Bachelor's thesis

The formalization and realization level in Namibian schools
An investigation of two countryside schools

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Abstract

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The aim of this thesis is to find out if there is a gap between the formalization level and the realization level in the Namibian school system. Moreover, our aim is to figure out how we, as visiting teaching students, interpret the relationship between steering documents and the teaching in the classroom. In turn, the aim was used to formulate three different research questions: What can we experience while observing in the classroom at school? What do the interviewed teachers express concerning our asked questions? What are the main differences between the two latest steering documents?

The reason why we decided to do a study about the school system in Namibia is because it is a young country, it was proclaimed independent in 1990. Therefore we think it is interesting to study how the school system and its political steering documents have developed over the years.

Our theoretical framework includes the concept of curriculum, reconceptualism and cultural issues. Our focal point has been on the following three perspectives, democracy, gender and learner centred education.

The method we used in this study is triangulation, in this case analyzing political steering documents, interviewing teachers and other people connected to the school and finally classroom observations. The attitudes to the three above mentioned perspectives vary amongst the interviewed personnel. This study as come to the conclusion that there is a gap between the formalization level and realization level.

Keywords: cultural concern, education, formalization level, Namibia, realization level, senior secondary school
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Appendix A
1 INTRODUCTION

As students at Växjö University, we spent eight weeks in Namibia in order to write our thesis. We were thinking about Namibia, knowing a little about their historical apartheid background and got interested in the change their school system must have gone through from before independence until today. Coming there and seeing the school reality slightly altered our first aim and we had to concretize our aim further. Before leaving Sweden, we had the presumption that Namibian people would not be very open about their political history. We believed that the learners would be active and exited to learn and we also believed the teachers to be active and eager to get all learners to understand. Furthermore, we had the impression that the curricula and syllabuses were more old-fashioned than equal documents in Western Europe.

In this chapter we will introduce Namibia’s background, its school system and the two schools we visited. This background will guide the reader to our aim and the research questions.

Namibia was colonized for more than a hundred years and became independent in the 21st of March 1990\(^1\). The nation is in the process of re-building and has been struggling with strengthening and uniting the country since independence. In this process the education plays an important part\(^2\).

In the two schools we visited, introduced separately in chapter 2, everybody sang the national anthem Namibia – Land of the Brave at every morning assembly we attended and in this way unification of the nation was shown. “We give our love and loyalty, together in unity”\(^3\). The principals and teachers at each school were proclaiming the importance of education and unity throughout the country to the learners. For us as visitors, this united philosophy was a new experience compared to what we are used to in Sweden. This is one of the dimensions we have taken into consideration when visiting the schools.

After many years of colonization and as a part of the apartheid regime in South Africa, Namibia is a relatively young democratic country\(^4\). The Republic of Namibia is a large country with an area twice the size of Sweden and is situated in the south western part of Africa with a population of 2.1 million people\(^5\) and it consists of a number of different


\(^2\) Interview with Mr Nakashole, 2008-10-30

\(^3\) http://www.embassyofnamibia.se/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=50&Itemid=60&lang=en, *National Anthem of Namibia*. [Internet] [fetched 2008-11-20, time 11:20]

\(^4\) Snyder, C. (1999)

\(^5\) http://www.ne.se/lang/namibia  [internet] [fetched 2008-12-17]
regions. There are different tribes in these regions and each tribe has got their own tribal language\textsuperscript{6}. As some groups are unable to understand each other, English is chosen to be Namibia’s official language.

\textbf{1.2 AIM AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS}

Our aim and research questions developed from the presumptions we had before the visit. We became interested in investigating the level of formalization compared to the level of realization, especially in the subject of History. To define it for the reader, we wanted to find out if and how the teachers used the political steering documents, such as curriculum and syllabuses in their teaching profession.

After a couple of days at the two schools a formulation of questions developed for our thesis. In order to find answers to our questions, we analyzed the steering documents, interviewed teachers at the two schools, Mweshipandeka and Gabriel Taapopi, and finally we did classroom observations. We will define our research aim with the following question:

\textit{How do we as visiting teacher students interpret the relationship between the steering documents and the teaching in the classroom?}

In order to concretize our aim, we have formalized three questions to explore the purposes of this thesis:

1. \textit{What can we experience while observing in the classrooms / at school, regarding the above relationship?}
2. \textit{What do the interviewed teachers express in this matter?}
3. \textit{What are the main differences between the latest steering documents?}

\textsuperscript{6} Discussion with Mr Mbodo, 2008-11-11
2 FRAMES OF REFERENCES
In this chapter we give a background of the school system in Namibia around the independence, what it is like today and an introduction to the visited schools. Furthermore, there is a theoretical approach to support our questions.

2.1 THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE SCHOOL SYSTEM OF NAMIBIA
The process of developing appropriate policy documents for the education system of Namibia was started 1970 by SWAPO the South West African Peoples Organisation in Zambia, Angola, and in Congo. These lead to co-operation and contacts with different organisations, such as international support groups, non-governmental organisations and sympathetic governmental agencies. These contacts enabled the exile schools in the countries of Angola, Zambia, Congo, and others to design and develop educational programs such as curriculums, syllabuses and textbooks and other educational documents.\textsuperscript{7}

In January 1990, the ministers designate for Education, Sports and Culture created a document. The aim of this document was to give every child up to the age of sixteen the right to free education, and to develop an educational program that supports each individual.\textsuperscript{8}

In the 1980s the first textbook for the subject of social science was constructed. The aim of this book was to help strengthen Namibia to become an independent nation and to let the people of Namibia know the importance of education and lifelong learning.

A number of similar documents were developed in 1991, followed by the Pedagogy in Transition, and The Imperatives of Educational Development in the Republic of Namibia. The aim of these documents was to spread the knowledge of educational administration, both on regional and national levels. They lead to the development of implementing the aims of the National Integrated Education System for Emergent Namibia – Draft Proposal for Education Reform and Renewal. Other documents were developed during the years after independence as well, such as Curriculum Guide for Formal Basic Education, A Guidance Brochure for the Implementation of International Certification of General Education (IGCSE) at the Senior Secondary Schools. This was the beginning of the work and development of political documents for the education system.

When Namibia was declared independent this affected the school in many different ways. After being colonized for over a hundred years, the Namibian schools were affected negatively, the nation was broken and torn apart because of the racial and ethnic polarities and

\textsuperscript{7} Snyder, C. (1999)
\textsuperscript{8} Snyder, C. (1999)
this was also mirrored in the schools. White Namibian children were placed in schools with better economic situation that black Namibian children and the differences between urban and rural schools were obvious in such way that the urban schools were better provided for.

These inequalities called for a reform and renewal of the education system in Namibia. Namibia as a nation wanted equal education and equal opportunities for the Namibian children. To achieve these aims, the reform took place in 1990. The reform included curriculum renewal, reorientation of pedagogy and a teacher education reform. It also contained five overarching goals, which were equity of access and opportunity, enhancing effectiveness in teaching and learning, promotion of internal efficiency, democratization of educational enterprise, and finally strengthening lifelong learning. This contributed to a united and integrated system, in which racial and ethnic discrimination were not accepted. Before independence some parents did not see education as necessary, and their children were sometimes taken out of school to work at home.

The general view of education has switched since 1990 and now education has become an important factor for the development of Namibia as a nation. The primary school is compulsory and children are not allowed to leave school until they are sixteen years of age, or have completed the primary education as stated by the constitution. The main goal is to provide education for everyone in Namibia.

### 2.2 PRESENT DAY SCHOOL SYSTEM

The Namibian basic education consists of ten years. School is free and compulsory from the age of six up to the age of sixteen. The children start in grade 1 between the ages of six or seven years old. And when they reach grade 12 they are eighteen or nineteen years old. There are both public and private schools, and today the parent can decide what school they want their children to attend and this is more common today. The parents realize the importance of education more now than before.

