Exploring voices exploring appropriate education

Cees Grol

A practitioners’ discourse
Exploring Voices Exploring Appropriate Education
A practitioners’ discourse

Verkennen van stemmen die passend onderwijs verkennen
Een discours van mensen uit de praktijk
(Met een samenvatting in het Nederlands)

Proefschrift
ter verkrijging van de graad van doctor
aan de Universiteit voor Humanistiek te Utrecht
op gezag van de Rector, Prof. Dr. G.J. L.M. Lensvelt-Mulders,
ingevalge het besluit van het College voor Promoties
in het openbaar te verdedigen
op 28 november 2012
des voormiddags om 10.30 uur.

doors
Cornelius Egbertus Joseph Grol
Geboren op 14 maart 1952, te Groningen, Nederland
Promotor
Prof. dr. Hugo Letiche, Universiteit voor Humanistiek

Co-promotor
Dr. Peter Pelzer, Universiteit voor Humanistiek

Beoordelingscommissie
Prof. dr. Hans Jansen, University of the West of England
Prof. dr. Alexander Maas, Universiteit voor Humanistiek
Dr. Hans Schuman, Fontys
Prof. dr. Paul Verweel, Universiteit Utrecht
Prof. dr. Jack Whitehead, Liverpool Hope University
“… he who has had the luck to be born a character can laugh even at death.
He cannot die.
The man, the writer, the instrument of the creation will die, but his creation does not die.
And to live for ever, it does not need to have extraordinary gifts or to be able to work wonders.
Who was Sancho Panza?
Who was Don Abbondio?
Yet they live eternally because – living germs as they were – they had the fortune to find a
fecundating matrix, a fantasy which could raise and nourish them: make them live for ever”

(Pirandello, 1998, 6)
Since entering the University for Humanities’ part-time DBA / PhD programme in January 2008 I have had a marvellous time of diverging and converging perceptions, perspectives, trains of thought and creativity. Sometimes I felt shaken and lost, at other times euphoric and encouraged. Although a lot of studying involves sitting behind a desk, ‘working vaguely behind a computer’ to cite my youngest son Erik, it was not a lonely job – on the contrary.

At the start of the programme I had a great deal of encouragement and support from many people, to start with my fellow cohort 7 students and especially: Lizette van Donkerkoed, Ine van Emmerik, Hans Frederik, Gifty Gyamera, Carolien Nijhuis, Wim Snijders, Kerstin van Tiggelen and Elvin Zoet.

I gained many new insights from the programme’s core and visiting tutors: Robert van Boeschoten, David Boje, Asmund Born, Steve Brown, Peter Case, Paul Cilliers, Jack Cohen, Yannick Gabriel, Heather Hopfler, Dian-Marie Hosking, Douwe van Houten, Chris Kuiper, Ruud Kaulingfres, Geoff Lightfoot, Simon Lilley, Alphonso Lingis, Steve Linstead, Alexander Maas, Ilja Maso, Jean-Luc Moriceau, Burkhard Sievers and Adri Smaling. Some of my thanks are posthumous unfortunately. It was amazing to have opportunities to meet and talk to these inspiring people. I am also grateful to have met Yvonne Leemans who advised me to reinforce the auto-ethnographic part of my study.

Hugo Letiche and Peter Pelzer were my most important persons academically. They supervised my exploratory process in a significant and supportive way. I presume that Peter in particular must have been driven crazy by my ongoing attempts and drives to diverge; thank you for your patience and your ongoing positive way of showing the need to converge. Hugo’s comments were more straightforward, but cooperative and constructive from my auto-ethnographic and narrative perspective again and again; thank you for directing me. And I enjoyed tapping from Peter’s and Hugo’s paralogic discussions on my work during the shared supervision sessions; it enacted intellectual freedom and the additional value of sharing insights.

The practitioners who talked to me were the most important people from the exploring voices exploring appropriate education perspective. Their stories about appropriate education form the core information of my polylogue, my story on the daily practitioners’ discourse on appropriate education. Their commitment to tell their stories was extremely inspiring. Thank you for your information and the willingness to cooperate.
I did not apply for a voucher at the Hogeschool Utrecht where I work, since I preferred to retain my own intellectual freedom during my exploratory process. Yet my educational manager Riki Verhoeven has supported me from the very first day I started the study, which I appreciated and still appreciate highly.

My colleagues exhibited a great deal of interest in what I was doing during my exploratory process, and gave me the room to share new insights. Some of them played a particular role for a set of different reasons. Renée van der Linde introduced me to the part-time DBA/PhD course, Loes Houweling gave me feedback several times leading to new insights, and Karel Mulderij offered me ideas and accommodation whenever I stayed for a week in Utrecht. At the end Renée van der Linde supported me in the process of creating my polylogue. Comments of Nico de Vos were inspiring, even when mentioned in passing. Thank you all for your interest and support.

Albert Ligtenberg, Lies Ypkema and Sietse Durkstra are some of my former students who introduced me into the works of Boje during their study. Marieke Leseman is my former student who introduced me into the narrative turn. Thank you for introducing me.

I met Hans Jansen several times during my exploratory process; he is always open to sharing ideas and giving feedback. And he paved the way to DeWeijer Design BNO and Real Life Publishers. That is how I met Jochem Bolleman, Leonie Koppel, Marijn ten Kroode and Anita Willems-Bodewes; I am grateful they handled the formatting of my texts and photos.

Hans Nipshagen had the courage to initiate me into some sculpting rites in an extraordinarily patient way. Hans, thanks.

Putting energy into exploring voices exploring appropriate education, alongside working at the Institute for Ecological Pedagogy, implied neglecting family and friends. So I have to apologise for not having met our social-emotional standards; I hope my extended and nuclear family, and my Groningen and Termunten friends and soul mates will forgive me for having been selfish for five years. Some of these people I have to mention in particular.

The first is my friend Vincent who died in a bizarre accident on 25 May 2008. Ideals to live and to die for acquired an intense dimension; I feel indebted to Juliette and their children for the way they shared their grievance and resilience, a life lesson.

The second ones are my sons Carel and Tom for supporting writing my texts respectively the creating of the polylogue. As I experience with all my kids, we changed educational roles when and where I followed their advices and guidelines.

The third one is my daughter-in-law Ilona Kranendonk who organised the infrastructure to improve the English medium of my text. She recruited her colleague Terence Kennedy to edit my text, what appeared to be an excellent move.

Last but not least in this respect is Karin Boonstra. She directed me to the track of ‘alternating views’, a milestone in my process of exploring voices exploring appropriate education.

This just leaves one person to mention, my wife Marola. In October 2007 I walked with her through the broad landscapes of East Groningen near our cottage in Termunten. We looked back on our lives so far with satisfaction, something other than looking back in self-righteousness. We perceived many opportunities emerging while discussing our future, one of them being working less and increasingly enjoying the enchanting environment we walked through. We decided to put into effect that part-time retirement plan as from the summer holiday of 2009. Two months later I subscribed to the part-time DBA/PhD programme and I have never been so busy and absent-minded in whole my life since then. I do not regret the choice I made, yet I feel a profound indebtedness because of the way I betrayed our shared ideals and simultaneously because of the way you have encouraged me in enjoying my exploratory process. In the interim we attended a Bob Dylan concert, singing that times are changing. Are they, I wonder?

Cees Grol
28 November 2012
Introduction

Appropriate education is a Dutch policy. It obliges school administrations to organise diverse educational settings so as to offer all children an appropriate education arrangement in their local or regional environment (Keesenberg, 2008). The researcher who wrote this thesis was one of these administrators, a voluntary job as a tiny part of his educational activities. It facilitated entry to the site he explored.

The researcher initially believed he was exploring the Appropriate Education phenomenon; yet he appeared to explore the appropriate education discourse in daily practice. He attended appropriate education meetings and interviewed practitioners involved in the implementation of the appropriate education policy. He became intrigued by doing justice to the variety between and within voices he heard, recorded and transcribed. Two tracks emerged in the researcher’s exploratory process.

One track appeared to be the researcher’s reflection on his position as researcher in relation to the interviewees. As a result the researcher decided to explore relational (Ellis, 2007) and performative (Holman Jones, 2005) ethics in addition to prevailing ethics in qualitative and narrative research (Baarda, Goede & Teunissen, 2009; Clandinin, 2007; Cohen, Manions & Morrisson, 2000; Evers, 2007; Maso & Smaling, 1998). This exploration led to the researcher’s idea of writing a ‘civic dialogue’ to put identities and positions in conflict and conversation (Holman Jones, 2005) as a way of representing the diversity in the practitioners’ appropriate education discourse – that is: the discourse he explored.

The other track was deconstructing the verbatim transcripts of the interviews and other documents the researcher collected. The researcher developed a deconstructive tool as a means to look for ‘Boje-an’ stories in the verbatim transcript texts; stories told without a proper plot or mediated coherence that might or might not make sense in retrospect (Boje, 2001). Inspired by Bakhtin (1981, 1984b) the researcher decided to write a dialogue. The researcher was particularly challenged by the rewarding power of the dialogue’s characters’ voices that he was to create.

Continuing his exploratory process the researcher decided to merge the two tracks into one by constructing a practitioner’s polylogue1 out of the stories he found. The researcher emplotted (Boje, 2001) the stories temporarily: as a means of constructing a polylogue. Then the researcher created five characters to perform the polylogue in the form of an appropriate education meeting.

The researcher wrote a scenario to perform the particular meeting, a scenario beyond the narrative prison of strategy and unity of coherence (Boje 2008). This antinarrative approach prevented the author from plotting and therefore becoming the polylogue researcher’s monologic plane (Bakhtin, 1984b).

The scenario was enacted, and the verbatim transcript served as a starting point for writing the same meeting from the perspective of each of the five characters as a way of representing the multi-voicedness of the practitioner’s appropriate education discourse. The researcher wove these five perspectives into one play to put the five characters and their positions directly in conflict and conversation as suggested by Holman Jones (2005).

