RECENTERING THE TEACHER:
FROM TRANSMITTER OF KNOWLEDGE
TO MEDIATOR OF LEARNING
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Mary Grosser
Elda de Waal
Mediation in the classroom

- Traditional role of teacher: teacher-oriented and content-based approach
- Outcomes-based approach:
  - Learners responsible for own learning
  - Independent
  - Creative and critical thinkers
  - Solve problems
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal framework</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Constitution Act 108 of 1996</td>
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<td>- South African Schools Act</td>
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<tr>
<td>- National Education Policy Act</td>
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<td>- Code of Professional Ethics</td>
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**Legal framework...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>✔ Constitution Act 108 of 1996</th>
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<tr>
<td>☺ <strong>Section 29(1):</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>grants the right to a basic education</td>
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<tr>
<td>☻ <strong>Section 28(2):</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>enhances learners’ right to education</td>
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South African Schools Act 84 of 1996

Preamble:

Provide education of progressively high quality...

... develop talents & capabilities of all South Africans
Legal framework...

✓ National Education Policy Act 27 of 1996

😊 Preamble:

...legislation to facilitate democratic transformation of national system
...to serve needs and interests of all people
...to uphold fundamental rights
Legal framework...

✓ Code of Professional Ethics

😊 General stipulations ré educators:
... acknowledge calling to educate/train
... attitude and dedication of educators
... acknowledge / uphold basic rights
Mediation in the classroom

The task of a mediator:

• Greek word: *mesites* = intervene between two parties
Mediation in the classroom

Principles of Mediation:

• Intentional intervention
• Directing the learning process
• Do not tell learners what to think or produce solutions to problems
• Be sensitive to diverse learner needs
• Help learners to bridge the gap between what they cannot do on their own at a given time to what they can do with a little help
• Create awareness that there are more than one solution to a problem
Mediation in the classroom

Principles of Mediation:

• Principles of mediation embedded in the theory of Constructivism
• Two main trends: Cognitive constructivism and Social Constructivism
• Cognitive constructivism: equip learners with cognitive skills to construct their own sense of what is being learned
• Social constructivism: acquire knowledge through interaction with the environment instead of only relying on the teacher
Mediation in the classroom

Principles of Mediation:

• Links with the theory of Reuven Feuerstein (1979) on cognitive modifiability
• Mediation between teacher and learner is instrumental in cognitive modifiability
• Selecting and organising the world of stimuli for the learners instead of direct exposure to stimuli
• Equipping the learner with means to learn (tools to acquire knowledge and skills)
Mediation in the classroom

The quality of a mediated learning experience:

- Feuerstein (1991):
  1. Intentionality and reciprocity
  2. Transcendence
  3. Meaning
  4. Competence
  5. Self-regulation and self-control
  6. Sharing behaviour
  7. Individuation
  8. Goal-planning (goal-setting and goal-achieving)
  9. Novelty and challenge
  10. Self-change
  11. Optimistic alternatives
  12. Belonging
• Intention to teach and change mental state
• Awake reciprocal desire to learn
• Create awareness of learning processes
• Self-reflection

INTENTIONALITY AND RECIPROCITY
• Go beyond goals of the interaction and apply to new situations
• Disclose to learners how and where learning can be used in other situations

TRANSCENDENCE
• Interpret the meaning of interaction: why? what for?
• Let learners understand the value and relevance of what is being done
• Also implies a search for meaning

MEANING
• Create a feeling of mastery and success
• Optimistic disposition, belief that I am able to solve problems
• Let learners know if they successfully completed a task
• Feedback
• Help learners achieve competence and then mediate feelings of satisfaction
• This motivates learners to master new situations

COMPETENCE
SELF-REGULATION AND CONTROL OF BEHAVIOUR

- Guard against impulsiveness ("stop a minute let me think")
- Involve learners in self-reflective activities
• Provide opportunity for learners to learn from one another
• Promote cooperation between learners

SHARING BEHAVIOUR
• Learners to remain individuals and develop own personalities
• Allow different approaches/different solutions to problems
• Acknowledge different learning styles
• Learner to become owner of his/her own ideas
• Learners should set their own realistic goals and develop ways to achieve them
• Learners should learn skills to evaluate whether they achieved their objectives

GOAL PLANNING
• Provide tasks that are difficult enough to present a challenge, but not so difficult that they are demotivating

NOVELTY AND CHALLENGE
Learners should assess themselves and become aware of their own progress.

Self-reflection
Competences required to be a mediator

- **NOT** a checklist to determine competency!
- Meant to inform exit level outcomes.
- Combine and weigh roles differently.
- Integrate theory and practice…
Competences required to be mediator...

Norms and Standards for Educators, section 4
[contained in National Education Policy Act]

Central 1st role of learning mediation,

however:

7th role of learning/subject/discipline/phase

specialist = over-arching role
Competences required to be mediator

• Section 4(a)(iv)
  Advance and protect basic rights

• Section 4(b)
  Enable full potential

• Section 4(c)
  Achieve equitable education opportunities

• Section 4(e)
  Encourage lifelong learning

• Section 4(h)
  Recognize aptitudes and abilities

• Section 4(i)
  Encourage independent and critical thought

• Section 4(j)
  Promote a culture of respect for teaching and learning
Practical competences

✓ Use a second official language to explain, describe, discuss
✓ Employ appropriate strategies: learner needs and disabilities
✓ Use key teaching strategies, whole class teaching, self-study
✓ Adjust teaching strategies: developmental stage of learners
✓ Encourage critical and creative thinking
✓ Challenge stereotypes
Foundational competences

✓ Understand how language mediates learning
✓ Understand different learning styles and preferences
✓ Understand nature of barriers to learning
✓ Understand explanations of learning at different ages
✓ Understand potential causes of failure in learning processes
Reflexive competences

✓ Reflect on extent to which objectives have been achieved
✓ Defend choice of learning mediation
✓ Analyze learning that occurs in classroom
✓ Assess effects of existing discipline practices on learning
✓ Reflect on ways to overcome barriers to learning
✓ Analyze strengths and weaknesses: addressing issues
Aims of the research
Empirical research

• Pilot study conducted with 40 practicing teachers who study for a BEd-honours degree at the NWU Vaal Triangle Campus
• Literature survey: NCS documents, mediation, relevant policy documents
• Quantitative research method:
  • Descriptive in nature:
    Survey research
  • Self-constructed closed questionnaire
Empirical research

Self-constructed questionnaire

• Section A: Biographic data
• Section B: Determining understanding of the concept mediation in the classroom
• Section C: Determining understanding of the competences required to become a mediator of learning
• Section D:
Empirical research

Biographic data
Empirical research

Descriptive statistics: Section B
Empirical research

Descriptive statistics: Section C
Empirical research

Descriptive statistics: Section D
Empirical research

Descriptive statistics: Averages for all questions in the various sections
Findings
Conclusions
Thank You