One goal the Namibian government has is that every child should have a school within five kilometres of their home. From grade 1, English as a subject is compulsory for every Namibian school child, although instructions are given in the children’s native language.

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9 Snyder, C. (1999)
10 Snyder, C. (1999)
11 Interview with Mr Nakashole [2008-10-30]
13 NIED (1996)
14 Discussion with Mr Mbodo [2008-11-11]
until they reach grade 5. In grade 5 the medium is English, and remains so for the rest of the education period. As mentioned previously, this is because the many native groups with their separate languages have got difficulties understanding each other. Every school, private or public, has to follow the same curriculum. Before independence, each ethnic group had their own system for education.

A new curriculum is under construction and it will be implemented in early 2009. “The schools are using drafts from the new curriculum that are under construction and also the newest syllabuses’”\(^\text{15}\).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School level</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Age</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lower Primary</td>
<td>1-4</td>
<td>6-10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Upper Primary</td>
<td>5-7</td>
<td>11-13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Junior Primary</td>
<td>8-10</td>
<td>13-17</td>
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Figure 1: Basic education in Namibia. Grade, age and school phase.

Basic Education in Namibia contains three phases, Lower Primary, grade 1-4, Upper Primary, grade 5-7, and finally Junior Secondary, grade 8-10. The overarching goals of the Basic Education in Namibia are to promote the learners with a sense of nationality, justice, and democracy. The government also wants to promote human rights, respect for oneself and another, to foster morality, and to give ethical values. Furthermore the learners should be prepared for the challenge and responsibilities they will meet as adults. Another important view is to promote a sense of sustainable development in terms of human resources and economic growth\(^\text{16}\).

The Namibian school system also contains a Senior Secondary phase, grade 11-12. In this phase the aims are to continue and develop the goals from the Basic Education. The aims in this phase have shifted from being a fostering education to become more knowledge-based in the two different curricula. The overarching aims of the Senior Secondary phase are for the learners to achieve an understanding and critical mind, promoting the ability to apply knowledge, skills, and attitudes in practical way, and to solve different problems that can occur in real life as an adult.

\(^{15}\) Interview with Mr Mbodo [2008-11-07]

In Senior Secondary School the learners choose a certain field of study. This means that the pupils read at least three interrelated subjects, which will form their main area of study. There are many different subjects in this phase, but not every school has got all fields of study, meaning that the learners will have to know what schools they can choose that provides that specific field. There are six fields, which reach from A to F, and within those six fields there can be differences. For example field A, which is Agricultural field of study, has got two different directions which are A1; Agriculture, Biology and Natural Economy and A2; Agriculture, Biology and Physical Science.

2.3 TWO NAMIBIAN SCHOOLS

Our contact person and field coach Mr Jason Mbodo helped us to get in contact with two different schools, both senior secondary schools in the Oshana region in northern Namibia, situated in the small town of Ongwediva.

2.3.1 GABRIEL TAAPOPI SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL

This senior secondary school was founded in 1988 by a man named Gabriel Taapopi. In the beginning the school had about three hundred learners, but the school has grown a lot since then. Gabriel Taapopi is still senior secondary school today containing grade 8 to 12, and the learners are between 13 and 19 years old. The school has over nine hundred learners and twenty-eight teachers. According to the principal every teacher has a collage degree in his or her subject, and the school has always believed it important for every teacher to have an adequate education. A teacher telling us how important in-service upgrading became after independency also confirmed this. The teaching staffs have a fairly young average age and the majorities are female.

In addition to the compulsory subject that every school in Namibia must provide for their learners in grade 8 to 10, Gabriel Taapopi is offering their learners accounting and business studies or keyboarding and web processing. To get to grade 11 they have to complete the examinations in grade 10. In grade 11 and 12 the school is divided into certain fields of studies. This means that the learners in grade 10 are supposed to choose which field of study they want to focus on for future profession.

18 Interview with Mr Eelu [2008-10-27]
2.3.2 MWESHIPANDEKA SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOL

Mweshipandeka is a large school with over eight hundred learners from grade 8 to 12, and together with Gabriel Taapopi it is one of the larger schools in the area. Mweshipandeka was founded in 1983 and had at this time about six hundred learners. From the beginning Mweshipandeka was only a senior secondary school with grade 11 to 12. Similar to the Gabriel Taapopi School, the current head of Mweshipandeka thought it was important for the teachers to have an adequate education. To teach in these grades at pre-independence, you had to have further education than a completed grade 12.

Teachers working here before independence had a degree or had at least started an education from collage. To teach in grade 8 to 10 it was only necessary to have graduated grade 12. In 2008 Mweshipandeka had 33 teachers and they had two vacancies making it 35 teachers when all positions are filled up. There is also a Japanese volunteer worker in mathematics working there. Every teacher in this school has a teacher education degree and they work in groups in their subject department. The teachers follow the syllabuses in the subject of History from 2007 when planning and teaching in the subject. The syllabus from 1998 seems too old and the new one is not yet finished. When the school receives an updated version of the new curriculum they discuss it in the staff meeting they hold every morning. Mweshipandeka is also offering other subjects than the compulsory subjects for grade 8 to 10. These are, Technology and design ore Home economics and Needle work.

To sum up, Gabriel Taapopi and Mweshipandeka are two very similar schools when it comes to size, number of teachers and number of students. What makes them different is the fact that they have different fields of studies. Furthermore, they are situated in the same region in the town of Ongwediva.

2.4 STEERING DOCUMENTS

In this chapter we present the steering documents for the school system in Namibia that has been used in this thesis. These are based on two curriculums, *The pilot curriculum guide from 1996* and *The curriculum draft for basic education from 2007* and two different syllabuses for the subject History, one from 1998 and the latest from 2007.

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19 Interview with Mrs N Kapolo [2008-11-11]
20 Interview with Mr Kemanya [2008-11-06]
2.4.1 CURRICULUM

The curricula are divided into three different areas to help us answer our aim and research question; democratic values, learner-centred education, and gender. Below we introduce the two different curricula.

The pilot curriculum guide from 1996: This curriculum acts as a supporting document to the Namibian schools and their teachers together with the various subject syllabuses. This curriculum is intended for the basic education, in this case grade 1 to 10. The documents provide a common framework, and as a support to other documents and textbooks where the teacher as well as the learners can identify locally relevant content. One of the overarching goal with this pilot curriculum guide is that the learners, when through with their basic education, should have the knowledge and understanding of attitudes and values for self-fulfilment and to function in the society.

For the basic education there are goals for both the teachers and the learners to achieve. The basic education should “promote national unity, liberty, justice and democracy”21. The democratic philosophy is present throughout the steering documents. The basic education should promote democracy principles that the learners practice in the school environment as well as in the civic life. The aim is for the learners to develop responsibility toward others, such as people in their own community and the nation as a whole.

In one part of the curriculum the content is that learner-centred education belongs in a society with democratic thoughts. Democratic participation should be implemented on all levels, in the school environment as well as in the society, and the learners should be encouraged being active in the society and its structure. An integral part of the teaching and learning process is to assess the progress and achievements of each learner, the learner-centred education. It is important to get a reliable picture of the learners development to achieve and see each learner’s need during the education and from there try to construct appropriate methods of teaching. The curricula work as a framework in the education system in these matters.

Furthermore, according to the curricula the learners have very different interests and aptitudes, therefore the teacher should encounter a wider variety of areas in the classroom so the learners have the opportunity to explore their interests. It is not only the teacher’s responsibility during the education to help the learners to learn. The learner should “be empowered to think and take responsibility not only for their own, but for each other’s

21 NIED (1996) p. 4
learning and development; and they should be involved as partners in, rather than receivers of, education”22. This is part of the democratic thought that goes through this curriculum.

Another part that we have been taken under consideration in this curriculum is gender. It is about being treated equally in the classroom and in the school environment as a whole, and this includes both teachers and learners.