At the end of his exploratory process the researcher reflected, taking Vygotsky as an external point (Procee, 2006; Procee & Visscher-Voerman, 2004). He reflected on his explorer’s role, on voices exploring appropriate education and on the zones of proximal development of the appropriate education discourse.

I am that researcher. This introduction tracks my exploratory process into voices exploring appropriate education. My thesis aims at enabling readers to follow the thoughts and ideas of the five characters involved in the implementation of the Dutch appropriate education policy, antinarratively representing the practitioners’ appropriate education discourse. The antinarrative construction of a polylogue is the narrative of my thesis, the construction of an antinarrative appropriate education polylogue my representation of the diversity in the appropriate education discourse I explored.

In terms of Watzlawick, Beavin Bales & Jackson (2011/1967) I communicate in my thesis on two levels. The first is the content level, which is the plotless polylogue as contented in Chapter Four: Voices exploring appropriate education. The second is the relationship level consisting of different layers. The first relational layer is the argument to write a plotless level to do justice to the variety within and between the voices I heard, and to prevent the polylogue becoming my univocal plane. This argument is underpinned in Chapter Two on My exploring voices. The second relational layer in my communication is to be responsible to the academic community and the reader by describing my exploratory process in terms of events, considerations and decisions in

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1 Multiple persons can be involved in a dialogue (Kessels, Boers & Mostert, 2002). To emphasise the participation of multiple persons the researcher called his dialogue a polylogue.
Chapters Two, Three and Five respectively: My exploring voices, Exploring voices exploring appropriate education and Post voices. In a way I also wrote Chapter one on Appropriate education from a relational perspective, that is: as a means to introduce appropriate education and its discourse for readers not knowledgeable in this area.

Introduction to the chapters

The thesis on ‘Exploring Voices Exploring Appropriate Education’ describes an exploratory process into a practitioners’ discourse on appropriate education.

Chapter one: Appropriate Education is about the Dutch educational policy called Passend onderwijs. The chapter positions the appropriate education in national and international educational and ethical Discourses with a capital ‘D’ and discourses with a lower-case ‘d’.

Chapter Two: My Exploring Voices starts with the autobiographical description of my extended educational career, leading initially to an exploration of appropriate education from a phenomenological approach. The chapter then describes my researcher’s shift from phenomenology to the narrative turn. As a result of, amongst others, reflective sculptor activities, the leading question became how to do justice to, and present the variety between and within, the practitioners’ voices. As a consequence the situational (Guillemin & Gilman, 2004), relational (Ellis, 2007) and performative ethics (Holman Jones, 2005) started to play a major role in my exploratory process additional to prevailing procedural qualitative researchers’ ethics (Baarda, Goede & Teunissen, 2009; Clandinin, 2007; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000; Evers, 2007; Maso & Smaling, 1998). Alongside these auto-ethnographic-driven ethical considerations, from Bakhtin (1981) I tapped the idea of using a dialogue as a way of presenting the varieties within and between voices. Bakhtin (1984b) taught me as an author to renounce my essential surplus of knowledge. Boje challenged me as author to construct a polylogue as an antinarrative to keep the polylogue out of the prison of required unity of coherence.

The plot of my thesis is my substantiated justification of constructing a plotless polylogue as a means of doing justice to the variety within and between practitioners’ voices I heard talking about appropriate education.

Chapter Three: Exploring Voices Exploring Appropriate Education describes the methodological steps towards the construction of a polylogue and writing its text. It is about the collecting process of information: about the destructive process of the collected information into stories to resource the polylogue; about the temporarily employment (Boje, 2001) as a tool to grasp the number of stories and the subsequent fragmentation of the plots and their constituent stories; about creating five characters and distributing the fragmented plots amongst the five created characters; about constructing, enacting and recording a scenario; about the process of writing and polishing a polylogue text; and about weaving a play.

Chapter Four: Voices Exploring Appropriate Education contains the polylogue described as a play. The characters are: Anne, administrator of a regional education office; Cees, chair of an education association, secretary of cooperation-associations, and researcher; Joan, special educational needs coordinator at a primary school in a deprived urban area; Paul, director of a special primary education school in a rural area; Rob, a janitor and an additional character; and Rosemary, teacher at a small primary school in a rural area.

A glossary is added for the practitioners’ Dutch slang that I decided to leave untranslated in the English medium polylogue to emphasise the Dutch character of the appropriate education policy and its discourse.

Chapter Five: Post Voices begins with my reflective review of the exploratory process from the perspective of Vygostky, whose work is interpreted differently. I first reflect on my explorer’s role from the traditional Dutch Vygotskian approach. I conclude that my prelude education voice resounded in my exploring voice. Reflecting on voices exploring appropriate education from Vygostsky’s socio-historical voice as interpreted by Wertsch (1991) I conclude, referring to Lyotard (1998), that my small story on an appropriate education discourse adds an intrinsic and ongoing incoherence to the Dutch appropriate education Discourse (Gee, 2005). Reflecting on the zones of proximal appropriate education developments I conclude that the presentness (Morson, 1994) to the current appropriate education discourse is lacking. My final words are on my acceptance and the consequences of this omission.
Introduction

The thesis “Exploring voices exploring appropriate education” explores and represents a tiny part (Tuft, 1997) of the exploring process into the practitioner’s discourse on appropriate education. This chapter explores the ‘D’iscourse framework of the practitioners’ ‘d’iscourse on appropriate education. The distinction between ‘Discourse’ and ‘discourse’ stems from Gee (2005). About ‘discourse’ with a small ‘d’ he writes:

“We, as ‘applied linguists' or ‘sociolinguists' are interested in how language is used ‘on site' to enact activities and identities. Such language-in-use I will call ‘discourse' with a 'little d’’. (Gee, 2005, 7)

In Gee’s terms I perceive the practitioners’ appropriate education discourse as a discourse of ‘language-in-use’ in daily practice: it is the discourse with a small ‘d’. Gee asserts that Discourses with a capital ‘D’ exist in the abstract. They are a

“‘dance’ … as a coordinated pattern of words, deeds, values, symbols, tools, objects, times, and places and in the here-and-now as performance that is recognisable as just such a coordination.” (Gee, 2005, 28)

Focusing this chapter on the Discourse framework I begin with a remarkable Discourse pattern that emerged at the beginning of the implementation of the Dutch appropriate education policy. The national appropriate education coordinator argued that a misunderstanding led to the idea that appropriate education is synonymous with, or the same as, inclusive education, which is not the case (Keesenberg, 2008). His argument marks an explicit unravelling of appropriate education and inclusive education, making the inclusive education Discourse play an indispensable and inextricable role in the Dutch appropriate education Discourse from its onset and therefore worthwhile to explore.

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1 Keesenberg (2008) explained that the misunderstanding stems from a ministerial memorandum published on the internet (2005). The memorandum proposed directing all care means to school administrators, suggesting the end of direct financing of special education. As a result the media assumed the elimination of special education and the obligation of regular schools to admit all children. However these conclusion were not correct and the memorandum was removed from the web to be replaced by another, modified memorandum.

ation processes. The main problem with these appreciative approaches is the failure to address exclusion4.

However, as such, inclusion-exclusion concepts are of secondary order. A first order underpins the second order and consists of dominant moral traditions of modernity,

“whereby the focus firmly attached to the agency of the rational, autonomous, independ-
ent, impartial, atomistic agent necessarily represented by the norm of the male, renders
friendship as morally insignificant.” (Clapton, 2009, 254,255)

As an alternative to this dominant male view, Clapton advocated integrity, a moral space where all are valued and all belong, leaving the binary position of inclusion or exclusion. Based on her feminist research she advocated a Fabric of Integrality to support people with disabilities. This fabric consists of four features:

1 “The construction of normalcy is confronted, and identities of embodiment acknowledged;
2 The power of orthodoxy is diminished, and communities of resistance, of struggle and of emancipator transformation accommodated;
3 Social relation of acceptance are honoured, and friendship is reclaimed;
4 Stories are celebrated.” (Clapton, 2009, 254)

Concerning the last feature, Clapton emphasised that this is not only about narrati-
vity and creativity within ethical inclusion, but also about actively repelling silence and amnesia. The inclusive dominant UNESCO Discourse is based implicitly on the exclusion dichotomy. This Discourse is unquestioned, so its ethics are also unquestioned.

Exploring the Dutch inclusion Discourse I turned to the work of Douwe van Houten (1947-2010) who was Professor of Social Policy and Organisation at the Utrecht University for Humanistics.

Houten (2000) argued that the Netherlands is a disabling environment7 for people who are not enabled to participate in society. They are not included, which is different from exclusion: it is deeper. Nobody forbids participating, however nothing is arrang-
ed to enable participation. This hidden discrimination manifests itself in a dicho-
tomy between standard citizens and second-class citizens. The former has a

“paid job, is healthy and straight-limbed. Once you do not meet this standard, you may descend to the second-class category.” (Houten, 2000, 2) (Transl. CG)

In Dutch society’s welfare state, weak groups can normally rely on support, yet they do not really matter. Houten’s ideal society is a different one where everybody matters. The issue at stake is the impact of marginalisation in Dutch society, the dichotomy of standard citizens vs. second-class citizens. Houten argued that this dichotomy is caused partially by the impact of policy-classifications within welfare-arrangements and explains this causality as follows.

People have often difficulties appealing to facilities of the welfare state. As result they have to be incorporated into the classification developed for the sake of care arrange-
ments. Then equality is at stake: equal cases have to be treated equally. In practice this leads to asking questions, mostly by using standardised questionnaires. The answers determine whether you have the right to a particular form of support or not. Citizens provide part of the answers, while for the other part the citizen is dependent on professionals.

