

Power Knowledge Contestations at a Transforming Free State Higher Education Institution: Learning Guide as a Metaphor

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to examine the connection between power relations and knowledge or truth. Foucault developed the idea of a 'regime' of truth. For Foucault, truth/knowledge is linked in a circular relation with systems of power which both produce and sustain it, and also to the effects of power which it induces and which extend it. The status of truth plays an economic political role. Power is produced in (and produces) social relations, and so is closely linked with systems of knowledge or truth; or in other words, with discursive practices. This complex and inevitable drama plays itself out in South African higher education institutions under the context of transformation today. The Author abuses the learning guide as a stage on which the power knowledge relations drama unfolds at two merged historically different institutions of higher learning. Critical emancipatory theory lends itself well to allow a focused gaze on the unfolding engagements between the dominant and privileged group against the dominated, excluded, disadvantaged and marginalized group. The unveiling discourses are given meaning through Textually Oriented Discourse Analysis (TODA).

Key words: Dominant and dominated discourses; Power knowledge relations; TODA; Critical emancipatory theory; Historically Black Institutions (HBIs); Historically White Institutions (HWIs); Learning guides

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INTRODUCTION

According to van der Berg (2008) the academic performance differential between rich and poor schools and those in large cities and isolated rural areas are exceedingly high in South African. This undesirable state of affairs in South African education system emanates from the legacy of apartheid policy wherein higher education and education in general was provided along racial lines in pre-democratic era. This would translate into First World class facilities being provided for the white population from primary school up to tertiary education. In his Unpublished PhD Thesis, Nkonyane (2008) argues that this, coupled with the use of Afrikaans and English as languages of teaching and learning also put them at an advantage and many steps ahead in effective learning. The whole school curriculum was based on and reflected a Eurocentric cultural capital.

At higher education this was manifest in other institutions being labeled as "bush universities" or Historically Black Institutions (HBI's) with everything associated with them being of an inferior quality compared to the Historically White Institutions (HWI's) out beating them in quality on everything. All this was meant to serve and maintain the policy of segregation and discriminatory racial objectives. When the "Nation building" project unfolded post- 1994, it was informed and guided by realization of the economic and knowledge gap between the races (black and white) of South Africa, where in the minority white race at 20% controlled about 80% of the wealth and knowledge compared to the 20% wealth and knowledge controlled by the 80% black majority. Education had a hand in this situation as already highlighted above. It is not surprising that higher education transformation became a major strategy in the completion of the political puzzle of a new nation built on non-racialism, non-sexism and equality among its citizens. This led to the over-celebration of the "historic" mergers of the former black and former

white universities as outlined by Education White paper No. 3 (1997). One important question which this paper attempts to address is whether equality envisaged as a desirable outcome by government from the institutional mergers has been achieved or not. This is achieved by finding out how learner guides are designed and used in teaching and learning situations in Free State (FS) higher education institutions which have just merged and also by determining who derives benefits there from and how.

In this paper the learning guide is made to represent a contestational terrain of discourses between the people of South Africa with certain markers magnified and essentialized as difference: colour, race, culture and social class which resulted into the two groups occupying different positions; exclusion and marginalization, with the African majority being at the receiving end in the process. The learning guide offers an opening through which to look inside the merged institutions of higher learning and see if the envisaged new rainbow nation is indeed born because in the affected HBI this teaching and learning aid was not used before the mergers.

