education, these theories have been widely adopted in staff development courses. As we observed in the previous chapter, these theories are useful. However, they provide only a partial explanation for student learning and are only useful if the critiques of the theory are recognised (for example Haggis 2003; Marshall & Case 2005). As with other psychological theories of learning, the approaches to learning theories have been used in reductionist ways as if they described stable traits possessed by individuals (for example 'Simphiwe

is a deep learner'). Furthermore, the theory has been used as if it were a grand theory capable of explaining learning across all cultural and disciplinary contexts and as if it represents the 'truth' about how students learn. In our view, this theory on its own does not offer a sufficiently nuanced explanation of the complexities of student learning. However, if used in conjunction with other theories such as those discussed below, it could contribute to a more robust conceptualisation of learning in higher education.

In the learning and teaching module we have found theories related to academic literacies and New Literacy Studies to have greater explanatory power for understanding student learning (for example Taylor *et al* 1988; Ivanic 1997; Geisler 1994; Gee 1990; Lea & Street 1998). Central to these theories is the belief that learning is a social practice and that when students do not succeed in higher education, it is because they are unfamiliar with the new social context; it is not simply because they do not possess particular traits (such as motivation, aptitude, and so on) or that they do not possess the requisite conceptual knowledge and study skills. From this perspective, epistemological access means learning how knowledge is produced and represented in different disciplines and contexts, and learning the strategies for understanding, discussing, organising and producing texts in different disciplines. Academic literacy theories have been particularly useful when applied specifically to higher education by theorists such as Northedge (2003a and 2003b), Boughey (2002) and Haggis (2007) to offer practical strategies for ways of inducting students into disciplinary practices and higher education learning. From the field of higher education studies a growing body of theories aimed at understanding and improving teaching and learning is emerging. However, the field is not yet well established (Shay 2012). We return to a discussion of this in the conclusion to the paper.

Over the years that we have offered the programme, the designers and facilitators have developed a deeper conception of its purpose, which has resulted in shifts, particularly in terms of the epistemic relation, that is, the nature of the 'knowledge' we use in the programme. This is particularly evident in the way in which the selection of the content has changed over time. We seem to have moved from predominantly making available to our participants the work of writers which Kandlebinder and Peseta (2009) (in Peseta 2011:84) have found are most commonly used in staff development courses (Ramsden, Biggs, Entwhistle, Prosser, Trigwell, Barnett and Marton) to using a knowledge base which evidences a more coherent explanatory framework for teaching and learning in higher education, critiques some of the commonly used concepts, and is contextually more relevant to the South African context and possibly, more broadly, in higher education.

Movement between practice and theory

In order for a fuller conceptualisation of the knowledge base and knowledge practices of the programme to emerge, we employed a second dimension of Maton's Legitimation Code Theory: Semantics. Maton (forthcoming) defines *semantic gravity* (SG) as "the degree to which meaning relates to its context …The stronger the semantic gravity (SG+), the more closely meaning is related to its context; the weaker the gravity (SG-), the less dependent meaning is on its context". He defines *semantic density* (SD) as "the degree of condensation of meanings within socio-cultural practices… The stronger the semantic density (SD+), the more meaning is condensed within practices; the weaker the semantic density (SD-), the less meaning is condensed." In the previous chapter we noted that it was important for the pedagogy of staff development courses to move between introducing theory and relating the theory to actual or potential contexts of application. As with most professional curricula in higher education, the curriculum of the formal staff development programme can be described as exhibiting relatively strong *semantic density*; meanings of concepts and theories need to be unpacked in order to be enacted in teaching practice. The programme is underpinned by a theory base, and employs concepts and ideas that condense a wide range of complex meanings within them, for example concepts like 'epistemological access' and 'curriculum alignment'. In addition, the curriculum evidences relatively strong *semantic gravity*, that is, the programme requires participants to apply the theory with which they engage, to their own teaching contexts. As opposed to traditional academic disciplines, professional disciplines have to "face both ways" (M. Barnett 2006) thus the programme has to face towards the academic discipline(s) it draws from as well as towards the field of practice of the university.