The curriculum draft for basic education from 2007: is based on the previous pilot curriculum guides and on the Namibian vision 2030. This curriculum is not yet finished; it is to be implemented in the school system 2009 “As soon as the curriculum is revived the schools get the last draft, so that they can keep up with the development”23.

Namibia is a young and developing country and its vision is to go from a literate society to a knowledge-based society. Hence there will be a society where knowledge is constantly being renewed and used to improve the quality of life for the Namibian people. This vision is an important part of the aims and values stated in the curriculum. Another core value in the curriculum is the importance of learning for life. The Namibia vision 2030 statement is: “A prosperous and industrialised Namibia developed by her human resources, enjoying Peace, harmony and political stability”24.

The Namibian schools have a democratic assignment according to these curricula. In the curricula from 1996, one of the aims is to develop and to promote a democratic awareness within the learners. The general basic education has got an important part in this and the schools are supposed to help develop a democratic society, where national unity, regional, African, and international understanding is present. The curriculum states that in a globally affected world it is important to have a strong identity and strong values both as an individual, as a culture, and as a nation. In order to achieve the main goal of the Namibia vision 2030, the curriculum states that the key is to have a learner-centred education. A knowledge-based society needs, according to the curriculum, strong individuals that have good social and teamwork skills. The optimal approach to achieve this is to have learner-centred education.

When it comes to the description of gender, the curriculum explains the issue of gender equality. The school, the subjects, and the teachers within each subject should promote equal opportunities for each gender. Furthermore the curriculum brings up that the teachers are to be aware of the gender stereotypes and also to try to work against them is of great matter. The teacher must in that case be aware of his or hers own attitude and expectations on

22 NIED (1996) p. 25
23 Interview with Mr. Kemanya [2008-11-06]
24 NIED (2007) p. 8
boys and girls. If the teacher can be a good role model in terms of gender, the chances that the students will pick up this behaviour increase\textsuperscript{25}.

The curriculum states that gender issues should be taken up explicitly but also as a natural part of the education and teaching in each subject and in the school as a whole. This will, according to the curriculum, give the learners the instrument to challenge and change the gender roles and stereotypes that exist in the society.

To sum up, both curricula state that these three different areas have an important role in the political steering documents. The three areas are; gender, democratic values, and learner-centred education. The curriculum from 2007 is more detailed for the teacher to follow. The aim in the curriculum from 1996 is that the learner when through with basic education shall function in the society. Democracy is present in both curricula and they promote that the learner take these thoughts out in the society. According to the curricula from 2007 the aim is to get knowledge based society as the vision of 2030 point at that. To realize this society, the curricula states you need to work with democratic methods.

Both curricula require the importance to work from a learned-centred point of view. This integrated way of work is the way to achieve democracy in the school as well in the society according to the curricula 1996. The curricula from 2007 agree with this but also mean that it is important for the school to help the learners to get a wider knowledge and learn for life. The school has a great importance bringing democracy out in the society according to the curricula from both 1996 and 2007. The gender aspect in the curricula from 1996 shows the importance for the teacher to treat everyone the same. This is something that also the curricula from 2007 take up as important and the teacher is the key for the learners to know how to treat each other with gender equality.

2.4.2 SYLLABUS IN THE SUBJECT OF HISTORY
The subjects in the Namibian education system have got their own syllabuses to guide the teacher in their profession. We are going to mention two of the syllabuses in the subject of history, one older and one from today. This is to see if we can notice any difference between the older and the newer document.

History is a subject with many different aspects within the social and economic area. The subject includes civic, political, economic, social, and also cultural and natural environment\textsuperscript{26}.

\textsuperscript{25} NIED (2007)
We have studied two different syllabuses, one from 1998 and another from 2007, and the focus has been on the syllabuses for grade 8 to 10.

The syllabus from 1998: this syllabus includes general aims for the subject of history. Those aims conclude that the teachers and the learners should master and develop in the classroom and in the school environment. In this syllabus the aims are more into the rebuilding of the nation thought. The syllabus brings the democratic aspects in focus, such as being a responsible citizen and has pride in one’s past and in one’s people’s culture. But it also focuses on the collective communion where the people are united. In order to achieve this, it is important to stimulate an interest for the past in order to gain a better understanding about the present and the future.

“A nation without a past is a lost nation and a people without a past are a people without a soul.”

The syllabus from 2007: contains general aims for the subject of history. For this syllabus the aims conclude the united philosophy and the overarching goal that Namibia is going to be a better place to work and live in. These documents focal point is rather on the learner as an individual with his and her needs. Some of the aims in the syllabuses in the subject of history are that the subject should promote democratic principles in the classroom and promote equal opportunities between males and females in all spheres of society. The learners should develop a responsibility towards other individuals such as the family, the community, and the nation as a whole.

To summarize, the syllabus is a quite concrete guide to what the teachers are supposed to teach in the subject of history, and the rooms for the teachers own interpretations are quite small. The two syllabuses we have been looking at differ from one another in the view of individuals and the collective group. The syllabus from 1998 talks more about the collective, where the nation of Namibia is in focus as the communal background for everyone. The united philosophy is very present in this syllabus; this is more like a guide to how the school as an institution should build up an independent nation. When you look at the syllabus from 2007 it is more about the learner and how he or she can become an individual citizen. The unity philosophy is still present in this newer syllabus, but it is not as obvious as

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26 National Institute for Educational Development Syllabus Junior Secondary phase, History grades 8-10 for basic education, 2007. NIED, Okahandja
27 NIED (1998)
28 NIED (1998) p. 11
29 NIED (2007)
30 NIED (1998)
in the one from 1998. The 2007 syllabus is more learner-centred, which can be seen in the chapter about Basic Competences, where it is said that every learner has his or hers own needs and that the teacher has to respect this in the classroom.

2.5 THEORETICAL APPROACH

When writing this thesis dealing with steering documents in culture we found three main theoretical approaches you have to take into consideration. We will present these three approaches on how to relate to our research questions. They will work as a foundation to our thesis; What can we experience while observing in the classroom / at school, according to the above relationship? What do the interviewed teachers express in this matte? What are the main differences between the latest steering documents?

2.5.1 THE CONCEPT OF CURRICULUM

There is no doubt that the curriculum has got an important role in the school system. However, there are large differences between the implementation from school to school, from region to region and from country to country as well. In order to distinguish between the different roles of the curriculum, there are three different concepts to the curriculum that need to be discussed. These are; the intended curriculum, the implemented curriculum and the achieved curriculum. In this thesis we used the first two concepts as a support to the research. Below we explain the two concepts further.

The intended curriculum: This curriculum concept is the written documents, in which the content works as a guide to practice\(^3\). In the case of Namibia, it is the National Institute for Education and Development\(^4\) that has been involved in the writing of these documents.

The implemented curriculum: This concept means that the activity goes on in the classroom, the classroom level, meaning what actually happens in the classroom. According to Dalin, previous research has shown that the curriculum is used differently in the classrooms, mostly depending on what kind of resources the school and teachers have. For example; materials, educated teachers, characteristics of the group of leaders in the classroom, and also how the headmaster and the teachers choose to approach the curriculum\(^5\).

\(^3\) Dalin, Per, 1995. Changing the school culture. Trowbridge, Wiltshire: Redwood Books
\(^4\) NIED (1996, 2007)
\(^5\) Dalin, P. (1995)
2.5.2 RE-CONCEPTUALISM

The knowledge within the school is already a sample from a much larger world. It is a cultural resource that comes from somewhere else, and is often a product of the perspectives and beliefs of the dominant segments of the society, such as cultural values and group.