It has been noted from experience that learning guides are used as the only curriculum resource material in the merged institutions of higher education, a view also held by Apple (1985); Klein (1985) and Sleeter and Grant (1991). As such learning guides play a vital role in shaping social construction of meaning, hence their influential and powerful status. This status is also fuelled by the critical role of Open Distance Learning (ODL) in South African higher education. And ODL by its nature depends largely on teaching guides to facilitate teaching and learning. Students believe that learner guides, just like any other book tell the "truth", Anyon (1979) says that they are thought to serve the interests of all equally and presumed not to favour some at the expense of others. They are celebrated as adhering to objectivity, the golden rule of science; hence carrying the 'truth'. But we would suggest differently from the common held belief. Curriculum is not nor was it ever objective or neutral. The selection process, where choices are made about what to include or not to include, will always favour some groups and interests over others; this problem affects learning guides directly in higher education institutions in the Free State. The concerns, doubts and suspicions of this paper on the objectivity and neutrality of learning guides in knowledge production are strengthened by Mangan (1993), when he points out that curriculum materials work as a political process and, among others, effect, promote and sustain political ideology through the careful presentation of human images. Learning guides and films, for example, play a part in portraying and establishing approved perceptions of various groups of people and defining relationships between and among these groups. In this regard, overly or covertly creating images of self-belief, those resources can contribute to attitudes that make it easier for some groups to justify the unequal treatment

of others (Mangan, Ibid). And as such, the learner guide becomes part of a structure of cultural exclusion, because it ignores the multiple narratives, histories and voices of culturally and politically subordinated groups.

1. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

There are two broad research trends which parade themselves as valid, objective and universal knowledge/truth producers. The first, the physical/natural sciences which according to Held (1980) idolizes scientific method on its reliance on positivism and the desire for broad sweeping trends established by large numbers. The second, from the social sciences, which claims that what researchers are doing, is telling people who they are, whether the researcher is telling her research subjects or the rest of the world. But my realization of the power relations, class, race, education level and other axes of social inequality and the impossibility of operating outside these relations convinced me to opt for critical emancipatory theory as a lens through which to engage and interrogate all issues and discourses pertaining the use of learner guides in FS higher education institutions after the mergers or incorporations. That has been done also because I do not believe in the myth of objectivity or view from nowhere which allows dominant views to be presented as universal and for the context of history to be ignored (Hoggart, 2004). The first two approaches have a tendency of producing imperial knowledge, which disadvantages the dominated. Tyson (1997) supports this sentiment by saying that positivism and the phenomenological approach produce knowledge of three types: knowledge useful to the career building goals of Western/Westernized academics; knowledge to satisfy the curiosity of those who think that curiosity is a sufficient basis of treating others as their "someone's private zoo"; and knowledge for the development project.

Critical social theory that is operationalized in this paper comes in different genres all with a central feature—the rejection of positivism (Agger, 2006; McLaren & Kincheloe, 2002). The Frankfurt school for example, viewed positivism "as the most effective new form of capitalist ideology" (Agger, 1991). They argue that people are taught to accept without challenge, the status quo, and in so doing, continually perpetuate the world as it is.

Since critical social researchers seek to interrogate dominative relationships, they place the relations of power that operate between groups and individuals into spotlight (Crotty, 1998). There is a rejection of economic determinism and an agreement that power comes in different forms. Researchers seek to address such questions as: who hold the most power? Who gains and who loses in specific contexts? And whose voice is privileged? The goal is always to expose the forces that constrain and/or facilitate peoples' lives. For example, as adopted in this paper, post-structural approach

investigates how selves and social relations are constituted in particular relations of power-knowledge (MacDonald, 2002). Post-structuralism also emphasises the productive aspects of power. Drawing heavily on the work of Michel Foucault, post-structuralists conceive of power as a network of discourses that work to generate knowledge and subjectivity:

For Foucault discourses are anything which can carry meaning. Language, images, stories, scientific narratives and cultural products are all discourses. But discourses are also things we do. Social practices like segregating work, giving away the bride in marriage, and so on, all carry meaning. (Alsop, Fitzsimons, & Lennon, 2002, p.81)

Social subjects, Foucault believed, are produced by this network of discourses. Individuals and groups do not possess power, instead, they occupy various and shifting positions of power and resistance in the network of power relations. Critical theory legitimizes Indigenous Knowledge systems as canons. It opens space at the centre of knowledge production for the subaltern voice or discourse, which has been presented as marginalized and pushed to the periphery in the FS higher education.