Muller (2008) makes a distinction between curricula which are mainly theoretically driven and achieve coherence through disciplinary concepts, and curricula which achieve coherence mainly through a focus on the contexts in which curriculum content is applied. He terms these *conceptual coherence curricula* and *contextual coherence curricula*. Because the programme faces towards lecturers' everyday practice, contextual coherence is appropriately privileged. In all the modules of the programme, considerable time is spent on participants' exploration of their practices as situated within specific macro, meso and micro contexts.

In the programme curriculum, conceptual coherence is achieved by introducing participants to concepts, theories and ideas, all of which are chosen to contribute to their ability to design courses and teach in ways which will facilitate students' access to knowledge – to use as tools to think about all aspects of their practice. In Maton's terms, this involves a twofold movement: weakening semantic density,

as the complex meanings condensed within theory are unpacked in order to be enacted in practice, and strengthening semantic gravity, as these abstract, context-independent theoretical ideas are contextualised within those teaching practices. At other times participants are required to critically reflect on their practices and to draw general principles from those reflections, using theory introduced during the programme. In Maton's terms, this is to strengthen semantic density and weaken semantic gravity: condensing the meanings of their concrete experiences into more context-independent ideas. Maton calls this repeated movement up and down in gravity and density, in the way that the knowledge of actors moves between condensed and unpacked and between abstract and concrete, the *semantic wave*. Studies of other education contexts are suggesting that such waves are crucial for enabling cumulative learning (Martin & Maton, forthcoming).

For example, to illustrate the semantic wave, in the module on curriculum development, participants are introduced to paradigms and theories underpinning curriculum practice (for example, Habermas 1972; Grundy 1987; Toohey 1999). They then consider how globalisation affects higher education curricula, using the ideas of international theorists such as Barnett (2000), Barnett, Parry and Coate (2001) and local theorists such as Luckett and Luckett (1999). They are then tasked with analysing and critiquing their own curriculum practice in relation to the paradigms and theories. Some of their responses to this task emanate from their disciplinary contexts and their orientations to teaching and learning. The influence of disciplinary knowledge structures on curriculum decisions is examined, using the work of theorists such as Bernstein, Maton, and Wheelahan. This engagement with theory is followed by a more micro focus on curriculum design in the context of national and institutional curriculum policies (for example, Kraak 2002; Boughey 2004; Moll 2004). Theories and critiques of an outcomes-based approach to curriculum design including the concept of constructive alignment are interrogated and critiqued. The work of Biggs, Knight, Hussey and Smith, Wheelahan, Ecclestone and Moll and others is examined during this part of the programme. Finally participants (re)design a curriculum for one of their courses in the light of emerging understandings of how students learn, as well as of curriculum design theories and principles. From this example, the constant movement between theory and practice in the programme should be evident.

Disciplinary differences and identities

Disciplinary differences among participants can result in a clash between their own disciplines and the new field of HES they are entering when they undertake the programme. As noted in the previous chapter, HES has a horizontal knowledge structure, that is, knowledge which is structured segmentally rather than

hierarchically. Understanding disciplinary differences in this way can provide insights for staff developers as to why it is that academics from disciplines not cognate with the field of education may find it challenging (and sometimes frustrating) to engage with the field of HES.

It is therefore imperative that staff development courses are structured in ways that scaffold academics' entry into the field of HES. At the outset of the programme, the facilitator makes explicit her understanding that for many participants, particularly those from the natural sciences, the programme will be experienced as semantically dense. Participants will need scaffolding to induct them into what, for many, will feel like a very different and in fact alien discourse community. This is done by, for example, encouraging participants to contribute to an 'Edu-speak Glossary' and by discussion of readings such as the Kneebone (2002) article referred to in the conclusion to this chapter.

If one accepts that the purpose of academic staff development courses is to create opportunities or spaces for as many academics as possible to engage with HES in order to advance their capacity to recontextualise and reproduce their own disciplines, then one has to consider what kind of knowledge-knower structure would be most productive to enable the integration of as many different knowers as possible. The aim is for these lecturers to become conversant with the knowledge practices of the field of HES. We therefore work at filtering the multiple disciplinary gazes of the participants through the focused lens of the staff development programme. This is done so that academics can shape their pedagogic practices to enable epistemological access for the largest number of students. Through introducing programme participants to the emerging 'canon' of HES, we develop a community of higher education teachers with a more-or-less shared understanding of pedagogical principles that can potentially underpin their practice. Introduction to this emerging canon:

> provide[s] a focus and basis for intersubjective debate across an extended epistemic community. Because the cultivated gaze is based on a canon, immersion in which helps develop a 'community of experience', it both enables the possibility of debate over something (a canon) and a shared means of conducting that debate (the shared sensibilities of knowers) (Maton forthcoming).