According to Englund\(^{34}\) you can see the concept of re-conceptualism when you want to understand curriculums and the ideas behind them. He says that the education system is affected by different social ideas. It means that the concept of education is changing and adapting to the, at the moment predominant ideological base. A certain social order has been given an important place in the curriculum. The cultural and political hegemony that exists in the country can be seen in the political documents. Apple, whom Englund is referring to in his book, means that the teaching materials and the school documents are contributing to the reproduction of the cultural and ideological hegemony that the dominant groups in society want to maintain. It is these dominant groups in society, for example politicians, who outline and decide the steering documents for the national educational policy. These documents become tools for them to control and maintain the social and cultural values in society.

The school produces a certain kind of knowledge and it is an area for a specific culture and ideological hegemony. The teachers who are inside the system of education are agents for this cultural and ideological incorporation that takes place in the schools. Englund introduces an interesting theory, about the cultural hegemony that is reproduced through the education system and for the most part in the school.

2.5.3 CULTURE

In order to simplify, we want to explain what we mean by the concept of culture, based on the anthropologist Geert Hofstede.

Culture is not something that comes with births; it is something you get to know from an early age. The value comes with a certain culture is a collective phenomenon within groups who live in the same social environment, in this case the northern part of Namibia.

Culture can be described as a set of values and rules to live by, which the social group has in common\(^{35}\). People who live in a collective culture have similar ways of thinking and living. The values are not necessarily written down, but they have in come to exist

\(^{34}\) Englund, Tomas, 2005. *Läroplanens och skolkunskapens politiska dimension*. Riga: Daidalos

through different traditions and ways of living\textsuperscript{36}. Everybody lives in a society, which has got different kinds of social environments that reflects different cultural and social patterns. From a group of people you can often fin out what kind of society they live in, or what kind of values that are predominant in that specific group.

According to Hofstede, based on culture and economic development among other things, you can tell whether the society is collective or individual. In a collective culture, the group is the most important factor in this specific life pattern. \textit{``My salary goes not only to my nearest family, but to my whole extended family, if there is a need for it. I may be obligated to feed twenty people.''}\textsuperscript{37} This kind of loyalty towards relatives and sometimes others, expresses the core in the collective culture. In this kind of culture you do best in avoiding terms like \textit{``I''} or \textit{``me''}. On the other hand, in a culture with an individual perspective they encourage you to think of yourself as an individual in the society and not only as a part of a group\textsuperscript{38}.

There are certain distinctions between the two societies. In a collective society the interests of the group are more important than the interest of the single person, unlike the individual society where it is the other way around. Another important distinction is how the importance of privacy for the person is valued. In a collective society, patriotism and unity are important issues for the country and privacy is not important to a single person. In an individual society, the privacy is of great matter because people in this kind of society tend to see autonomy as an ideal.

From these two perspectives you can see different ways of approach the concept of education. Depending on what kind of culture you come from, you will therefore have a different view on education and education matters. In a collective culture you tend to see your education as an access to a group with higher status in the society, as well as earning money to better provide for your own group and family.

In the individual society education has a slightly different role. When the individual person gets an educational degree his or her economic values rises and so does his or her own self esteem\textsuperscript{39}.

Another anthropologist, Gillis Herlitz, discusses the concept of different cultures and the approach on the individual and the group. Herlitz writes about the terms of \textit{``I''} and \textit{``we''}. Some cultures, in this case the African, are predominantly collectivistic cultures and he


\textsuperscript{37} Interview with Mr. Mweutota [2008-11-03]

\textsuperscript{38} Hofstede, G. (2005)

\textsuperscript{39} Hofstede, G. (2005)
describes this type of culture as a “we”-culture. In this type of culture the human being is first of all seen as a member of a group, where his or her activities are directly related to this group.

In pure “we”-cultures, the group’s expectations on the individual are more important than any other expectation. For example, you see a tendency to strive for spiritual or religious values in life rather than material things such as career and individual success. For a person in a “we”- or a collective culture the most important thing is to withhold harmony and balance within the group. That is, according to Herlitz, why people in “we”-cultures avoid criticising other people straight to their faces. They would rather cover it up than disturbing the harmony in the group. They do not want to lose their face in front of their group. In Africa there exists a saying that represents this group mentality quite well; *One finger cannot pick a bug.*

Herlitz also mentions the meaning of languages. If two people speak the same language there can be problems but if two people speak two different languages the problems can, without a doubt, be even grater. So when two people, in this case Namibians an Swedes, try to communicate in a language that is not their own, problems can and probably will occur. The language those two people will speak is going to be English, because English is the official language of Namibia and a language that Swedes have as a second language. But this does not mean that all Namibians can speak it fluidly, no, this only means that the country has settled for one language. This does not take the different native languages in to account.

Most of us do not speak a foreign language well enough to express ourselves exactly the way we want to. Both language and body language differ from when you speak your own language. We will always miss a bit here and there, and this can create more problems. The communication will not be as distinctive as it would in any of our own native languages. Herlitz states that this will create problems with the understanding.

Herlitz also writes about time and the different perspectives on times that exist depending on where you live or where you come from. Common expressions for us in Sweden are “time is money” and “don’t waste time”. This shows, according to Herlitz, our perspective on time and the fact that time is limited and can cost money. But in several African cultures the general view on time is that it is unlimited. This was something we actually came across during our time in Namibia. “African time” is a common statement in

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40 Herlitz, G. (1999)
41 Herlitz, G. (1999)
42 Herlitz, G. (1999)
Namibia, and this reflects the general view of the aspect of time; “*time is the only thing we have plenty of*”\(^43\). This expression sums up their view on time versus ours.

\(^{43}\) Local expression we heard at the market
3 METHODS
In this chapter we will motivate our choice of methods used to collected data to our thesis. This is to help the reader to better understand the text and our approach toward our research. In order to gain a better understanding for the research we have been using the concept of triangulation\(^{44}\). This means we have been looking at our research from three different views.

3.1 METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH
Parts of the method are qualitative research, in the sentence that we have been using qualitative methods during our empirical study.

Some investigations are based on classroom investigations and interviews and discussions with teachers and people with connections to the school system in Namibia.

Another more theoretical investigation is made by comparing the steering documents and appropriate reading materials. This will make up the main part of this thesis.

In order to achieve a higher level of validity we used three methods. A qualitative investigation is built on a strategy where the focus is not only what is said during, for example an interview, but what kind of standpoint there is behind the words. The qualitative methods we used during our investigation were semi-structured interviews. The two other methods we used were observations and text analysis\(^{45}\).

We did our research with a qualitative aspect in order to achieve a deeper understanding of the Namibian schools. The thesis is a small field work with focus on the Namibian school system and more specific two different schools in northern Namibia. Field works are often small research intentions used when you want to concentrate and go deeper into one or two units. When the researcher is able to focus on only one case, the possibility to explain why and how the results are achieved the way they did increases.

When doing a study, it is important that the writer is aware of the fact that he or she has to decide on what they want to do a research about. There are two things you have to keep in mind\(^{46}\); the first is that the situation cannot be chosen at random. In a study you have to make sure that the chosen case is representative of a specific factor that is coherent with the studied area. The other thing you have to keep in mind is the fact that the researcher has to be able to justify the chosen area.

When it comes to the possibility of generalization it is important that the

\(^{46}\) Denscombe, M. (2009)
researcher is aware whether his or her fieldwork is similar or dissimilar to others of equal type during the investigation. To know this, you can before you start your investigation read about similar investigations in the same subject area and in some cases also in the same country.

Our investigation is done as a small case study with only two Namibian schools. They are not necessarily representative or typical for Namibian secondary schools and therefore it is not possible for us to generalize on basis of our investigation.

3.1.1 STEERING DOCUMENT ANALYSIS

The analysis of the steering documents constitutes the base of this investigation. The method of analyzing helps the researcher to gain a better understanding of the meaning of the content in a text or a document. In order to increase the relevance of the text the researcher can present different categories, ideas or questions linked to the research. This procedure will show what kind of text the researcher will give to the reader.  