This is the discourse that has been manifested in different forms: Black Education, Education for Power, and Education for Social Equality by Sullivan (2006). Since universities are a strategic site for social transformation, critical theory believes social improvement; transformation and empowerment can be achieved through them. The domination of neo-liberal discourses at higher education institutions has been instrumental in discouraging and destroying active and conscious imagination. Heroin in Reason (1996) argues that the human psyche, through imaginative capacity, creates a world of form out of our original experience of being embedded and deep participation. This imaginary world evolves through sensation, image, dreams, and stories and is one of immense possibilities. One of the tragedies of the fundamentalism of unconscious participation and the positivist mindset is that this multiplicity is cut down to one imperial reality, one truth, and one way of seeing things. The language defined by conceptual language, categorizing, pruning and pinning down, reduces this vast range of imaginative possibility to a world of fixed things. South African higher education still operates on this mindset explained by Reason above. It should move away from this type of mindset if it aspires for more localized, relevant and useful knowledge.

Post-structuralism is essential for the study because with its stated empowerment and emancipatory intentions in research enables the subaltern culture to understand learning guides against the background of higher education policies in post-democratic South Africa, but also to see beyond the policies in knowledge power relations. The question of cultural identity in the form of Africanization of higher education institutions in South Africa assumes a central position in the transformation

of higher education in the country. However, of utmost importance is to understand the covert link between the mergers of higher education institutions with a capitalist agenda. The merged universities in FS have strategically opted for the use of learner guides for quality control and assurance with the intention of maintaining some form of uniformity in their campuses. Under these circumstances, learning guides were supposed to serve as a preparatory instrument to enable the learner to take an active part in the teaching/learning process. Contemporary students in the transformed higher education system in the FS rely more on the technology and culture of learning guides to construct and affirm their identities. Moreover, they are faced with the task of finding their way through the closed narrative structures of learning guides. The discursive construction of learning guides is informed and embedded in the social relations prevalent at the high education institutions where they are compiled. These power relations allow the dominant discourse to constrain the production of knowledge, dissent and difference. And as such, is in conflict with the basic principle of higher education life: Academic freedom, which Nixon (1998) describes as the freedom of an academic to speak his/her mind, in order to teach according to their own interest. Learning guides being centrally compiled do not give other lecturers the opportunity to contribute in their formation. One person creates the final product. In the learning guides, the individual verbalizes thoughts, beliefs, intentions and consciousness. The learning guide becomes the medium through which self-reflection; self-knowledge and self-examination are obtained and passed on as knowledge for social consumption. In this way, the compiler forces his/her views on other academics especially since examination papers and memoranda are based on the same learning guides.

Through critical emancipatory theory learner guides are seen simultaneously as cultural products and elements of cultural production in South African higher education. Thus, they are identified as being used for purposes of cultural exclusion, domination, disempowerment and marginalization of the formerly dominated and oppressed-the subaltern culture. On the surface, learning guides appear very innocent and objective, but going deeper into the same learning materials, one is overwhelmed by observing and realising how they perpetuate the status quo. The following questions are asked to contextualize learning guides as texts in the argument of this paper: How do learning guides relate to the existing order of discourse? Are learning guides consistent with the durable aspects of the social relations (between the dominant and dominated cultures)? In response to these questions, texts are doubly contextualized, first in their relations to other elements of social events, second in their relation to social practices, which is "internal" to texts in the sense that they necessarily draw upon order of discourse, i.e. social practices in their discursal aspect, and the discourses and

styles associated with them. However, texts are points of articulation and tension between two causal forces: Social practices and, through their mediation, social structures; and the agency of the social actors who speak, write, compose, read, listen to and interpret them.