Some would argue that this view of academic staff development is an imposition on participants' disciplinary and epistemic identities, and constitutes a form of symbolic violence (Manathunga 2007) – one which pathologises lecturers, encourages a deficit view of them, and does not acknowledge their agency and the rich 'capital' they bring with them into a staff development course. As Manathunga says:

> They bring with them professional and personal identities profoundly shaped by disciplinary discourses, prior work, and life experience and implicit values about the nature of academic work, the role of theory, and what constitutes valid evidence (2007:27).

However, as discussed in the previous chapter, we believe that we limit or counteract the extent of symbolic violence by recognising, beginning from and working with lecturers' own disciplinary understandings and engaging in critical conversations with them about teaching and learning. The development of shared understandings based on induction into a field and its practices, creates the possibilities for building cumulative knowledge of how best to create the conditions for enabling epistemic access for students – something which is undoubtedly a distributional justice imperative (Wheelahan 2010; Young 2008). The pedagogical processes of the programme enable ways of knowing about teaching and learning – namely a reflexive, scholarly engagement with and about teaching and learning. We suggest that symbolic violence is limited because participants retain some control of the pedagogic device (see Chapter 4) of the PG Dip (Higher Education) in that they are encouraged to choose what and how to use the knowledge from the canon presented to them in the programme and to integrate this with knowledge about teaching and learning in their disciplines. The programme does not prescribe to them how they should use this knowledge when thinking about pedagogic practices in their disciplines. They are thus in control of the epistemic-pedagogic device for their contexts.

To conclude this section, we believe that in the programme we are building participants' knowledge in relation to the central organising concepts of enabling epistemological access for students, which is explicitly linked to the notion of curriculum coherence. As the programme progresses, the concept of epistemological access is studied in relation to understanding how students learn, as well as course design and assessment. We build this understanding in relation to the role of a coherent curriculum, in which appropriate tasks for the scaffolding of student learning as well as the importance of high quality formative feedback all contribute to enabling students' epistemological access to the discipline. All of this is framed in the context of the role of higher education in South Africa, given the poor state of schooling, a condition which is likely to persist for the foreseeable future (Scott *et al* 2007). It is therefore evident that the pedagogy of the programme enables participants to build cumulative knowledge of the field (Maton 2009). Participants build knowledge and integrate concepts, theories and skills learned across the different modules of the programme, and apply these in a range of contexts.

In the next section we analyse how the programme content and processes foster a reflexive, scholarly approach to teaching; we thus discuss the kind of knower the programme privileges.

Social relations of the programme

As stated earlier, in all knowledge practices, both knowledge and knowers are always implicated; this means that engagement in any discipline should result in changes in the identity of knowers. Maton (2000, 2007, 2011) conceptualises the relationship between knowledge and its subject(s) as *social relations* (SR). The natural sciences, for example, are characterised not only by stronger epistemic relations, but also downplay knower identities as the basis of achievement. Conversely, education, because of its strong axiological (moral or value) orientation, has a much stronger focus on the identity formation of knowers (SR+). In many staff development courses, as mentioned above, the emphasis on particular dispositions as teachers tends to overshadow the building of field knowledge; in some cases, staff development work has been a-theoretical (ER-) (see for example Light & Cox 2000; Rowland 2001). In our staff development work it has been our endeavour to emphasise both epistemic relations and social relations as the basis of cultivating a scholarly gaze on teaching and learning.

Knower identities

Education as a social practice aims to develop identities that value the advancement of individuals and society. The formal academic staff development programme is also very much a social project, and as such, a good deal of the work that takes place as part of the process of teaching and learning on the programme can be termed *identity* work. The programme promotes knowers with particular ways of knowing. It is our aim that lecturers cultivate, alongside their disciplinary identities, the identity of critically reflexive scholarly teachers whose purpose is to design courses and teach in ways which will ensure that their students have access to the powerful forms of knowledge of their disciplines.