Consequently, we analyzed the steering documents in order to gain a deeper understanding of the underlining thoughts of the texts, and in this way gain an understanding of the aims behind the level of formalization.

Furthermore, we have to know what is actually meant by the steering documents so that we can see and understand what is actually happening in the classroom during our observations.

3.1.2 CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS

A simple way of describing an observation is to say that you are watching a series of happenings in their natural environment. When the researcher uses the method of observations, he or she can avoid possibility of manipulation from the investigated person. The researcher can by his or her own observations see what is actually happening in certain situations.

We did direct observations in a closed environment, which is the most appropriate for this kind of observation. In this case, the closed environment was the classroom. The results from the observation are the things the two of us have actually seen and experienced.

According to Esaiasson in Metodpraktikan, there are different ways to approach

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47 Denscombe, M. (2009)
50 Esaiasson, P. (2007)
51 Esaiasson, P. (2007)
observations in research. The first one is the character of the participation; you can either remain passive or be active. The second approach is the time; the study can go on for several years or just for some weeks. The third approach is the risk of manipulation during the observation. This can be either dominant or non-existing. A fourth is how obvious the intentions are with the observation, are they concealed or are they open and well known. Our intentions were open and known for the principal, the teacher, and also the learners because as mentioned previously they know we were there to observe. The fifth is how the environment is constructed, weather it is artificial or natural. Our studied environment was not constructed in the way it was inside the schools.

This investigation has been affected by all these five approaches in one way or another. We were in Namibia, and did our research for approximately six weeks in the schools and in the end of the semester. The research was made during the same period of time in both schools, in this case three weeks in each school. We met the two teachers in their own and for them well-known environment, such as their offices and the classrooms and the teachers knew we were there to observe. In the result we chose to call them Teacher 1 and Teacher 2, in order to keep them anonymous.

The observations in this thesis were supposed to be passive in the way that we only made the observation in the classroom during the lessons. In some cases we were involved in the lessons when the teacher or students asked us questions, therefore we cannot say we were completely passive during the observations. The risk of manipulation was average in the sense that our presence was not a part of the usual environment.

With these observations, we have also been interviewing the teachers we have observed, which is a common procedure when making observations\textsuperscript{52}.

3.1.3 INTERVIEWS

In the two schools we visited we did interviews as a complement to our research and observations to get as wide a picture of the schools and teachers as possible. We interviewed the principals and a few teachers in each school. We also interviewed an in-job training teacher at the Teacher Resource Centre in Ongwediva, who helped us understand the School system. This man also worked as our field coach and he was the one who helped us get in contact with the two schools in Ongwediva. The teachers in each school introduced us to other teachers in the schools and we asked a few of them if they would consider being

\textsuperscript{52} Esiasson, P. (2007)
interviewed to help us with our thesis.

The qualitative interviews can be used as a complement to the observations. It is a common way to avoid discrepancies between what you are observing and what information you get from the interviews. In this coherence it is also necessary to say what the observations is not telling you, that is the difficulty to understand peoples intentions with their actions and what kind of interpretations they do in certain situation\(^5\). This is why it is important to have another foundation, aside from the observations, in these case interviews, for your research.

Interviews have been carried out with five teachers and two principals in the two schools. Four of the interviewed teachers were history teachers, whilst the fifth one was a bit older and had knowledge about the school system and the school she worked in, and therefore, an important source.

Semi-structured interviews have been applied in order to go beyond our specific topics, if necessary. During this kind of interviews the interviewer has got a list of topics he or she wants to cover. The interviewer is also prepared to be flexible and develop his and her ideas as interview goes along. By adopting this kind of interviews the answering person can give open-minded and more detailed answers\(^4\). Our implemented interviews were semi-structured and carried out with open questions and follow-up questions. Follow-up questions are good because in that way you can try to eliminate the risk of missing any important information.

By interviewing a person you can get a deeper understanding of how the specific person sees him or her self in this specific case. And by making observations of this person in their natural environment you can see whether the person gives you the right information or if he or she is telling you what the interviewed person thinks you, as a researcher, want to hear.

### 3.1.4 VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY

In order to make this investigation more valid and reliable, we chose the concept of triangulation. This concept means using three different methods in order to gain a higher level of understanding. The methods we used were, as previously mentioned; Interviews, classroom observations and text analysis of the steering documents.

When it comes to validity and reliability in a mostly qualitative research like this one, it can be better to talk in terms of trustworthiness and authenticity\(^5\). This is since we

\(^{53}\) Denscombe, M. (2009)  
\(^{54}\) Denscombe, M. (2009)  
have been investigating real life people and real life situations. Alan Bryman states that if you are investigating people instead of, for instance plants or animal, human beings often set a meaning to their world and what happens in it. People can manipulate their own behaviour in the direction they want. This aspect creates a problem for us in this investigation.

We have been visiting a country and a part of the world that is quite different from our own in terms of culture and the way you approach your own society. Namibia is, as previously mentioned, a culture where your social group is of great importance. Your existence is based on your group and what is best for you and the group. The problem for us can be that when you ask your responding person in an interview you can not completely sure that what they are saying is true, or if they tell you what the person think you want to hear. Or if we just do not understand what they mean. As mentioned in this text in the chapter about culture, a fear exists of letting your own group down in these collective societies. Therefore, as a researcher you cannot be completely sure that what your responding person says is valid or not.

One problem we bumped into during our interviews was the language barrier. According to Herlitz different languages can be a problem when it comes to understanding each other. English has become the official language in Namibia and most of the Namibians can speak and understand English. But since every Namibian tribe has got their own native language there can be a problem with the English language anyway. The English language can sometimes be difficult for us Swedes to understand since English is not a native language for us either. In cases like this, there can be a problem with the understanding of one another, and the fact that we come from different cultures can make the communication a bit confusing as well. As Herlitz mentioned, different cultures could have not only different languages but also different body language.

Another thing that might have affected our results in this thesis is the fact that we as visitors were not a part of the natural environment. The character of participation can either be passive or active. Our part was both, in the sense that the teacher sometimes asked us questions or to participate in the teaching act. But, in either way, our presence in the school can have affected the general attitude in the school. For example, the teachers may have adjusted their usual teaching to what he or she thought we wanted to see. The risk of us manipulating the research result is plausible and something we have to keep in mind.

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56 Herlitz, G. (1999)
57 Hofstede, G. (2005)
58 Herlitz, G. (1999)
In this context the focal point of triangulation is in using a quantitative method as a support to qualitative results from a qualitative method. The qualitative methods we used were semi-structured interviews and the analysis of the steering documents furthermore; the quantitative method used was the classroom observations. When using the concept of triangulation you double-check your information from your qualitative methods with the results from a supporting quantitative investigation. This is an attempt to secure facts that have been revealed during the other investigations. And as already mentioned, in this case it is of great importance when you are doing an investigation in a, for you, relatively new and unfamiliar culture with different approaches to your group and cultural background.

3.2 ETHICAL ASPECTS

When we arrived in Ongwediva we had a meeting with our contact person, Mr. Jason Mbodo. Mr. Mbodo works as an in-job training teacher at the Ongwediva Teacher Resource Centre and he has a pas as an English teacher. In order to get access to visit the schools we had to get an approval from the Ongwediva Town Council. We told them about the aim of our thesis, and the fact that e had gotten a scholarship from SIDA, to go to Namibia and write a thesis as a part of our university programme.

When we visited the two schools, that we chose to call School A and School B, instead of their real names, we met with the headmasters and teachers of each school. We introduced ourselves and presented the aims of our thesis and the method we intended to use. We asked for permission to visit the teacher’s lessons and classes to do our observations and the interviews with the teachers.