Texts can be seen as products and as process. Texts as products can be stored, retrieved, bought and sold, cited and summarized. Texts as process can be grasped through seeing “texturing”, making tests, as a specific modality of social action, of social production or “making” of meaning, understandings, knowledge, beliefs, attitudes, feelings, social relations, social and personal identities, institutions and organizations. Learning guides as texts are produced under conditions of unequal power relations at higher education institutions between the dominant and the dominated discourses. And this is manifest in the exclusion of the dominated culture in these learning materials. The domination of the research process/knowledge production by whites may itself be regarded as one of the objective mechanisms that sustained racial domination (Evans, 1990). Learning guides at higher education institutions therefore became a tool for domesticating the students and lulling them into conforming to white supremacy hegemony. The dominated culture’s suspicion on learning guides is exacerbated by the exclusion of black experience in their content. The formerly Historically Black Institutions (HBI’s) offered the dominated culture the space to confront socio-political issues from their perspective. This space has been closed down under the mergers of higher education institutions. The new arrangement does not accommodate the “voice” of the dominated discourse and pins then down on the “learning guide” which is produced within a positivist framework and, as such, “neutral”. This neutrality disadvantages those on the other side of the fence of power. Neutrality of the learning guides is understood as support for the dominant discourse as it lends itself to the oppressive discourse.

1.1 Learning Guides and Knowledge/Power Relations

This gist of the argument in this paper is that due to its political history, which has influenced the social/power or knowledge/power relations that has remained unaffected despite the political changes of 1994, learner guides in SA are abused in subtle ways for the purposes of maintaining and perpetuating the status quo. Singh from the UK comes up with what I think is the best alternative form of a learner guide when he says:

The main aim of this guide is to encourage and support committed professionals in the development of anti-racist and anti-oppressive practice. It is not only a how to do guide, it is about developing new ways of thinking and being. Only by combining action with critical thinking can one hope to make inroads into the edifice of institutional racism. (2003, p.69)

The pretense of mainstream social sciences as value free projects and activities is rejected because the “value

free” myth rationalizes oppression and legitimizes the status quo, which favours certain groups of the population with opportunities and access to social and public goods. Fox and Prilleltensky (1997) and Martin-Baro (1994) argue that emphasis is, therefore, to be put on the theoretical and practical case for socially excluded and vulnerable groups and persons. Learning guides in the South African context fail to fulfill the above aim by Singh under the pretext of “neutrality”. This critically means legitimizing the past social and racial inequalities.

Since learning guides do not promote critical thinking, they condition the mind to think in a particular way that is beneficial to the dominant discourse. Ward Churchill supports this conclusion by saying:

Having been conditioned your entire lives, the way we are all conditioned our entire lives, to receive sound-bite answers to questions we have never had the critical ability to form in our minds, forecloses our ability to interrogate reality and draw conclusions from it. That is the function of the media. That is the function of the education system you understand. It’s not to teach you to think critically, which is education in value. It’s to teach you what to think. That’s indoctrination. (2003, p.73)

1.2 Methodology

Nine academic staff members (5 males and 4 females) from Central University of Technology (CUT) and Free State University (FSU) were purposively selected and interviewed. Most of the respondents were in management positions in their different Schools. This was important because among other things, our discussions would include administrative issues like race relations on campus, university position on learning guides and the Africanization of higher education. Due to time limits, relevant respondents who were more knowledgeable and well exposed to learning guides were picked with the help of my supervisor for the study.

The number of nine informants was enough to provide sufficient information for the study. In Critical Emancipatory Qualitative Research the usefulness and validity of findings is not detracted based on the number of respondents interviewed, because what is important in using qualitative strategies is not the number of respondents, it is rather the information produced. Mahlomaholo (1998) convincingly argues that large sample sizes sometimes yield information that cannot be managed and adequately analyzed. He also notes from Popkewitz (1997) that:

... Samples of a hundred tests would often simply add to the labour involved without really producing anything more significant than a sample of what, for example, ten texts would have produced. (1998, p. 225)

2. RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

Meulenberg-Buskens Free Attitude Interview (FAI) technique was selected to determine the feelings and

views of both dominant and dominated discourses on the use of learning guides in teaching and learning in Free State higher education. According to Meulenberg-Buskens (1993) the FAI was developed during an industrial psychological research, the so-called Hawthorne research in 1929 in the US. The researchers discovered that when they gave the interviewees the freedom to speak, the information obtained became more relevant than when they used a structured questionnaire. Thus, this open type of interview provided them with the type of information that could be used to solve problems in the labour situation.