A paradox emerges. On one hand the welfare society directs its facilities towards sus-
taining active citizenship. On the other hand intervention strategies marginalise and create relations of dependency. It is often coupled with reductionism. Attention is focused primarily on the disability, the problem. No attention is paid to the abilities; the potentials; these are not facilitated.

Four years later Houten (2004) elaborated further on the dependency Discourse. He argued that daily civic existence is partially ruled by professional experts of the welfare

4 Clapton (2009) observed two ethics when it comes to exclusion: the ethics of normalcy and the ethics of anomaly

1 The ethics of normalcy contains: a morality and ideology of sameness and superiority; legiti-
mating processes of authority, control, compulsion, coercion and justification perpetuating hegemonic and normative power; a belief that normality can be defined and defended, recog-
nised and practised as a social good; and overt practices of domination of the powerful: to use the selvedges of definition to exempt, reject, expel and/or eliminate those deemed as non-
normal or ‘anomalous’. 
2 The ethics of anomaly leads to: a general perception of affected, inferior people; people embody differences; people inferiorised and constrained by the Ethics of Anomaly; people excluded from certain areas of society to the margins; people forced into an aporetic and definitive rela-
tionship with the reignant who dominate, control subjects and operate an Ethic of Normalcy.

5 Clapton (2009) drew a distinction between three terms. (1) Impairment is the ‘flaw’ in the person’s being; (2) Disability is the person’s difficulties experienced because of the impairment(s); and (3) Handicap is the social consequences imposed by the community or society in which the person lives. So in Clapton’s terminology the Netherlands is a handicapping environment.

6 Clapton (2009, 7):

“This is an excluding and essentialist relationship of anomalous Otherness. These hegemonically ap-
plied ethics channel conduct without exposing the hidden assumptions of negative valuing personhood, and the resulting positions of marginalisation.”

7 Clapton (2009) argued that the inclusion concept goes beyond the dichotomous discource; if is multifaceted, complex commanding a socio-ethical critique within the dominant matrices of (1) Patriarchy, where the role of the father is linked to the male-female gender dualism underpinning the Western Logic of Identity, and (2) Kyriarchy, where role of the Master and Lord is linked to the power of social arrangements and structures.
state by means of medicalisation and bureaucratisation. Medical experts have a definition monopoly which results in the definition power demanded by society to legitimate illness. So the relation between the medical expert and patient is dependency, and as a rule the patients follow the expert.

According to Houten the individual medical approach is still in charge. To explain this approach he refers to Oliver (1996) who distinguishes two perspectives on disabilities: the individual model and the social model. Positioning and confronting these models, Oliver perceives the medicalisation as a part of the individual model. Medicalisation as a typical approach leads to suppression by medical staff. The social model causes people with a disability to be perceived as handicapped by society, leading to a perception that disabled people are not capable of joining the education and labour market. This perception results in exclusion and poverty.

Whatever the approach, the legislative equality principal causes a bureaucracy that depersonalises both client and civil servant to a level of reducing the client to a file number. What matters is not the client but the expert; the bureaucracy leaves no room for biography. Welfare state arrangements are thought from the managerial perspective, characterised by large-scale thinking. Biography is small thinking.

Bureaucracy and medicalisation interweave. Since this leads to granular legislation it leads to increasing legislative power leading to bureaucratisation as shown by the Dutch personal bound budget system. To apply for such a budget the person has to rely on the expertise of care offices and indication committees, penetrating daily life of households.

As a summary Houten (2004, p. 34) indicated that the way the Dutch welfare states operates implies ‘standardisation and marginalisation, amongst others by referring to policy classifications; effects inextricably connected to the way of operating’ (Tranls. CG). Profound reconstruction of the system and emancipation is needed to promote equality and diversity. As a solution Houten promotes concrete Utopias to avoid the scattering of new big stories, perceiving a varied society as ‘a collection of quite humble stories’ (2004, p. 35) rooted in practice.

Again four years later Houten (2008, 46) defined ‘practice’:

“By a ‘practice’ I am going to mean any coherent and complex form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that form of activity are realised in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of, that form of activity, with the result that human powers to achieve excellence, and human conceptions of the ends and goods involved, are systematically extended.” (Macintyre, 1990: 187) (Tranls. CG)

From this ‘practice’ definition Houten (2008) perceived three Dutch inclusive education practices as examples of good inclusion practices to establish a more inclusive society. Two of the examples are local initiatives9. The third is the ‘Appropriate Education implementation plan’, where he kept his opinion open:

“It remains to be seen whether it leads to good practices.” (Houten, 2008, 50) (Tranls. CG)

Bolsenbroek & Houten (2010) noted that Dutch inclusive education is designed as a new school concept against a traditional background of pupils with and without disabilities attending separate schools. The government offers a legislative framework, hardly policy signs towards inclusive education as a result of new developments called ‘Appropriate education’:

“According to this vision the intention is to seek for the best option for the child. Schools decide if and how far they elaborate the inclusive education concept. This makes it increasingly an issue of society itself.” (Bolsenbroek & Houten, 2010, 44) (Tranls. CG)

In the meantime UNESCO (2005) positioned inclusion as one of the four models within a continuum of inclusion. From excluding to including the first model was ‘exclusion’. Exclusion meant that children with special educational needs did not participate at all in education. In 2003 the number of excluded Dutch children was around 4,000 (Bolsenbroek & Houten, 2010). The second UNESCO model was ‘segregation’; in this model pupils with special educational needs participated in education yet in separate settings receiving a special treatment. The third UNESCO model, ‘integration’, accommodated segregated groups or individuals in regular settings enabling participation in classes with peers. ‘Inclusion’ was the fourth UNESCO model, a continuous

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9 Houten’s (2008) first example is the ‘Gewoon anders’ Foundation, a project in the new city of Almere. It started as a primary education inclusion project in the 1997-1998 academic year, and secondary education joined after a couple of years. In the year 2006-2007 seventy-five primary schools and seven secondary schools were associated with the ‘Gewoon Anders’ foundation, catering for 800 pupils with a handicap. The independent Indication Committee decides on acknowledgement of extra support. When support is assigned, parents are consulted about the best support, and parents decide. The Foundation supports teachers and special educational needs coordinators, and accommodates a special learning resources centre. The second example is the ‘Ardum’ Foundation in Middelburg. This foundation has been associated with a primary school in the neighbouring city of Vlissingen (Flushing) since 2004. It provides an individual educational plan for each pupil returning to regular education. It is geared towards pupils to learn how to learn, how to make choices, how to advocate for themselves, and how to organise things themselves.

10 Houten’s (2008) first example is the ‘Gewoon anders’ Foundation, a project in the new city of Almere. It started as a primary education inclusion project in the 1997-1998 academic year, and secondary education joined after a couple of years. In the year 2006-2007 seventy-five primary schools and seven secondary schools were associated with the ‘Gewoon Anders’ foundation, catering for 800 pupils with a handicap. The independent Indication Committee decides on acknowledgement of extra support. When support is assigned, parents are consulted about the best support, and parents decide. The Foundation supports teachers and special educational needs coordinators, and accommodates a special learning resources centre. The second example is the ‘Ardum’ Foundation in Middelburg. This foundation has been associated with a primary school in the neighbouring city of Vlissingen (Flushing) since 2004. It provides an individual educational plan for each pupil returning to regular education. It is geared towards pupils to learn how to learn, how to make choices, how to advocate for themselves, and how to organise things themselves.

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9 Bolsenbroek & Houten (2010, 27) recommend Oliver as ‘the first professor of disability studies in England, living himself with a disability’. The work Houten (2004) referred to is:


process of learning and participation, and of preventing the exclusion of pupils with special educational needs.


Houten (2008), anticipating Bolsenbroek & Houten (2010), identified good Dutch educational inclusion practices, nevertheless concluding that the Government’s appropriate education policy provided a legislative framework hardly containing inclusive intentions. Keessen (2008) explicitly unravelled appropriate education and inclusive education.

Dutch educational Discourses and the appropriate education implementation plan

Bolsenbroek and Houten (2010) observed three forms of segregation in the history of Dutch education: based on religion, based on black schools and white schools, and based on disabilities as embedded in the inclusion Discourse.

The segregation based on religion has a long tradition in the Netherlands. The 1806 Education Act effectuated the constitutional separation between State and Church (Bakker, Noordam & Rietveld-van Wingerden, 2006). A distinction was made between public schools funded by the State, and private schools funded by legal bodies. However the government discouraged the foundation of religious schools, and promoted public schools where religious education was banned. So in the 1820s Protestant and Catholic citizens started their school struggle for freedom of education. The 1848 Constitution laid down the Freedom of Education.

The 1917 Constitution solved the ongoing debate on freedom of education by assigning the same rights to public education and private education, effectuated in the 1920 Lower Education Act. Both educational systems have had the same rights to public education and private education, effectuated in the 1920 Lower Education Act. Both educational systems have had the same rights to public education and private education, effectuated in the 1920 Lower Education Act. Both educational systems have had the same rights to public education and private education, effectuated in the 1920 Lower Education Act. Both educational systems have had the same rights to public education and private education, effectuated in the 1920 Lower Education Act. Both educational systems have had the same rights to public education and private education, effectuated in the 1920 Lower Education Act. Both educational systems have had the same rights to public education and private education, effectuated in the 1920 Lower Education Act. Both educational systems have had the same rights to public education and private education, effectuated in the 1920 Lower Education Act. Both educational systems have had the same rights to public education and private education, effectuated in the 1920 Lower Education Act. Both educational systems have had the same rights to public education and private education, effectuated in the 1920 Lower Education Act. Both educational systems have had the same rights to public education and private education, effectuated in the 1920 Lower Education Act. Both educational systems have had the same rights to public education and private education, effectuated in the 1920 Lower Education Act. Both educational systems have had the same rights to public education and private education, effectuated in the 1920 Lower Education Act. Both educational systems have had the same rights to public education and private education, effectuated in the 1920 Lower Education Act. Both educational systems have had the same rights to public education and private education, effectuated in the 1920 Lower Education Act. Both educational systems have had the same rights to public education and private education, effectuated in the 1920 Lower Education Act.