We thought it was important to let each interviewed teacher know it was voluntarily to participate in our study, and that the interviews would be a part of our thesis. We also thought it was important for them to know that their identities were to be kept anonymous in our thesis. Furthermore, to get a deeper and more vivid discussion, we tried to talk to them as colleagues with similar competencies. This approach may have resulted in the open and interesting discussion we also had in the teachers’ office.

We treated all the collected material with respect and each day we did a short summary of the day. This was a way for us to try and keep our own values and perspectives out from the information we got and from what we have seen and heard during the day. We used keywords, short faces and similar when we did our observations, interviews and discussions with the teachers. We did this in order to make sure we did not miss anything significant. Finally, the two of us were always attending the classroom observations and the
semi-structured interviews together, this because we wanted to make sure not to miss anything important.
4 RESULTS
In the following chapter, a description of the empirical studies will be introduced. These investigations consist of the political steering documents for the school, such as the curriculum and syllabus in the subject of History, interviews, and classroom observations from the two different schools. We summarize relevant results and we study the eventual connection between them.

4.1 STEERING DOCUMENTS
In this chapter we aim to present the result from our steering document investigation. We will present, as stated earlier on, the main differences between the two latest versions of the steering documents. We will begin with describing the results from the two latest curricula and then move forward to the latest syllabus.

The curriculum for basic education ⁶⁰ builds on the first cycle of Namibian curricula from 1990. One of the purposes of the curriculum is to ensure that every school throughout the country works with the same goals and aims. These political steering documents describe the national goal and aims for the Namibian school system, and principles of teaching, learning, and assessments. One of the major challenges for Namibia is to get quality and relevance of the education system. These documents have their roots in the independence constitution society.⁶¹

One of the main differences we could see between the two curricula from 1996 and from 2007 was the perspective on our theoretical approach, democracy, learner-centred, and gender. Both curricula stated the importance of these aspects, but the newer version was more particular and the aspects are more in focus in this text than in the earlier addition. As mentioned before, the key to get a democratic society is through learner-centred education. In the draft curriculum from 2007 we could read that the schools are supposed to help develop a democratic society, with national unity, regional, African, and international understanding. In a world that is globally affected it is important to have a strong identity and strong value both as an individual and in the culture of the nation. We noticed that the curriculum from 2007 was detailed and the aims where more individualistic when compared to the curriculum from 996 were the unity philosophy was more accentuated.

We can also show that there is a difference between the two syllabuses in the subject of History. The syllabus from 1998 takes focus on the collective community, where

⁶⁰ NIED (2007)
⁶¹ Snyder, C. (1999)
the people are united. In order to achieve this, it is important to stimulate an interest for the past in order to gain a better understanding of the present and the future. In the syllabus from 2007 the focal point is rather on the learners as individuals with different needs. 2007 syllabus is more learner-centred than the older one. This is especially visible in the chapter about Basic Competencies, where it is stated that every learner have his or her own needs and that the teacher has to respect this in the classroom.

To summarize, the national goal presented in these curricula has not changed much from 1996 until 2007. The main difference between the two is not that they do not say the same thing, because, they almost do, but the fact that the curriculum from 2007 is developed and formulated as a framework for the teachers to go by. Both curricula state the importance of democratic values in the schools as well as a national unity and developing a democratic society. We can also see that both of these curricula see learner-centred education as a very important factor. It is important to see all the different individuals in the classroom and to achieve a strong society with individuals that work together. The curriculum brings up the fact that everybody is supposed to be seen as equals, both in the classroom and the school environment as a whole. According to the curricula the teachers have to be aware of the different gender roles that are so firmly rooted and the teachers have to see beyond gender. A good example of this is a situation we became spectators of during one day. We were visiting a history class, in order to do our daily observations. The classroom was quite crowded and just in front of the teacher a couple of girls were seated, listening to the teacher and writing down what the teacher said. In the back of the room there were a couple of boys sitting, almost asleep with their books closed. But at some point during this lesson one of the boys decided he wanted to sit in front. So, the boy just moved one of the girls so he could take her seat in front. The boy’s seat in the back seemed to be to far from the blackboard for the girl to see and she didn’t want to sit in between the boys whom were not interested in the subject. The boy sat down on the girl’s seat and continued to sleep and the girl was forced to sit on the floor with her books in her lap. Neither the teacher, nor the rest of the learners reacted to this situation.

The syllabus from 2007 also focuses on the aspect of learner-centred education and in the concept of creating strong individuals for the future Namibia.
4.2 INTERVIEWS

Interviews have been carried out with a few persons in the two different schools. The questions were formulated for the subject of History and we formulated these with our aim and our research questions in mind. Because of the similar results of the interviews, an account of the interviews one by one will not be given. Therefore, in the text below, a summary of the interviews is given.

When it came to the discussion about the teachers’ opinions about having group discussions with the learners in the classroom, all interviewed teachers were of the same opinion. They all said that they used group discussions as a medium of learning, because both the syllabus and the curriculum said so. During our observation we saw that the use of group discussions were non-existent.

Later on in the interviews when we asked about whether or not they passed on the information that is in the curricula and the syllabuses to the learners, again all the teachers said they did. But when we asked a learner about that he or she said they did not. Almost everything was a contradiction to how they really executed their teaching in the classroom, at least under that specific period of time when we were there to observe and talk to them. The only thing the teachers were not agreeing on were the use of workshops. The teachers in one school were more inclined to attend to an eventual workshop than the teachers in the other school. When it came to the concept of gender and gender issues awareness almost all the interviewed teachers said they tried to follow the curriculum guidelines. There were a few who added that boys often took more of the teacher’s time because the boys were often those who made more noise and therefore naturally took more space in the classroom than the girls. This appeared to be a common problem. Overall, most of the teachers said they were aware of the gender aspect of the teaching, but when we talked to them further about this issue they said nowadays it was more about the girls being able to participate in school at the same conditions as boys.

Learner-centred teaching was something the teachers said they were also aware of. All of them referred, once again, to the curriculum and what it said about learner-centred teaching. All of the interviewed said the same thing. They do try to do what is written in the curriculum and the syllabus. But some teachers mentioned the, to them, obvious problem with learner-centred education. The fact that the classes are too large, the possibilities to see and
meet every learner’s needs are quite small. “[…] it is hard to accommodate every student’s separate need when you have so little time and a big class”\textsuperscript{62}.

When we asked about the democratic values and the democratic aspects of teaching all of the teachers said it was an important issue nowadays since the independence in 1990. All of them once again referred to the curriculum and what the text said about the democratic aspects of teaching.

The named difference was that the female teachers said they were a bit more inclined to talk about it in the classroom. One of the teachers actually said it out loud that he or she was reluctant towards talking about politics in the classroom. Because “[…] it could have the opposite effect in terms of the students’ only will adapt their parents’ point of view […]”\textsuperscript{63}. All the teachers were somewhat homogeneous in their answers. The largest difference as we noticed was what the teachers answered about gender equality. But not even there we found answers that differed enough to mention it as a specific difference.

\section*{4.3 CLASSROOM OBSERVATIONS}

The observations have been done in the schools we visited and below we will present the results of those observations. The observations took place in different classes that our mentor teaches. We have chosen to summarize these experiences in one chapter in which we will present the results, and we let the schools be anonymous by calling them school A and school B. In each school we had a mentor who we followed during lessons for approximately ten schooldays each.

School A and school B are quite similar when it comes to number of learners, socio-economic status, and the number of teachers, which is why we decided to present them together. Our mentors or the teachers we followed are also kept anonymous. They are, as mentioned before, called teacher 1 and teacher 2.

Below, we will try to describe the school facilities and how two of the interviewed teachers work in the classroom. The facilities at school A were very limited for teacher 1; there was one rugged blackboard in each classroom. So when teacher 1 for instance needed a map, it had to be portrayed on the blackboard in order to show the learners the geographical area. Therefore, a great responsibility is left to the teacher’s geographical skills.