Maton (forthcoming) argues that the strength of the social relations of a field has implications for the degree to which the field is accessible to newcomers, because where these are very strong, only certain kinds of knowers are considered legitimate, whereas the weaker they are, the more different kinds of identities and dispositions can be accommodated. If staff development is to be accessible to academics from across the disciplinary spectrum, then it makes sense that field practices need to balance a focus on social relations with a focus on epistemic relations. In other words, even though we recognise that different academics will find different aspects

of the programme more or less applicable and useful for their contexts or for their orientations to teaching and learning, the programme developers do select a particular body of knowledge based on their understanding of the nature of teaching and learning in higher education (see Chapter 4). We aim to balance emphasising specialist educational knowledge as the basis of achievement with acknowledging the legitimacy of participants' understandings of their own practices, which arise from their own personal experience. We believe that a focus on the knowledge of the field of HES is appropriate, as opposed to focusing only on individual contexts and practices.

Gazes

In the programme we endeavour to foster ways of knowing and being as a teacher in higher education. Maton (forthcoming) points out that different knowledge practices develop different kinds of knowers who view the world in different ways. He distinguishes between four orientations in ways of knowing and being, which he terms 'gazes': trained, cultivated, social and born gazes. Each gaze signifies different strengths of social relations, ranging from the relatively weak social relations of the *trained* gaze (who the knower is, is insignificant; their specialist knowledge is what matters) to a very strong social relation in the *born* gaze, where the knower is born with a disposition to, for example, play music or create art (see Figure 1, which shows the continuum of gazes in relation to the strengths of their social relations). Towards the weaker end of the SR continuum is the *cultivated* gaze privileged by the programme. The cultivated gaze "offers the possibility of attaining legitimacy through prolonged immersion in a way of being, seeing or acting" (Maton forthcoming).

To attain the gaze of the reflexive scholarly teacher who aims to provide access to the knowledge and practices of their field to students, entails that participants engage critically with the programme content and processes (Maton forthcoming). The two-year part-time programme structure makes it possible for academics to experience a gradual immersion in and sustained engagement with the field of HES. Throughout the duration of the programme, participants complete regular formative tasks that require them to relate the theoretical knowledge to their own disciplinary and teaching contexts. These include short written tasks, interactive on-line tasks and on-line reflective journal writing. In addition, participants present their thinking about how what they learn on the programme relates to and can be applied to their

own practice, for peer feedback. The summative assessment is a teaching portfolio in which participants integrate what they have learned in all the modules of the programme. Writing the teaching portfolio necessitates in-depth engagement with the programme materials and processes from all the modules. It is through all these activities, we hope, that our participants are able to cultivate the gaze of scholarly, reflexive practitioners. However, exactly how they enact their pedagogic identities will be influenced by their disciplinary backgrounds and personal dispositions. We realise that cultivating a scholarly gaze is an ongoing and long-term endeavour. In the programme we encourage lecturers to adopt such a gaze, which we hope will lead to practices they will continue throughout their professional development.

Back to disciplinary differences

Analysing the epistemic and social relations of the programme enables one to see why an approach to staff development that is primarily based on a constructivist notion of knowledge and learning is likely to alienate those from disciplines with hierarchical knowledge structures which exhibit stronger epistemic and weaker social relations. Since "the kind of gaze underlying the knower structure of fields may thus be crucial to the extension of its epistemic community" (Maton forthcoming) it makes sense for staff developers to consider the implications of their course design (particularly the knowledge base they select) for opening up access for academics to the field of HES.

As a result of disciplinary differences, the knowledge practices promoted by the programme may be met with resistance and incomprehension by some participants. We find Mills and Huber's (2005) notion of an educational 'trading zone' useful in understanding our work with academics, especially in the initial months of their participation on the programme. In these 'trading zones' ideas related to teaching and learning can be shared both within and between disciplines. Mills and Huber suggest that one of the reasons that there has been limited development of educational trading zones is that lecturers' pedagogical identities are deeply embedded in their academic identity and practice, "making engaging with an educational 'trading zone' an epistemologically unfamiliar habit" (2005:9). For example, Kneebone, a medical doctor who late in his career chose to study the education of medicine, describes feeling as if he had moved into "alien territory, where familiar landmarks had disappeared" (2002:514). Making sense of educational research caused a clash of world views for him: "Exploring the humanities can challenge our entrenched ideas about science and the nature of knowledge … it demands a willingness to look through new spectacles and critically examine long-held assumptions" (2002:517). Facilitators of courses for lecturers from a range of disciplines need to acknowledge this possible difficulty for their participants, and pedagogic processes need to be