The 1923 Royal Decree allowed the start of an extraordinary education system with four school types: schools for the mentally handicapped, schools for deaf children, schools for blind children, and schools for the hearing-impaired children. The 1931 additional Royal Decree expanded this extraordinary education system with another two school types: schools for what was then called psychopaths, and schools for the physically handicapped. The aim of this extraordinary education system was to differentiate pedagogical and didactic care for those children who cannot be catered for within the regular education system.

The 1949 Royal Extraordinary Education Decree laid the legal foundation for more school types: schools for epileptic children, schools for tubercular children, schools for sickly children, schools for government and guardian pupils, schools attached to a paedological institute, and schools for children with learning and behavioural problems. Alongside these additions this Decree divided the school for the mentally handicapped into schools for morons and schools for imbeciles. The 1967 Royal Extraordinary Education Decree expanded the system to children of kindergarten age and children of secondary education age, and legalised the multidisciplinary character of the admission committee. Nationally educational experts held the opinion that extraordinary education could help extraordinary children in the best way. These experts welcomed the increasing number of the extraordinary education population.

The 1967 Royal Extraordinary Education Decree expired in 1985 (Meijer, Pijl & Hegarty, 1994; Groot & Rijswijk, 1999). Yet the governmental idea driving back the extraordinary education figures started in the seventies. The government tackled the expanding of the extraordinary education system by:
“driving back the differentiation and giving regular schools a task in the care of children with a disability.” (Bakker, Nijdam & Rietveld-van Wingerden, 2006, 544) (Transl. CG)

The 1985 Elementary Education Act replaced the 1920 Lower Education Act. The Interim Act Special Education Secondary Special Education was introduced simultaneously. This Act barely differed from the 1967 Royal Extraordinary Education Decree, but it revived the discussion about the future of special education. Issues of discussion were: the growth of special education, the division of special education in school types and the growth of secondary special education. In 1985 the Advice Council for Elementary Education proposed a flexible model suggesting three special education groups (Meijer, Pijl & Hegarty, 1994, 99,100; Groot & Rijswijk, 1999, 22,23), which I have schematised as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group 1</th>
<th>Group 2</th>
<th>Group 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LOM</td>
<td>Doof</td>
<td>ZMKL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MLK</td>
<td>SH</td>
<td>ZMOK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IOK</td>
<td>ESM</td>
<td>ZMOK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leer-en Opvoedingsmoeilijkheden; Moeilijk Lerende Kinderen; In hun Ontwikkeling Bedreigde Kleuters.</td>
<td>Doorkinderen; Slecht horend; Ernstige Spraak Moeilijkheden; Blinden; Slecht Zien; Lichamelijk gehandicapt; Meeroudburger gehandicapt; Langdurig Zieke Kinderen; Kinderen in Ziekenhuizen; Pedagogisch Instituut.</td>
<td>Zeer Moeilijk Lerende Kinderen; Zeer Moeilijk Opvoedbare Kinderen.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning and behavioural difficulties; Learning difficulties; Developmental Difficulties.</td>
<td>Deaf; Hearing-Impaired; Severe Speech Disorders; Blind; Partially Sighted; Physically handicapped; Multiply handicapped; Chronically Ill Children; Children in Hospital; Paedological Institutes.</td>
<td>Severely mentally retarded children; Severely maladjusted children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potentially these children can attend regular education, ultimately with the help of itinerant or peripatetic teaching.</td>
<td>Children with specific needs. They need special education for some time at least. A small number of these children may attend regular education, others with the help of itinerant or peripatetic teaching.</td>
<td>Children with very specific needs, probably needing special education throughout their educational career.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Groot & Rijswijk, 1999, 22,23; Meijer, Pijl & Hegarty, 1994, 99,100)

During the Interim Act the extension of number of pupils attending special schools was seriously questioned. The doubts about this growing number were raised by: parents who preferred their children to be educated in the neighbourhood; the shifting citizen paradigm; and the government dealing with increasing financial costs (Bolsenbroek & Houten, 2010).

In 1991 the government started the Together To school Again policy (Houten, 2008). Policy took the position that too many pupils relied on a separate educational system, i.e. special education or secondary special education. All children, including children with special needs, should attend regular education as far as possible (Leij & Linde-Kaan, 2002). By this policy the government reacted to an increasing number of parents and experts who considered the existing segregated system as outdated (Schuman, 2010). In practice Together To School Again was a chain structure of the cooperation associations to stimulate cooperation between primary schools and special primary schools in order to implement a continuum of care (Keesenberg, 2008), or adaptive education leading to fewer referrals to special education and cost control (Meijer, 2004).

In 1995 State Secretary of Education Netelenbos concluded that more attention was needed for financial, personal and administrative conditions in order to bring the care to the child instead of the child to the care. This conclusion led to new legislation in 1998 (Schuman, 2010), issuing three Education Acts: the Primary Education Act, the Secondary Education Act, and the Expertise Centre Act (Eurydice, nn; Groot & Rijswijk, 1999, Schuman, 2010), which I combine in the following scheme:

11 Houten (2000) argued that citizenship has had a petty-bourgeois connotation over many years in the Netherlands. Due to a 1998 policy paper of the Federatie Nederlandse Gehandicaptenraad (Federation of the Dutch Council for the Disabled), citizenship acquired a positive connotation. It became a desirable ideal. Inclusive citizenship became a position everybody can aspire to: “Full citizenship of people with an impairment implies to be included, to be a member of society instead of an individual or marginal group” (Federatie Nederlandse Gehandicaptenraad, 1998, 11) (Transl. CG)

12 ’Together To School Again’ is the English translation of the Dutch education policy called ‘Weer Samen Naar School’
On 21 December 2004 Minister of Education, Culture and Science Hoeven (2004) wrote a letter to the chairman of the Lower House of the Dutch parliament. The letter was about the evaluation of Together To School Again. The minister was somewhat satisfied with the quantitative results of Together To School Again and the Policy for Disadvantaged People. Yet the results were not optimal in spite of intermediate adaptations and interventions. The Pupil-Bound Budget had been in effect for too short a time to be sure of its effectiveness, yet shortcomings were to be expected.

All in all, the minister strived for schools assuming care for all children in their region while regulation had to be replaced by horizontal accountability: the minister proposed a shift of governmental steering arrangements.

Meijer (2004) evaluated the effects of seven years of Together To School Again. He noted a decline of the Special Primary Education population and in figures, the same increase in the Regional Expertise Centres population. The populations of the regional expertise centre schools with the less-hard criteria grew the fastest. Evaluation of Together To School Again, Pupil-Bound Budgeting and Junior Secondary Vocational Training led to four overall conclusions (Bolsenbroek & Houten, 2010): (1) cooperation between policy areas was lacking; (2) there was too much bureaucracy concerning indicating; (3) the role division between school and parents was unclear; and (4) a lack of opportunities existed to create in-between types of education.

The 2003 Amendment to the Expertise Act introduced the Pupil-Bound Finance (Houten, 2008).

Pupil bound finance is also called ‘Backpack’ and enables the sponsoring of a child to stay aboard for regular education (Keessenborg, 2008). This regulation concerns children with an indication for a school of Regional Expertise Centre Category 2, 3 or 4. A Committee of Indication judges the application by parents. The ‘backpack’ was in full effect when I explored the appropriate education discourse between 23 September 2008 and 15 May 2009.

Once granted a ‘backpack’ parents may choose between regular education and special education. When parents choose regular education for their child they get a ‘backpack’ consisting of three financial parts: an amount of money for extra staff, some discretionary budget, and money for peripatetic or itinerant teaching. The minister made an exception for category 1; these schools have a budget financing (Schuman, 2010) as usual in Together To School Again. Budget financing means that schools receive a fixed amount for care and decide how to allocate the money.

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Support within Pre-vocational Secondary Education continue to exist. Two: school boards may organise alternative cooperation models for the sake of children who apply for education provided that parents are involved. In that case the ministry may discharge a board from its care obligation.

State Secretary of Education, Welfare and Science Dijksma sent her implementation plan (Dijksma, 2007b) and covering letter (Dijksma, 2007a) to the chairman of the Lower House of the Dutch Parliament on 5 December 2007.

Exactly six months later\(^\text{15}\), on 5 June 2008, Dijksma (2008a) wrote that the reason for appropriate education lay in the educational tendency to focus on what a child is not able to do instead of what the child can do. Two months and eighteen days later I started to explore the appropriate education discourse by attending meetings and interviewing people. Here my exploration of the Dutch educational Discourses and the appropriate education implementation plan ends, to hand the floor to the polylogue, being the deconstructed appropriate education discourse based on the information as collected, deconstructed and reconstructed in the framework of this thesis. The continuing political Discourse is described in Chapter Five on Post voice.

Not mentioned in this oversight is the minister’s controversial 2005 memorandum published on the internet for a couple of hours. This memorandum suggested the end of direct financing of special education. Despite the few hours of publicity the impact on public opinion was that the minister was striving towards the elimination of special education. It provoked Keesenberg (2008) to explicitly unravel appropriate education. Houten (2008) concluded that the government’s appropriate education policy provided a legislative framework hardly containing inclusive intentions.

15 In the meantime the results of a parliamentary inquiry were published on 13 February 2008. It was named after its chair, Dijsselbloem (2008) and revealed the results of twenty years of educational policy innovations. The main conclusion was that government had failed in reassuring the quality of education. Instead it interfered with the execution of daily tasks, sometimes into the smallest details. ‘Time for Education’ was the suggestive title of the inquiry’s report.