In the classrooms the blackboard is the most common facility and in this school the only one we saw during our observation. Furthermore, the blackboard and the structure in

\textsuperscript{62} Quote by teacher at school A
\textsuperscript{63} Quote by teacher at school A
which teacher 1 writes on it, has an important role because the asset of textbooks. It is not common for teacher 1 to use the blackboard; instead the teacher talks from the book, often very quiet and with no empathy. The information is not wide or deep it is just what is standing in the textbooks.

Not every one of the learners has the asset of a textbook and it is common for them to share one book between two learners. This is because the textbooks are expensive and the schools cannot afford to buy one for every learner. The learners cannot buy one by themselves because of the cost, but both school A and B can lend out older textbooks to the learners to copy them. The environment for learning at school B is similar to the one at school A when it comes to classrooms facilities, such as blackboards and benches. There is no further learning equipment in the classrooms such as maps etc. When a map is needed, the teacher does the same thing as teacher 1 at school A, which is to draw a map on the blackboard. The classroom communication is a one-way communication, where the teachers does most of the talking and asks only a few rhetorical questions. There are rarely any other types of questions asked in teacher 2’s classroom activities., but in this classroom all the learners have to listen to the teacher otherwise teacher 2 will let you know. As we experienced the learners are not often given the chance to form or utter their own opinion.

The common procedure in the classroom was that the learners wrote down what teacher 1 said and what is eventually written on the blackboard, this exercise book served as their textbook. Sometimes the learners slept during the lessons and teacher 1 did not care if they listened or not. Teacher 1 did not integrate the learners into the lessons by waking them up and asking them questions. Teacher 2 as school B was more attentive to the learner’s level of activity in the classroom. Teacher 2 classes were also supposed to be around 45 minutes long, but lasted only about 30 minutes or less. The teacher tended to be late, referring to the symbol of African time and sometimes the teacher did not even bother to show up. We found ourselves waiting for teacher 2 on several occasions, without showing up to give us an explanation on why. Furthermore, teacher 2 got angry, if the learners were late to his classes.

All of the information that comes up in the classroom comes from the textbook, and all of the examinations are designed from it as well. This approach to learning is similar to the one at school A. The information teacher 2 gives is altogether quite shallow and does not catch the learner’s interests in any particular way. However, the teacher speaks with empathy about the historic issues that are brought up in the book. Teacher 2 also uses the blackboard quite frequently and lets the learners write off what is on it. We did not see any of the democratic nor learner-centred approaches which both teacher 2 and all of the other
interviewed teachers claimed they were very aware of it. It was the same thing with teacher 1. This teacher did not make classroom teaching especially democratic; teacher 1 used the textbook as the only source of information. Another contradiction we saw was the fact that both teachers had mentioned the importance of making the teaching as learner-centred as possible.

One other contradiction we found, which closely related to the democratic aspect and also the gender issue, was the fact that the learners were almost never given the chance to utter their own opinion in certain questions and cases.

The number of teachers differs between the two schools. At school B there is only one teacher in the subject of history. This was the teacher we followed for two weeks. Teacher 2 talked quite loud and wanted everyone to listen, and it was important that the learners listened to each other when they had something to say. Teacher 2 wanted the learners to read out loud from the book. This was a way for the learners to practise their English accent and their reading ability.

During our observation we also could see that the textbook had an important role for teacher 1 and that there is a need for the textbook. The major materials in the school are as we observed the teacher, the textbook, and the blackboard. Teacher 1 uses the textbook during the lessons and almost every time it ends up with the teacher reading out loud from the book. All the information comes from the textbook, which the examinations are designed from. The preparation before classes was very poor or none existing; teacher 1 just read in the textbook a bit before class and then went teaching. Similarly teacher 2 did not use any other material than the textbook to form the lessons, and teacher 2 only uses the textbooks to get the information that is written on the board. The teachers seldom use their own experiences to emphasize what the book says.

A notion, which was developed during the observation, was that teacher 1 did not use other materials, like newspaper or other methods in the classroom to adjust the teaching to the learners. In the classroom we observed that it was not that common for teacher 1 to try and integrate the learners and get their attention. Sometimes teacher 1 asks a rhetorical question that the learners can answer but teacher 1 did not have any follow-up questions. Therefore, the dialogue between the teachers and the learners was quite small. We could also observe that the teacher almost never asked the learners about their own opinion.
5 ANALYSES

As a result of different triangulating investigations\textsuperscript{64}, such as steering document investigation, classroom observations and interviews, it is obvious that there is a gap between the level of formalization and the level of realization. The steering documents are supposed to act as a framework for the teaching in the subject of History and for the teachers in their profession. As we can see the teachers say they act in line with the steering documents, but do something else.

We can show that the culture and a certain kind of knowledge are reproduced by the teachers in the classroom\textsuperscript{65}. During our observations we noticed that the culture is deeply se in the society, and in this case also in the classroom. One example is the situation where the boy decided to move the girl and take her seat in the classroom in school B. In this type of situations it is clear that the aim in the curriculum is not being followed. The different aspects we have been looking at; democratic, learner-centred, and gender, are not present under these circumstances. According to Englund\textsuperscript{66} this cultural and ideological hegemony is reproduced through the education system and for the most part in the school. This is showed in the steering documents that are created by the dominant groups in the society, such as politicians, and show how they want to mirror the society. Reading between the lines in the curriculum, we can see that it is important to continue working with education. These political steering documents aim at a knowledge based society with strong individual citizens. You can see a development in the steering documents were they are developing from a collective to an individual thought. This shows that Namibia is more of a collective society but the country is developing to an individual society according to these political steering documents.

In line with the discussion above and according to Hofstede\textsuperscript{67}, you can see whether a country is collective or individual, based on the cultural and the economic development. Countries that are familiar with an economic development are also experiencing a development in the society, from a collective to an individual society, says Hofstede.

The unity philosophy and the cultural hegemony create a sense of belonging. The Namibian culture is still very affected by the apartheid times and everybody seems to think that unity throughout the country is the best thing for a future Namibia. In our investigation a cultural identity and unity philosophy was present, and this identity and philosophy is created from the culture in the classroom and on the schoolyard. The teachers who are inside the

\textsuperscript{64} Bryman, A. (2004)
\textsuperscript{65} Hofstede, G. (2005)
\textsuperscript{66} Englund, T. (2005)
\textsuperscript{67} Hofstede, G (2005)
system of education are agents for the cultural and ideological incorporations that take place in the school. During our research we came in contact with the phenomenon of African time. The teachers did not always show up to the their classes in time and this could perhaps be explained by this concept that has a place in their culture. The teachers we visited during the work with this thesis seemed to have this perception of time applied on them. Maybe it is due to the fact that they are so integrated with their cultures’ perspective on time that they just do not think about the fact that they kept learners waiting.

The republic of Namibia stands between two different curricula and are also in the process of rebuilding their nation from time of independence. The politicians want one thing with the Namibian education system but there is an obvious problem with the implementation of the new curriculum. These documents are tools for them to control and maintain the social and cultural values in society. Our theoretical framework includes the concept of re-conceptualism and according to Englund⁶⁸ you can use this theoretical approach when you want to understand the steering documents. The education system is affected by different social ideas. The knowledge that comes to the school is already a sample from a much larger world and is often a product from the dominant segments of the society. The teacher’s tend do reproduce their cultural heritage, and that heritage is not always in line with the curriculum. We can see as we mentioned earlier that there is a gap between the level of formalisation and the level of realization. The focus on democracy, learner-centred, and gender in the classroom is not always in line with the steering documents.

It is obvious that the curricula that we have been investigating, from 1996 and from 2007, have developed from seeing the collective as more important to see the individual as more important. Because they want citizens that are strong and independent, and the learner-centred education helps the learner to be that citizen. The draft curriculum from 1996 says that the basic education should “promote national unity, liberty, justice and democracy”⁶⁹. The aim is that the learners develop responsibility towards other, such as people in the own community and the nation as a whole.