put in place to support lecturers from non-cognate disciplines and help them to understand the different world views they will be confronted with in a course such as the PG Dip (Higher Education). We suggest that through our emphasis on the scholarship of teaching and learning, we are creating "a more vigorous educational trading zone" (Mills & Huber 2005:11). We do not require participants to compromise their disciplinary identities, but rather we are contributing to their "cultivating a pedagogical imagination" (2005:17) at a 'meta-level' in relation to the primary dispositions of their disciplinary practices.

Towards strengthening the epistemic relations of the programme and the field of HES

It is our contention that the way this formal programme has been structured has been instrumental in achieving its aims. However, our analysis has shown that it is crucial that designers of courses for academic staff not only concentrate on developing 'knowers' but that they also ensure that their courses introduce lecturers to the 'knowledge' which will equip them to design courses, teach and assess, in ways that will provide access to powerful forms of knowledge in their disciplines for all their students. For this to be successful, we maintain that there is a need for the field of higher education studies (HES), from which academic developers draw, to strengthen its knowledge base.

In this chapter and the previous one, using Bernstein's and Maton's theoretical tools, we have analysed the PG Dip (Higher Education) in terms of both the pedagogic processes and the way in which the knowledge on which the programme is based, is structured. Our analysis has shown that in the programme emphasis is placed on both the kind of knowers we wish to develop and the knowledge base of the programme. It is in relation to the latter that the programme could be strengthened. We understand that both for our programme and indeed all courses aimed at the professional development of academic staff, there needs to be a stronger emphasis on the knowledge base of such courses, alongside concerns for the kinds of knowers being developed. Like Peseta, we believe that "… a practice intended to engage academics' hearts and minds should contain the sort of intellectual challenge and commitment that comes with trying to understand ideas deeply …" (2011:83). This means ensuring that academics have access to 'appropriate' field knowledge. As Shay (2012) points out, in our courses, lecturers should not only apply the principles of 'good practice' to solve particular pedagogic problems but also engage with the 'deep-end' knowledge of the field – knowledge that has high explanatory power.

The chapter concludes with the question of how we can strengthen the epistemological basis of staff development courses alongside their already strong

axiological orientations. It seems that we need to turn to the field of HES from which such courses draw their knowledge. Following Bernstein (2000) and Maton (2007), we have a growing concern for the need to pay attention to the structuring of knowledge and not just knowers, for this broader field of higher education studies. Similar to other theorists, we believe that the field needs to move from a reliance on multiple, sometimes incommensurate frameworks, towards a more coherent set of explanatory theories – explanatory theories with stronger ontological and epistemological foundations (Shay 2012; Clegg 2009; Maton 2000). We believe, for example, that it is possible for the knowledge about our multiple objects of study (for example, students, lecturers, teaching, learning, curriculum, knowledge and so on) to cohere around a set of organising principles underpinned by a social realist meta-theoretical framework which accounts for the complex interplay between the objects of study of HES. From a critical realist perspective, knowledge claims have different degrees of explanatory power (Bhaskar 1979). The implications of this are that field knowledge cannot be arbitrarily chosen; disciplinary knowledge choices need to be "based on non-arbitrary ontological and epistemological principles" (Maton forthcoming). For us, then, critical/social realism is a useful meta-theoretical framework, and Bernstein's and Maton's model of the epistemic-pedagogic device is a useful tool for theorising how we should build knowledge in HES and how to evaluate whether the knowledge which is generated has the necessary explanatory power – whether it is the 'right' kind of knowledge for making curriculum and pedagogic decisions for staff development courses. There is work to be done to ensure that the emergent 'coming of age' of the field of HES does not only occupy the moral high ground afforded it by its axiological gaze, but is also equal to the task of providing knowledge with increasing explanatory power for programmes such as the PG Dip (Higher Education) and to solve the vexing problems facing HE.

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