The explored appropriate education discourse positioned in the appropriate education Discourse

Keesenberg (2008) divided specialised education for care pupils into four columns, which I have schematised as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1st column</th>
<th>2nd column</th>
<th>3rd column</th>
<th>4th column</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New Law on Primary Education</td>
<td>Establishment of Regional Expertise Centres in (secondary) schools for special education; A Committee for Indication-statements issues the decision; There are four clusters; When placement is issued, there are two alternatives: - Enrolment at a school for special education; - Backpack; Criteria used are nationally-established.</td>
<td>Partnerships; Each school has its internal care structure, e.g.: - A mentor system and a care coordinator; Two types of specialised education: - Learning support education (within mainstream education); - Practical education (in a separate school or department);</td>
<td>No partnerships in secondary vocational education; Each Regional Training Centre organises the intake of level 1 and 2 pupils without thresholds; For care-pupils all types of different streams are developed, frequently in co-operation with businesses and Regional Monitor and Co-ordination Centre for early school leavers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in To School Again partnerships, including a special primary school; The Permanent Committee Pupil-care which issues the decision to place a child on the special primary school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Exploring voices exploring appropriate education I relied partly on my own network, and partly used the snowball method (Baarda, Goede & Teunissen, 2009; Evers, 2007; Maso & Smaling, 1998) to recruit interviewees. None of those directly or indirectly approached urged me to involve columns 3 and 4 in my exploratory process although they are mentioned by, for example, Erik and Theo\(^\text{16}\). Erik mentioned the transfer from primary education to secondary education without prompting me to explore this issue from secondary education’s perspective.

Theo gave me the name of two secondary education schools successfully experimenting with appropriate education. I contacted one of Theo’s schools, yet I decided to limit the scope of my exploratory process to columns 1 and 2. The diversity of information I collected at that stage was rich enough to meet the emerging focus of my exploratory process: the practitioners’ discourse on appropriate education. So the explored appropriate education discourse is positioned in the appropriate education Discourse’s Columns I and II.

16 Whenever I refer to interviewees their names are anonymous. See Chapter Two on My exploring voices for my ethical arguments; see Chapter Three on Exploring voices exploring appropriate education for the methodological arguments and effects.
Chapter 2

To position my exploring process in time: I started to collect information on 23 September 2008, and I finished on 15 May 2009. To indicate place: I started in Groningen in North Netherlands, and I finished in Velp in East Netherlands. The snowball method (Baarda, Goede & Teunissen, 2009; Evers, 2007; Maso & Smaling, 1998) and my own network produced a focus on mainly the Northern part of the Netherlands. Carel, one of the interviewees, argued that density of population may affect the organisation of appropriate education and therefore colour the appropriate education discourse. So he urged me to focus on the less densely populated northern part of the Netherlands. I had sympathy for Carel’s argument and decided to heed his call.

The next chapter on ‘My exploring voices’ describes my wanderings in philosophy, and my quest to find a way to do justice to the variety within and between voices I heard talking about appropriate education.

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As examples of the Dutch density of population variety, CBS (2009) reported that the density of population is 193 in the Province of Friesland, 247 in the Province of Groningen, 993 in the Province of North-Holland and 1239 in the Province of South-Holland. Friesland and Groningen are in the northern part of the Netherlands, North Holland and South Holland in the western part. The number is the number of people living per square kilometre. CBS is the Dutch Central Office for Statistics and mapped the population at 1 January 2009.

Pijl (2004) referred to some research into the formation of clusters in rural areas in England, confirming Carel’s idea that rural areas have their specific problems.

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The introduction of ‘Recur’ was itself one of these fascinating experiences. Jack Cohen introduced this concept during Cohort 7 Workshop 1 organised by the University for Humanistics, January 2008. He argued that what we call cycle thinking is actually recurrent thinking. Everyone leaves footprints in his first experience, affecting succeeding experiences, so the metaphor is not a cycle but a forwarding spiral. Since Cohen’s introduction I have perceived many recurrences, for example: my prelude educational voice, my exploring voices, my phenomenological voice, my narrative voice, my reflective, interlude sculptor voice; my ethical voices; my voice tapping from Bakhtin’s voices; and my voice dancing to the music of Boje’s voices.

The first time I personally met Paul Cilliers was 2008. He introduced the importance of a certain slowness (Cilliers, 1998) that is: to reflect more slowly than the environment by taking difference and delay into consideration in order to enrich the memory. According to Cilliers, memory is not merely what is remembered. Memory is also what is embodied in the recent, surviving the selection needed to survive since a complex system is its own complex system’s memory. In other words: the structure of
Chapter 2

the system is its sedimented history in which some elements of the network are not retained. Paraphrasing Cillier’s contribution, my memory is not instantaneous. My memory is developing; what I remember and what my voices communicate now is not what I remembered and what my voices communicated yesterday, and what I will remember and what my voices will communicate tomorrow.

Anticipation, Cilliers argued, is finding trajectories based on experiences in the past. The richer the memory, the more sophisticated the anticipation becomes. My voices composing this chapter are based on my memories, digital stories, photos, mindmaps, journal on research, intervision journal, summaries of studied literature, sculptures, recorded voices and my workshop reports. My aim is to let my voices communicate as truly as possible based on these resources.

The second time I met Cilliers was November 2008. This meeting raised my interest in his book about complexity and postmodernism (Cilliers, 1998).

In this book Cilliers offered a list of characteristics of complexity, amongst them that individual elements are ignorant of the whole system in which they are embedded. Therefore complexity emerges as a result of the patterns of interaction between elements. Complexity is incompressible due to the richness of interactions and the number of elements. As soon as you start to comprehend complexity, it is at the cost of its richness and variety.

As a result I understand I can never understand a complex system in totality. This complexity perception challenged me to understand my process of exploring voices exploring appropriate education as complex, incomprehensible. To understand this process I can only communicate it in the way I understand it. To communicate the way I understand the complexity of my exploring process I use seven voices as mentioned before.

My voices pretend not to be the true way to understand and communicate the complexity of my exploring process. I elicited only a selective number of threads out of the complexity, incomprehensibility of my exploratory process. Other voices than the seven mentioned were possible; other elicitations are possible. I am fully aware that in communicating my exploratory process I have to make unavoidable choices (Boje & Rosile, 2002). I am in a humble position.

Communicating from this humility I position my complex exploratory process concerning appropriate education in chaos, referring to Lefebvre & Letiche (1999). They argued that managing from a plateau is temporary and does not prevail for long. An empty space arises behind each plateau, a complex space where chaos enters the open system. I decided to choose politics as a plateau since State Secretary Dijksma (2007a, 2007b) announced the implementation of appropriate education, being the change provoking the power of people to tell (Luhman & Boje, 2001) about appropriate education; the politics as driver of the change.

I position the appropriate education chaos I explore between two political plateaux.

The first is the letter State Secretary Dijksma (2008a) wrote to the chairman of the Lower House of the Dutch Parliament on 6 June 2008. This letter described the initial progress of the implementation of the appropriate education policy as announced on 5 December 2007 (Dijksma, 2007a, 2007b).

I explored the open space place after this progress letter by exploring the practitioners’ discourse on appropriate education. My collection of information in daily practice started on 23 September 2008 by attending and recording a general board meeting of a Together To School Again Board; the collection ended on 15 May 2009 when I interviewed a lecturer to whom I was referred and who happened to be a colleague of mine.

The next plateau after this period was June 2009 when State Secretary Dijksma sent a letter (Dijksma, 2009a) and attached the Third Progress Report (Dijksma, 2009b) to the chairman of the Lower House of the Dutch Parliament. Her covering letter started with mentioning the phasing of the implementation of appropriate education as agreed upon by the discipline.

In between these plateaux one may perceive another political plateau, the second progress report as sent by the State Secretary to the chairman of the Lower House of the Dutch Parliament (Dijksma, 2008b). Since I was exploring the appropriate education discourse while this progress was published it does not frame my exploratory process into the appropriate education discourse.

The modernist approach is to step from one plateau to a subsequent one. I was interested in deconstructing a variety of possible positions taken by practitioners involved in the implementation of appropriate education in daily practice between the plateaux. In this way I explored more perspectives than I could ever perceive at once. The whole of these perspectives is the complexity. My exploratory process into this complexity is humble, that is: temporary and situational. Paraphrasing Lefebvre & Letiche (1999), I hope the reader may see complexity research in a different light after having read through this thesis, than those who do not use the metaphors of complexity; and therefore see appropriate education Discourse and discourse in a different light.

To communicate my exploratory process I begin to communicate with my prelude educational voice. The title of this subchapter may suggest that my educational voice stopped; it has not. My story of prelude educational voice stops at the moment I formally started my exploratory process into voices exploring appropriate education. In Chapter Five on Post Voice I reveal how my educational voice resounded in my exploratory voice.
My prelude educational voice

The start of my exploratory process into voices exploring appropriate education is preceded by a complexity of recurring experiences. One thread of these recurring experiences is my broad range of various working experiences in the educational field at several places in Europe and Africa.

I perceived myself as speaking with an educational voice when I joined the part-time DBA/PhD programme of the University for Humanistics in Utrecht in January 2008. To communicate these experiences I raise my prelude educational voice: not as a self-justification but as a way of communicating the start of my exploratory process (Freeman, 2007).

The term ‘prelude’ apparently points to a chronic order; first I educate, then I explore. However, during my exploratory process educating experiences recur and vice versa: during my educating process exploratory experiences recur. To give a hint of recurring educational experiences I communicate with My Prelude Educational Voice exploring my past.

“As researchers we cannot fully explain a past event because our narration of that event is another act of interpretation in a different time and space. Research itself is a negotiated narrative – a polyphonic and synchronic process constructed by many acts of interpretation across time and space.” (Cuncliffe, Luhman & Boje, 2004, 275)

So what My Prelude Educational Voice communicates is a negotiated narrative. It is a narrative containing my communication about educational experiences as a stepping-stone towards my exploratory process. Yet I am aware of its negotiation character depending on time and place, author and reader.