The whole Namibian society has got an ambition that is present in the steering documents. This ambition is to induce an individualistic development to the Namibian society. Another thing points in this direction is the fact that the parents now can choose what school to put their children in, private or public school, according to the interviewed

⁶⁹ NIED (1996) p. 4
principals. This affects their possibility to choose by themselves without being affected by someone else’s decision. It is the individual person that chooses and the collective society.

The process of development in what the teachers do in the classroom is going slow while the development of the steering documents is going much faster. Some teachers seem to think their way of teaching is still applicable to the newer schools system. This can become a problem since the steering documents’ aim is to develop the school in a specific direction, and this aim has a risk of being lost in the teachers’ cultural baggage. As we can see the steering documents present what the politicians wants the society to become but in the meantime the classroom is presenting something else. Namibia is a country that is more developed in one aspect, but not in others. Therefore, the development of culture that the teachers are representing in their classroom does not need to be similar in different regions of Namibia.

This development is also shown in the perspective of learner-centred and gender. The learner-centred education has an important role in reaching a democratic way of work in the school and when the development is going slow, this affects this process. The deeply set culture is shown in the classroom when it comes to democracy, learner-centred education, and gender.

Dalin means that the concept of the implemented curriculum is what is really going on in the classroom. The resources the school and the teachers have are of great matter for how the curricula are used. Other things to take notice of are that different schools have different ways of implementing and the fact that different schools are differently eager to send teachers away on workshops. That can also have effect on the gap between the formalization level and the realization level; it either gets smaller, or larger.

The interviews showed that the teachers used the steering documents diligently and that the democracy perspective was central in the teaching. According to the interviewed people the steering documents were frequently used in school.

We noticed, during our observations, that the teachers did not work the way they told us. They often said one thing during the interview, but then they did another thing whilst in the classroom, and also different when compared to what the steering documents said. Their cultural baggage was not left outside. What is shown in the classroom reflects the culture and not always what is in the steering documents. What the teachers say and do is not something they make up, but they are a part of a culture with traditions and this affects

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70 Hofstede, G. (2005)
them. What the interviewed teachers say and what they do in the classroom was not, as stated earlier, not in line with the steering documents. We came to the conclusion that not only the teachers’ cultural baggage had something to do with their work in the classroom; other aspects were to consider as well.

The fact that we arrived during the very last weeks of the semester is also something we have to have in mind. This can affect the result, because a lot of the learners and teachers were in the middle of the examination process. Therefore, it is possible that the form of the lessons can have been affected at this time. Perhaps the teachers had other things on their mind, such as examinations, and therefore they did not put as much effort in their teaching as they usually do. Another thing we have in mind in this thesis is the fact that it was our field coach that helped us to get in contact with the two different schools. He was the one who decided which schools to visit and come in contact with.

The language can, as mentioned, be a problem when doing this kind of research in another part of the world. Herlitz71 talks about the problems that can occur when two people speaks a language that is not their own to begin with. This is something we have noticed during our research. There were times when we did not understand what the teachers meant when they answered our questions and it was quite clear to us that they did not understand what we were asking about. This can affect the result in such way that we can not be entirely sure that what the interviewed teachers said was the entire truth or just fragments of it. This is why we chose triangulation as our choice of method.

When using triangulation you can, in a way, cover the most aspects of a subject. This method covers the things that are written, said and finally the things that are done. This formulates a quite solid foundation to the results of our thesis. The negative aspects can, as mentioned, be the interviews, because of the obvious problem with language and understanding each other.

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6 FINAL WORDS

In this thesis we wanted to investigate the steering documents used in a couple of Namibian schools and find out if and how the teachers used them in their lessons. We wanted to see if there was a gap between those different levels, and we worked on this thesis with our aim in focus; how we as visiting teaching students interpret the relationship between the steering documents and the teaching in the classroom.

Namibia is a young country still going through social development, such as in the school system. The development is slow and the teachers are not following what the steering documents tell them to do. One reflection we made through this was there is an ongoing power struggle between the social and political layers of the society. This struggle gives expression of ideology, politics, and power. The centre of the struggle is the state and its educations politics; in this case the steering documents.

We can see this power struggle between the teachers at school and what the politicians want with the steering documents. The teachers seem to want to pass on their cultural heritage from their school years while the political steering documents want the teachers to go in a specific direction. This seems to be where the conflict lies in the Namibian school system.

One reason for this changing process in schools can be that the government founded workshops with in-job teaching training are not fulfilling its original purpose. It is possible, from what we have learnt in our interviews, that the teachers do no go to many of these workshops in order to develop their teaching and their role as teachers. The main explanation seemed to be the time issue. There are too many things to attend to at school; the consequence of this is that there is not enough time to attend the workshops. The aim with these workshops is, according to Mr. Mbodo, to incorporate the teachers in the newest syllabus and curriculum. This changing process can either be fast or slow in different schools and can therefore not be generalized in this thesis. Some schools can have more or less material and or have no opportunities to attend the workshops, and these differences can be shown in the classrooms. It affects the gap between the level of formalization and the level of realization.

The teachers are in the middle of a great changing process and have to acclimatize both themselves and the learners to these changes; this may take some time, naturally.

Maybe, if you as a teacher would have gone through what happened in Namibia before independence you would think it is important to let the next generation know their
history. This is so make them understand the unity thought has got an important role in the Namibian society.

According to Hofstede\textsuperscript{72} you can, based on culture and economic development, tell whether the society is collective or individual. And a closer look at the Namibian steering documents will tell you that they Namibian society is changing from a collective into an individual society. And according to our beliefs, the citizens need a culture to refer to. This common culture is created by the society and is under development just as the society is.

It would be interesting to investigate this when the generation who is in school today is older and more experienced. Therefore, a future investigation could tell how the teachers in a couple of years work in the classroom and what the steering documents will say at that point. Already you can see a change in the younger generation thinks more like individuals and speak better English; hence it would be interesting to explore this field.

A concluding remark, the culture is present in the classroom and the teacher is the one who passes this information on to the learners. Even if the curriculum says something else the teacher’s role in school is of great matter. We came to the conclusion that there were, in fact, a gap between the steering documents and the classroom activities in the two schools we visited. Namibia is country that according to the steering documents is striving to become a more individualistic country. A new generation stands by the door and the future development is yet to see.

\textsuperscript{72} Hofstede, G. (2005)
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Interviews

Ms. Cecilia Paulus, History teacher grade 8-12. Gabriel Taapopi secondary school, Ongwediva, Namibia


2008-10-27 Mr. Sakaria N.N. Eelu, principle of Gabriel Taapopi secondary school, Ongwediva, Namibia

2008-10-30 Mr. Immanuel Nakashole, education officer in history, Ongwediva Teacher Resource Center, Ongwediva, Namibia.


2008-11-06 Mr. Erik Kemanya, principle of Mweshipandeka secondary school. Ongwediva, Namibia.

2008-11-07 Mr. Jason Mbodo, education officer and advisory teacher for English, Ongwediva Teacher Resource Center, and our field mentor in Namibia.


Discussion

2008-11-11 Mr. Jason Mbodo, education officer and advisory teacher for English, Ongwediva Teacher Resource Center, and our field mentor in Namibia.
Appendix A, interview guide

- Why do you work as a teacher?
- Do you have an education to become a teacher?
- How long are your lessons when you teach in the classroom?
- Do the lessons look almost the same as the ones we have observed?
- What textbook do you use, and who is it that decides what textbook you use?
- Do you use all the information that stands in the textbook?
- Do you use other material such as other textbook, text or magazines?
- In the classroom do the learners work in groups and discuss during the lessons?
- How important do you think the curriculum and the syllabuses are?
- Do you work on the bases of the curriculum and the syllabuses in the classroom?
- Do the learners know what the curriculum and the syllabus say?