The FAI being non-directive in nature opens the space for respondents to intervene and for the researcher to respond flexibly and sensitively. It is therefore possible for the researcher and respondent to assess and negotiate issues of validity and reliability during the research process.

2.1 How Scientific Is the FAI?

The fact that this instrument, though developed in 1929 (Meulenberg-Buskens, 1993): Continues to be used to date is sufficient evidence of how confident and positive researchers feel about it. Just to cite a few examples of such studies, they are Hawthorne (1929); Rodgers (1941); Doner (1982); Geertz (1993); Smaling (1993); Mahlomaholo (1998); Sematle, Z. (2003) and Mahlomaholo and Nkoane (2004). These are the studies where the FAI or at least a very close version thereof has been used. These studies have demonstrated the usefulness and value of this instrument in finding out the true feelings or views of respondents.

Quality (validity and reliability) according to the researcher in this study is what Meulenberg-Buskens argues for when she says:

Quality in social research is not a straightforward issue. Quality could refer to the relevance of a study, to the degree to which it yields useful and applicable information; to the degree it enhances values such as democracy and social justice and to the degree to which it empowers powerless people. Finally, it could also refer to the technical quality of a piece of work, that is, to the degree to which it conforms to the methodological expectations of a community of scientists. (1993)

2.2 Data Collection Process

Conducting research is an ethical enterprise. Research ethics provide researchers with a code of moral guidelines on how to conduct research in morally acceptable ways. Such guidelines seek to prevent researchers from engaging in scientific misconduct, such as: Distorting and inventing data, plagiarizing the work of others, publishing their data as an original contribution without proper acknowledgement, failing to maintain the confidentiality and privacy of research participants and clients, forcing people to participate in research against their will to be involved, deceiving people, falsely reporting results and assigning authors publications credit when they have provided minor contributions to the study or only made their

data available to the researcher (The American Psychological Association Ethics Code, 1992). For the mere fact that this study was conducted among university academics, there is no way in which one of the ethics could be violated. The interviews were conducted in the respondent's offices; they were therefore relaxed and comfortable. Each respondent was interviewed for one and a half hours to two hours. An audiotape was used to collect data.

2.3 Data Analysis: Textually Oriented Discourse Analysis (TODA)

Data was transcribed from audio-tape into a written format so that these could be utilized. It was written in the form of themes. Textually Oriented Discourse Analysis (TODA) was used for the analysis of the data. TODA is a system that takes its form of analysis as a narrative practice that is institutionally bound, discursively situated and geo-politically located. As a critical post-colonial ethnographic data analysis technique at the present moment, TODA needs not simply be another means of constructing knowledge of the partial (black), the particular and the contingent, but rather new form of theoretical practice that can engage difference without absorbing, accommodating, homogenizing or integrating it into totalizing schemes of Western essentialist ethnographic practices.

TODA looks at what the respondent says as text. That text is, therefore, used by the researcher as evidence to substantiate conclusions drawn about the discursive practices informing the construction and production thereof, as well as the very basic and deep socially structured issues grounding both discursive practices and the text. Through TODA, concealed operations of power and under-lying socio-economic relations connecting the myriad of details and seemingly disconnected zones of culture are uncovered. The major points that emerged from the interviews/texts became the sub-themes or analysis as asserted by Fairclough (1992). The texts of the two groups (dominant and dominated discourses) were grouped into two sets of corpora because there were more similarities than differences within the two groups respectively.

2.4 Presentation of Results

The analysis of all nine texts of the interviewed nine academics yielded six sub-themes showing two different discourses going on in the Free State. The six themes are:

A. The dominant culture regarded the learning guides as a necessity without which it could be difficult to facilitate teaching and learning in higher education. This is evidenced by the following extracts:

R1: I strongly believe that for undergraduate programs the learning guides is valid, like the first years, they need some sort of guidance on paper what you are going to tell them verbally is not going to stay long in their minds, but if there is something that they are going to refer to and say this is what my tutor or lecturer said in my class.