I began my educational career as a teacher at a public elementary school in November 1978 on a West Frisian island. Soon I was involved in the skirmishes to merge the local nursery school and our school into one elementary school for children aged between four and twelve. By prompting a merger the local education authority anticipated the 1985 Law on Basic Education20. By bringing into effect the Law on Basic Education in 1985 the 1920 Elementary Education Law expired (Groot & Rijswijk, 1999).

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The guidelines of the Innovation Commission Basic School21 inspired me. These guidelines advocated pedagogic and didactic continuity for all children. I developed a play-learning class22 in close consultation with the head of the school, and with my wife Marola who was head of a nursery school before we moved to the island. I followed their directions in my daily practice and we discussed the results. I imported the basic and initial reading, writing and arithmetic skills into traditional nursery school classroom organisation, and implemented this organisational system in daily practice. Parents became involved by supporting the initial reading process of their children twice a day.

As a class one teacher I was supposed to implement the basic reading skills assessment called ‘Toets van Sixma’23. This test appeared to be an insult to my nursery school colleagues. They fundamentally questioned how a test based on basic learning skills knowledge could be of more decisive value than their daily schooling experience with their children. The nursery teachers and I agreed on a phased transition of children from Kindergarten to the Lower School as an alternative approach. I observed the aspirant lower school children in the nursery school environment. The nursery school colleagues observed their former children in our school a few months after entering the lower school. Based on these experiences we discussed the children’s potentials and needs.

In retrospect I interpret the resistance to the test as a clash between curriculum-focused and development-focused education approaches24.

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20 By bringing into effect the Law on Basic Education in 1985 the 1920 Elementary Education Law expired (Groot & Rijswijk, 1999).
21 The Innovation Commission Basic School existed from 1974 till 1980. Its core task was to advise the Minister of Education on the education policy concerning the schooling of children from four to twelve years old (Leij & Linde-Kaan, 2002).
22 Two of the six directions towards the innovation of basic education inspired me in developing this play-learning class (Innovatie commissie basisschool, 1980, 12):
   1. The own identity of the toddler and of the pupil has to be taken into consideration.
   2. Individualisation and differentiation have to be realized.
   3. The own identity of the toddler and of the pupil has to be taken into consideration. (Transl. CG)
23 The assessment was rooted in Sixma’s thesis on basic reading skills (Sixma, 1973). In this thesis he considers basic learning skills (1) to be situational facts co-determining the educational situation, (2) to be decisions to promote an optimal learning process, (3) to be a presumed child development in the framework of an intended didactic process, that is: to be special presumed knowledge and skills, and (4) to mean a desired teachers’ knowledge and skills in the framework of a limited degree of teachers’ freedom of performing. The last one implied didactic to be the work of specialists who develop prescribed, timesaving teaching models, methods and plans. According to Leij & Linde (2002, p.149) the educational idea behind this test could be perceived as: ‘Do not start teaching reading before certain, specific conditions are met’ (translation CG). Here the clash originated with my pre-school colleagues.
24 In January 2000 I bought a book written by Oers & Janssen-Vos that made me reinterpret my first teaching experiences in terms of teaching approaches (1992, 4):
   “curriculum and/or development focused: education has to fulfil the societal need to transfer culture, however it also has to consider the children’s’ potential and needs. In the first case a curriculum-focused approach seems to be the appropriate method, while in the other case it is a development-focused approach (according to Van Pareren, 1988; 1991).” (Transl. CG)
   Reading this book I recognise I slightly prioritised the child’s potential and needs to the need for transferring the culture, and the development-focused approach slightly to the curriculum-focus-
I was released in July 1982 due to a decrease in the school population and in line with the 'last-in-first-out' legal position as used in education. We moved back to the mainland to seek job opportunities. Unemployment was high so I found incidental work as a substitute teacher for only a couple of days.

Voluntarily once a week in 1984 I taught foreign adults the Dutch language and culture.

In March 1984 I began substitute-teaching activities at a special education school for children with severe emotional behavioural disorders. The school was attached to a paedological institute. In June 1984 I was offered a full-time substitute job leading to a permanent appointment after another one-and-a-half years. I was determined to become a good special education teacher so the process of following directions and discussing results started from scratch. From that point of view it felt like making a new educational start. This time my immediate tutors were an educational psychologist and a clinical psychologist.

One of the problems I encountered at school was the so-called social clumsiness of most of the children. I discussed this with our physical education teacher Guus Zengerink who was also a psychomotor skills trainer. We decided to write a social skills training method since we had not found an appropriate educational approach. We developed and implemented this method in close consultation with our colleagues, some colleagues of a neighbouring school for primary education, and with the parents of our children.

In retrospect I recognise that I made a shift from a mimetic educational approach to a transformative educational one, being more interested in the personal development of a child than in its learning process.

After several years we published the method ‘Ik kan goed onderhandelen’ (Grol & Zengerink, 1990).

A spin-off was the training of school teams who bought our method. One of the schools was a secondary vocational one; this school won the first Dutch Award for Secondary Education in 1993. The presentation of the award by Minister of Education Ritzen caught the attention of national television. This public relations led to a second method called ‘Samen werkt het!’ (Grol & Zengerink, 1995). Alongside this some descriptive referrals were made (Faber & Steensma, 1992; Prins, 1993), and my colleague and I contributed to a book on social skills training (Zengerink & Grol, 1995). So in the early 1990s I became a social skills trainer specialist. Yet I was neither sure whether I was a social skills expert nor whether I wanted to be a specialist at all. I felt trapped.

Concurrently I gained a post as deputy-director of our school. I became involved in legislative and organisational changes. One was the implementation of Interim Law Special Education Secondary Special Education with a plannen duration of ten years; after this period the government expected to have developed a clear vision on special education legislation, as later described by Groot & Rijswijk (1999). And for the second time I became involved in skirmishes in a merger of two schools, that is: the intended merger of our school with a sister school attached to the same paedological institution. I experienced this process as highly bureaucratic and conservative. I felt trapped once more.

In the meantime I completed my ‘Higher Cadre Education Pedagogy’, a post-initial training pedagogy, and legal predecessor of the current professional Master Pedagogy. As a direct result I was offered a part-time post as lecturer at a polytechnic. While my daily discourses at school devolved into organisational and logistical discussions, the enriching part of my lecture post was the cross-pollination with my work as teacher. What I taught at the polytechnic made me reflect on my daily class activities, and what I experienced in daily practice I storied at the polytechnic. And as a teacher of the youngest children I participated in the development of a Development-focused Monitor Model. This reigned the discourse on curriculum-focused or development-focused education in daily practice.

My second teaching period ended when I applied for and got a post as special education lecturer in Botswana. My wife, four of our five sons and I moved to Francistown at the end of August 1995 after being selected by a Dutch Non-Governmental Organisation on behalf of the Botswana Ministry of Education.

Before leaving I attended a course on teaching in development countries. I expected to learn about other cultures, yet I learned that I lost my so-called status as social skills expert and that I should attune to the local cultural habits and norms. “But not only

26 The full title is “I can negotiate well: a programme for basic education, special education and secondary special education” (Tranls. CG). The programme aimed at social cognitive development, social behavioural development and the development of self-confidence. The theoretical framework revolved around the self-efficacy concept of Bandura (Grol & Zengerink, 1990), a theory we discovered while attending and completing a one-year post-academic course on Behavioural Therapy for Children and Youth organised by the Postacademische Opleidingen Sociale Wetenschappen (Post-Academic Training Social Sciences) in 1988. The didactic design of our method was based on Ringrose & Nijenhuis (1986).

27 “Together it works!” This method was a quire of a series of mentor lessons to support core teachers in coaching junior secondary school pupils at the group level (Kunst, 1995). Although our quire was a social cognitive method it included exercises to train social skills like: working together, talking together, and, more complicated, committing faults in a socially adequate way.
to attune, also add, "one of the visiting African professors warned me. "Otherwise it is better to stay here in the Netherlands".

In Botswana I was supposed to contribute to the implementation of the Revised National Policy on Education (Republic of Botswana, 1994), and especially to the implementation of the special education paragraphs of this policy28. My main focus was on developing and organising pre-service junior secondary schools teachers training at a College of (Secondary) Education where I was posted. I carried out my work in close consultation with: our sister college; the Departments of Curriculum Development and Assessment, Special Education, and Teacher Training and Development of the Ministry of Education; the Board of Affiliation of the Universities of Botswana and Lesotho; the Special Needs Association of Botswana; and the Botswana Wheelchair Association for the Paraplegic. Alongside this I organised tailor-made special educational needs workshops for primary and secondary schools on the spot.

We lived in Botswana until the end of August 1999.

At the college level I was involved in a variety of discourses, e.g. on: objective testing; on colonial and post-colonial teaching methods, on traditional and modern education, on formal and informal education, on authoritarian, authoritative and democratic teaching styles; and on outreach activities to get in touch with life outside the school and its campus for students and lecturers. As guest editor I became involved in a book about special education in Africa (Zindi, 1997). At the research level I contributed to discourses on public attitude towards disabilities (Hop & Grol, 199829), and on a preventive approach towards street children (Allen-Ile & Grol, 1998).

An extremely impressive event was my visit to the International Conference on Special Education organised by the Federal College of Education (Special) in Oyo state of Nigeria in August 1997. I had the opportunity to exchange experiences with fellow special educational needs lecturers from all over Africa. One of my colleagues complained that the post-colonial African educational system is based on colonial ideas, without written African resources on African educational projects carried out by African people although they exist. So at the end of our stay in Botswana I decided to write an article on special education in Africa, based on African literature. Before handing in the article I presented the content as the keynote speech during the annual Special Needs Association of Botswana meeting organised on 19 June 1999 in Westwood School in Gaborone to get feedback. The article was published the month after our return to the Netherlands (Grol, 1999).