R2: But remember I come from a scientific environment where we deal with more factual aspects, the students must learn facts that have been established. You know you cannot actually in that sense lead a learner into your own perspective, because they must know the facts. So, I specifically find the learning guides a good tool to facilitate the learning and to ensure that all learners know exactly what they must study, how they must study, what outcomes they must reach, and also to guide the process of learning so that they can assess themselves through the learning guide.

R3: ... so that is my compromise that we include 70% of the material in the separate reader distributed to students at the beginning of the semester ... I think it is not working perfectly, but I think it's the best for the moment (under the circumstances). I think in 3rd years perhaps we may move to the other side – we have 30% in the reader and more on what the students must find for them.

On the other hand the dominated culture saw the learning guides as an instrument at the disposal of the dominant culture for domesticating black students. With all information already packaged in it, and all assessment based on it, it was unnecessary for students to search for information elsewhere. The following extracts are evidence to the above:

R4: ... you know the recent history that we come from as a country, that of normalization as people like Foucault would say, where you want to centralize control, to make everybody conform, and so you want to reproduce status quo. You can do that with a learning guide that everybody conforms to the dictates of that which is contained in them.

R5: The new system in my opinion does not prepare our learners for independent thinking, as long as you are able to regurgitate what is in the learning guide it's okay.

B. The dominant culture did not believe that Black culture was excluded from the learning guides. They saw the learning guide as a neutral and not taking any sides in the two discourses in contest. This is their argument:

R2: ... my personal view is that teaching and learning cannot be value free. I mean it cannot be neutral—we all come from a certain environment and from certain perspectives. It's impossible to be totally value free.

R3: I mean I teach anatomy, the muscles in the arm are the muscle and that's what we want the students to do, we use the learning guide to help them achieve the outcomes of the course. We cannot ask them about something and bring in our own perspective.

The dominated discourse believed otherwise, hence their firm position the view that learning guides exclude their culture. Below is their argument:

R2: Definitely it excludes, because if you look at these learning guides you find that they follow what has been done in the previously white institutions. They definitely exclude black culture in terms of learning. If you want your ideas to be followed to the letter, you compile a study guide, the questions and memo and then you get a facilitator who is just going to push everything back to you for moderation

R4: My view is that we actually have not emerged from the past, not yet. The problems of immersions, of being bogged down, of being pulled by the dominant discourse in the past are still very existent in this country ... what is tolerated is that which is dominant and goes along with the dominant discourses of neo-liberalism which is fairly most capitalist, so anything that runs contra or seems to promote the alternative is relegated to the margin.

C. The dominant culture had a problem with the Africanization of higher education. Their fear was that it would erode all the present knowledge and replace it with the African knowledge. They argue as follows:

R1: I like to call it South Africanization, because I think that is an all-inclusive concept to us, we understand it ... we know the rainbow nation ... Africanization can perhaps be exclusive to certain people which I don't want to see because I view myself as an African also, but I talk about South Africanization, then I know all the cultures in my country will be included ... you know I don't think anybody can have a problem with that theory ... South Africanization.

R2: I think in a diverse country like South Africa it can be a daunting task. There are so many cultures. Is it practically achievable to include all other cultures? How do you do it in higher education?

Contrary to the skepticism of the dominant culture, the dominated group sees Africanization as the only remedy for untangling higher education out of the venomous tentacles of Western influence: They argue as follows:

R4: ... but the other alternative will say look at what is being privileged now and at what is relegated to the margin of knowledge production now, and then your role as organizer will be to bring in those that have been placed in the periphery to the centre, and so it does not mean to do away with anything, but it means there are people that have been left out in the whole celebration of human effort, and need to be brought to the fore and, start talking about them, make them visible and so forth. Those people stories, songs that have been sung by the people out there, but are not sung in the mainstream would need be brought on board and made acceptable and accessible to all the young kids.

R7: If you want to discover the universal you have to start from where you are. You can only gain entry into the universal by looking and understanding ourselves as human beings even more, so for me to understand and know England better, I don't have to go to England directly, but it is to look at what, who am I, and in that sense I would understand the Britons even more. So the message gained on Heritage Day is: If you want to go international, dip your bucket where you are deep, because you'll discover that which is international by going deep into the local.