Before we left Botswana three Batswana fellow-lecturers returned after completing their Master Course Special Education in England during my stay in Botswana. And I left behind a fully developed and practised curriculum on the brink of validation by the affiliated board of the Universities of Botswana and Lesotho30.

Back in the Netherlands I became a senior lecturer at the same polytechnic where I had held a post before we left. I became involved in post-initial special educational needs teacher training, and in offering contract activities to primary school teams.

Education in the Netherlands had changed since we left for Botswana.

Legislation had altered31, adaptive education appeared to be a new topic in the Netherlands while we heard about inclusive education from English colleagues in Botswana. So my wife and I decided to upgrade our knowledge by attending the International Special Education Congress organised by The University of Manchester and UNESCO in July 2000 in Manchester. The congress introduced us fully into the inclusive education discourse, differentiating between special education and special educational needs education, between integration and mainstreaming on one hand and inclusive education on the other. During the congress there was an ongoing debate between those who advocated inclusive education from a formal-logic, legislative angle and those who considered inclusive education to be the core approach. As long as it was a part of the solution as to how to adequately support a particular child with special educational needs.

28 Recommendation 95a appeared to be the proof of my professional identity as a special education expert. This accepted recommendation read: "REC. 95 [para. 9.6.31] With respect to human resources for special education, the Commission recommends that: a. All teachers should have some elements of special education in their pre-service or in-service training. Those who have not received such training during their pre-service courses should receive it during in-service training." (Republic of Botswana, 1994, 42)

29 The Revised National Policy on Education (Republic of Botswana, 1994, 10,11) read: "Provision of education for children with disabilities still remains limited. Part of the problem for this situation is that there is a lack of adequate data on the incidence and categories of disability among children." Marianne Hop, a colleague posted at the Francistown Teacher Training College, devoted her MA Ed dissertation to this topic (Hop. 1996). I was her 'critical friend' and involved some of my students. We wrote an article about 'Attitude towards Disabled People in Botswana' (Hop & Grol, 1998).

30 When I left I did not want to hamper my successors, as a result I did not stay in touch. So I was flabbergasted to receive a commending article on special educational needs training at Molepolole College of Education by Dart (2006) in October 2006. I was touched to learn that the curriculum that started in full in 1998 was validated in 2001 and was still going strong.

31 In 1998 the Law on Primary Education succeeded the Law on Basic Education, and the Law on the Expertise Centre succeeded the Interim Law on Special Education Secondary Special Education (Groot & Rijswijk, 1999; Schuman, 2010).
In the early years of the millennium I became involved in training colleagues in the perspective of the shift from the then existing post-initial teacher training system towards the Bachelor Master Structure\(^3\). Senior management of my department asked me to join a first cohort of lecturers to be trained to coach on competences. I had to transfer my newly-acquired knowledge and skills to a subsequent cohort of fellow lecturers after being trained. I decided to link this training to the dissertation of my MA Ed study I attended at the University of Greenwich (Grol, 2003).

The first cohort set the course for development-focused coaching and advised senior management to follow this direction. However senior management showed curriculum-focused tendencies, which affected my intended training of fellow lecturers and threatened to affect my interactions with students. I was confronted with managerial prescriptions as to how to design module curricula and how to design and complete the Electronic Learning Environment. As a result my transformative approach was overruled by the mimetic traditional approach (Oers & Janssen-Vos, 1992) of senior management. I felt demoted from a position of an independent-thinking and learning educational professional to a position of simple executor of rules and procedures (Lans, 2008). I started to think about quitting the polytechnic education field.

While I seriously considered resignation in the spring of 2004, I was offered a new job as coach at the Higher Cadre Education Pedagogy course. It was not the particular course I attended; it was the legal predecessor of what is now called the Master Course Pedagogy from an ecological perspective, my current professional environment. Later Jansen & Linde (2010, 8) wrote in their introduction into the workbook of this master Pedagogy from an ecological perspective, my current professional environment. Later Jansen & Linde (2010, 8) wrote in their introduction into the workbook of this master course that the course is based upon the pedagogical education concept of ‘Real Life Learning’:

“A permanent learner takes self-initiative. He takes his development into his own hands. He is open to change. He is flexible. And he is willing to tinker at himself when and if his environment asks for it. Essential then is the personal and professional development of the learner.” (Translit. CG)

When I started my new job as coach, the transformative tradition (Oers & Janssen-Vos, 1992) was sensibly present. It felt like coming back home in an educational field I feared to lose. Professionally I felt at ease since I had entered the part-time DBA/PhD programme.

In January 2006 I became volunteer chairman of a small Catholic Education Centre in my hometown. The Centre was on the edge of disappearing due to a lack of board members. I took the job because I felt an obligation to give something back for the generations of my family and my family-in-law who received their lower respective elementary or primary education organised by this Centre and its legal predecessors.

An unexpected side-effect was that I became an active participant in the local appropriate education discourse since the chairman of the Catholic Education Centre used to be the secretary of both the board of the local Together To School Again cooperation-association\(^4\) and the regional, federative Together To School Again cooperation-association. The former was one of three of the constituent members of the latter.

I resigned on 31 December 2009 because being coach, part-time volunteer and part-time PhD student was not compatible with a social life arising from a four-generation family, circles of friends in our hometown and home village, colleagues and a sports club.

So far with my educational voice I have told a chronicled, episodic story. To understand and communicate my educational passion I should give my educational voice a more nuanced and dynamic temporality (Cuncliffe, Luhman & Boje, 2004). For example:\(^5\):

“Every year I have a reunion with three former pupils and their parents from my time as teacher of a School Attached to a Paedological Institute. Each time we recollect stories, exchange thoughts and ideas, I learn a lot, and above all enjoy myself. Often learning is enjoying.

Let me tell you about these former pupils.

Arjen was a boy who became overstressed at school when he was seven years old. A psychiatrist diagnosed him, and prescribed medication by which I recognised the psychiatrist's hallmark. The psychiatrist added to his diagnosis that Arjen would be suicidal over time. Not a pleasant perspective for Arjen although he never heard it, not for his parents although they didn't hear it either, and not for me even though I heard it indirectly. I was outraged at this prognosis; how can you pass on such a self-destructive judgment to a child, what has happened to your values and norms during your life?

3 Prior to 1999 the Dutch higher educational system consisted of ‘long lasting degrees (4, 5 or 6 years) leading to a master equivalent system’ (Capano & Piattoni, 2011, 592). The 1999 Bologna Declaration set the European higher education ‘convergence’ (Ibid, 587) agenda out to create a European Higher Education Area. One of the priorities of the Bologna declaration was the adoption of a two-tier structure of academic curricula. As a result in the Netherlands ‘in 2002 the BA/MA system has been approved in flexible forms (3+1 or 3+2). The total length of previous degrees thus remained unchanged’ (Ibid, 592).

4 'Together to School Again’ has been a governmental policy to cut the increasing special education expenses since the early 1990s. The State Secretary of Education, and later mayor of my hometown Jacques Wallage, explained the two major objectives of this policy (Groot & Rijswijk, 1999, 39):

- improvement of regular education care for children with problems and
- stabilisation or decrease in the number of pupils referred to schools for young children whose development is threatened, schools for children with mild learning problems, and schools for children with learning and education problems. “(Translit. CG)

The ‘Together to School Again’ policy organised national covering cooperation-associations of schools to break down the fences between regular education and special education.

5 The example is a small and slightly modified part of the story I told during the launch of the workbook Master Ecological Pedagogy (Jansen & Linden, 2010). The whole story has been published (Grol, 2011).
Bert was a boy who talked about the speed of dinosaurs time and again in class, afraid of unexpected and loud noises, a typically individual sense of humour into which I apparently fitted. With this humour he opened slowly in class like a flower towards the surrounding world, steadily gaining the self-confidence to indicate what he liked and didn’t like. And above all his parents taught me how to handle Bert -- magnificent. When I met him after some years he asked if I still had that brown Citroen BX with matching number plate. In between he listed cars and number plates of some of my colleagues while I had forgotten my brown Citroen entirely. What is important in the life of whom?

Cor was a boy adopted from an African war area where at the age of around four he witnessed the murder of family members by the government army; he was forced to identify them. From the orphanage he was adopted to the Netherlands. He had felt himself to be a traitor the moment he left his home country; how could he ever be happy while his brothers were still in the same orphanage in agony?

Every time we meet Arjen, Bert and Cor are eager to know how they were then.

Cor is the most explicit: “I was the only normal one, the others were just crazy.” "Not us, surely?" “No not that bad, but the others were”. We look at each other, we listen to each other and we learn and laugh. Often learning is laughing as well.

Those days I learned much, very much. Learned in, from and through real educational life by teaching children who looked at me with a special view; I learned in, from and through real educational life by having the opportunity to discuss what was experienced with my colleagues, frankly and freely; learned in, from and through real educational life by involving parents in the discussions about their child – surprisingly we were rather exceptional by doing so – and by developing plans on how to proceed collaboratively.

By the way, in that time I worked at a school without a director, and the school was dancing. We worked, lived and learned together with each other, with the children, with the parents.

Real educational life learning, learning in, from and through educational life, it can’t be different, can it?” (Transl. CG)

By offering this example I aim to clarify my educational passion beyond my chronicled and episodic prelude education voice so far. The point I would like to make is this: I began my part-time DBA/PhD course as an education man in heart and soul, loaded with a backpack of educational experiences, engagement and passion.

An interesting educational policy development took place in the same month of my application to the part-time DBA/PhD programme, December 2007.

On 5 December 2007 State Secretary Sharon Dijksma of the Ministry of Culture and Sciences sent her Invoeringsplan Passend Onderwijs\(^\text{35}\) (Dijksma, 2007b) and a covering letter (Dijksma, 2007a) to the Chairman of the Lower House of Parliament.