D. The dominated group felt that the dominant group made money from the use of learning guides. They claimed that most of the references in the learning guides were from a specific race of academics, and this benefited the authors and the said culture when the books were bought. The following arguments are evidence to this sub-theme:

R6: The dominated discourse masquerades in the form of those learning guides that are said to be meant for the poor. But

if one is really interested in quality, there is no way quality can be sacrificed and compromised at the expense of cheaper material. In fact cheaper material you can still print of lofty and really sophisticated matter, maybe it's not to talk about this richness of the content of what is written in there.

R5: ... so, I'm not so sure whether the money goes to the faculty or the person who compiled the learning guides, otherwise money is involved, and then in some other case there are some consultants and NGO's who came up preparing learning guides and all that. That was for monetary gain. So, there is financial gain attached to them, especially that the people who prepare these will align themselves with particular books- we may not run away from that fact.

E. The dominant group regarded knowledge/learning guides as neutral and did not see any need for change of this teaching strategy as opposed to the view of the dominated group, which maintained that knowledge by its nature was not and could never be neutral. The two groups argued as follows:

R1: ...but again from my background where we have scientific natural sciences it is not only informed on an individual's thinking, it is an international science (not somebody's thinking). Yes, not somebody's thinking, these are facts, the facts are there.

R5: The position I come from unfortunately says no knowledge is or can be neutral irrespective of how hard you try as long as it is knowledge constructed or created by a human, it will always be an interpretation of reality, creating or putting a particular worldview/perspective. There is no knowledge that is universally true to everybody. All the time knowledge will be about seeing a certain side of a story. So if that kind of seeing the world from that particular view, what it tells is that which goes through the learning guide can't be neutral, will always be a reflection of a particular perspective.

F. The dominated group was struggling to get promotions at the merged institutions as opposed to the dominant group who were easily promoted. This substantiated the view held by the dominated culture that transformation of higher education in South Africa was only technical and indeed non-existent where it mattered most. The following statements attest to this point.

R5: ... at first, they obtained their masters degrees they were promoted to senior lectureship. However, after most blacks obtained the masters, it's a PhD that qualifies you for a senior lectureship because few blacks have PhDs. Now when blacks have PhDs, it's the issue of knowing English and Afrikaans. Blacks would qualify for promotion to associate professors if they have promoted or supervised post-graduate students. Most of the people I know here and at Bloemfontein have never promoted even single student at masters' level, but they are professors. I have promoted 21 masters students and have been an external examiner of a doctoral thesis, an external examiner for Concordia University in Canada. All of this was supposed to contribute to my being considered for promotion, but the issue of Afrikaans is a barrier in that and I am also not white in skin.

CONCLUSION

Realising their indispensability, the dominated discourse advocates learning guides that will resist the interest contained in the established academic disciplines and departments. Through critical pedagogy, the leaning guide must interrogate the knowledge, claims and the modes of intelligibility central to the academic status quo in various departments and disciplines. Equally important, learning guides must indicate the interests embedded in the questions not asked within academic disciplines. In other words, it must develop methods of enquiring into how the present absences and structured silences that govern teaching, scholarship and administration within academic departments deny the link between knowledge and power, reduce culture to an object of mastery and refuse to acknowledge the particular way of life that dominant academic discourse helps to produce and legitimate. In the South African context, Decolonization Pedagogy can offer a critical approach to address the concerns of those affected by transformative policies suspected to maintain the dominant discourses.

Critical pedagogics and cultural studies are important in higher education institutions today, because of the role that they can play in encouraging and preserving democracy in a world where power is so mendaciously exploiting notions such as democracy, freedom, and non-discrimination, while actively threatening in significant ways the rights of the marginalized. Fritzman's summary on some of the pedagogical implications of the post-structuralist Lyotard is used to conclude this argument:

Education should encourage students to develop new ideas and to challenge critically what passes as common knowledge and accepted wisdom. In addition, education should teach students to be sensitive to the presence of differences (1995, p. 69).

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