Appropriate Education policy aimed at the improvement of the quality of good education for all. As an education man in heart and soul, appropriate education was precisely my thesis target. However from my exploratory perspective it sent me barking up the wrong tree at the beginning of my exploratory process. My passion for education disabled me from seeing that I was not exploring appropriate education, but the practitioner’s discourse on appropriate education.

It is time to raise my exploratory voice here and now.

**My phenomenological voice**

Before the official start of my part-time DBA/PhD programme, on 1 January 2008, I made a mind map of my initial portfolio. The heart of my mind map was STUDYING. The left part read my educational road to the start of my study as communicated largely by My Prelude Educational Voice. The right part read my relational\(^\text{36}\) and cognitive associations.

The point I would like to make is this: I started not only as an educationalist but also as an explorative learner eager to collect as much knowledge as possible about, and skills in, the following areas: narrative research, semiotics, ethnography, critical methodology, postmodern methodology, dialogic methodology, liberating methodology and local emerging research.

The four year-one workshops of the part-time DBA/PhD programme formed an overwhelming source of inspiration\(^\text{37}\). I devoured all the information like a sponge and got lost for the following months. It was a confusing and enchanting time, reading beautiful and sometimes barely understandable books directing me towards all kinds of philosophical fields.

\(^{35}\) ‘Implementation Plan Appropriate Education’

\(^{36}\) My wife Marola and I feared that joining a study programme for four years might alienate us from each other. So in my mind map walking took a significant place in the relational part as a way to take the time to update each other on what happened and happens. Another result is that I produced reports of workshops I attended: not as a self-justification but as a way to communicate my exploratory process (Freeman, 2007), especially to Marola. I wrote these reports in English, as I also did with my notes and journals.

\(^{37}\) Workshops organised by the University for Humanities have played a significant role in the development of my exploring voice. Scrutinising my reports on these workshops I can figure out when I was triggered, why, and by whom, to take a specific train of thought or decision. It would be an omission not to mention these inexhaustible sources of inspiration yet I decided to spare the reader most of the details.
The first field I explored was phenomenology. As a passionate educationalist I have been interested in the education phenomenon in general from the beginning of my educational career, and in the appropriate education phenomenon in particular from the onset of its policy and of my exploratory process.

My first explicit acquaintance with the phenomenological approach took place with the introduction of the work of Merleau-Ponty during one of the first workshops I attended. To put it bluntly I was first attracted by this beautiful name, Merleau-Ponty. Then what he stands for enchanted me. I wondered whether research could come closer to me than as an interaction on my skin, through my skin, beneath my skin. I bought two Merleau-Ponty books (2003, 2007).

The first book I read was *De wereld waargenomen* (Merleau-Ponty, 2003), originally published as *Causeries* (1943). The book contained seven written accounts of seven radio broadcasts. I was impressed by the readability and the more or less simple way Merleau-Ponty unfolded his thoughts. For instance in the way he explained that Descartes and his successors only trust their cognitive, intellectual approach, reducing science to an instrument of technical development or school of accurateness of the truth. As a result science does not reflect reality: it schematises reality.

This argument excited me, appealed to me, and verbalised what I have thought for years without having the words for what I sensed: the reducing perspective of science.

I took up the second book with high expectations. *Phenomenology of Perception* (Merleau-Ponty, 2007) was originally published as *Phénoménologie de la perception* (1945). It was a beautiful yet abstract book. I was unable to comprehend the ideas. For instance where Merleau-Ponty writes about the experience of the body and the classical psychology; I was able to grasp that unlike what classical psychology does, the world should not be perceived as a collection of determinate objects, but as a horizon latent in all our experience. Arguments like this intrigued, thrilled, enchanted, kept me busy, but I was not able to fully understand its implications let alone to link it to my exploration into appropriate education.

Later Ilja Maso, professor of science philosophy at the University for Humanistics, introduced the phenomenological and the eidetical reduction during a workshop. He set those of us participating an assignment. He challenged us to bring an empirical phenomenon back to the phenomenon. We were given half an hour to describe a recent empirical phenomenon. Then we had to bracket all ideas, concepts etc. about the phenomenon, bringing the particular phenomenon back to its essence. As a follow-up we were given a take-home assignment to rewrite the particular empirical phenomenon. So in my initial assignment I added to and processed my struggle, my feelings, describing the experienced phenomenon in a way that might lead me to the essence.

This exercise made me begin to wonder whether phenomenology was the path I wanted to tread. Did I want to find out the appropriate education’s essence, and as a result did I want to become an appropriate education specialist just as I had previously been a social skills specialist? Yet I was still open to all the new information I was offered and collected. As an example I learned from Bollnow (1958) that making a decision is closing doors. Availability is to be open to others, to other options, to alternatives. I still wanted to be open, and did not want to put aside the phenomenology thoughts. I read Feyerabend (1997) who argued being against the method because that narrows the researching and exploratory mind. Everything should be possible. This ‘Anything goes’ doesn’t mean that everything is wise, useful or effective – it gives the researcher the guideline to apply methods and rules, depending on the situation. Assoun (1978) introduced me to the world of contemporary French philosophers, and I read about the enchanting world of simulations and simulacra by Baudrillard (1994) who was not mentioned by Assoun. I felt attracted to Baudrillard’s world of simulations and simulacra.

Anyhow, as a result I was not aware I was making an inextricable knot of knowledge threads in my head.

During the 2008 Christmas holiday I photographed myself:

![Christmas Holidays 2008, Termunten.](image)

I photographed myself in the dark, not knowing what study direction to take.

I was in the dark, confused and lost on one hand, still eager on the other. When I showed the photo to my colleague Loes Houweling, she interpreted the flashlight as ‘being blinded by the method’. Her interpretation opened my eyes. I relaxed, concen-

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18 Later I applied the world of simulations and simulacra during a discourse in my work about re-positioning our department under another faculty. The use of Baudrillard’s argument made people laugh, yet in the long term it burdened me with a depressive perspective of worlds detached from each other instead of worlds connecting to each other.
trated what I did and wanted to do when it comes to exploring appropriate education.

I gradually became aware that I was not interested in exploring the essence of the appropriate education phenomenon, whether this exists at all. I started to realise that exploring the phenomenological path was a fascinating and enriching exercise but ultimately for me an inappropriate direction to follow.

The ultimate unknotting of appropriate education and the practitioners’ appropriate education discourse took place on 2 November 2010 when I stayed in a hotel in Leicester attending a workshop on ‘Body of Research’. I mention this particular place and date because it appeared to be a turning point in my exploratory process. That night I suddenly became aware that I had turned unconsciously to the narrative approach, without feeling guilty at leaving the appropriate education phenomenological approach; making a fascinating journey is not wasting time but enriching the mind. My explorer voice focused on exploring voices exploring appropriate education fully aroused from my prelude educational voice focusing on appropriate education as a phenomenon.

My narrative voice

My acquaintance with the narrative approach coincided partly with my run-up to the part-time DBA/PhD programme.

As coach of the part-time Master Ecological Pedagogy course I assisted some of my students who did their practice-oriented scientific research along the narrative approach in the 2007-2008 academic year. I followed several routes to professionalise myself in this area.

The first route was to read relevant literature to address and anticipate issues put forward by students. My colleague Loes Houweling suggested a handbook on mapping narrative methodology by Clandinin (2007); I bought this book in November 2007, the same month that my colleague Renée van der Linde suggested joining the part-time DBA/PhD programme. I gained my first theoretical knowledge on the narrative turn simultaneously with my initial knowledge of the part-time DBA/phD-programme.

The second and most impressive route was to closely coach the research of Marieke Leseman, one of my part-time master students, as a way of co-directed learning the narrative method she intended to use. It was an excellent and meaningful time for both of us. After a while she changed direction towards critical ethnographic research, yet my initial foundation of narrative practice was laid.

The third route was to consult colleagues. Renée van der Linde again gave me useful tips on how to proceed, on how to make a new story out of collected information.

Alongside the Clandinin book tip I received information about a book written by Alvesson & Deetz (2000). I was intrigued by the content of especially Chapter Two on ‘Alternative social science research perspectives’, summarised in the following scheme:

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Dimensions of difference in research perspective

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Origin of concepts &amp; problems</th>
<th>Relation to dominant social courses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[Local / emergent]</td>
<td>[Consensus]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Elite / a priori]</td>
<td>[Dissensus]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[口中/interpretive]</td>
<td>[Postmodern deconstructionist]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Modern, progressive]</td>
<td>[Late modern reformist]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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The authors distinguished two binary positions on the horizontal axis in the scheme: local / emergent on the left side, elite / a priori on the right side. The authors distinguish two other binary positions on the vertical axis in the scheme: dissensus and consensus.

Intuitively I have been attracted by the local / emergent, dissensus quadrant, since I have read this scheme.

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38 The didactic approach we use in our Institution for Ecological Pedagogic is Real Life Learning (Jansen, 2005, 2007). One of the elements is the changing role of teacher and student. The student may become teacher; the teacher may become student. In this phase of coaching the student and I changed roles continuously.

39 Alvesson & Deetz (2000, 24) explained:

“Differences amongst research perspectives can be shown by contrasting ‘local / emergent’ with ‘elite / a priori ones.’

The elite / a priori pole privileges the researcher’s language and the research community’s expertise. The centre of the local / emergent pole is the situated, interactive nature of research in which the researcher’s language is open to new meanings, translations and re-differentiation.

40 Alvesson & Deetz (2000, 24) explained:

“The consensus-dissensus dimension focuses on the relation of research practices to the dominant social discourses. Research perspectives can be contrasted based on the extent to which they work within a dominant set of structurings of knowledge, social relations and identities, called here a ‘consensus’ discourse, and the extent to which they work to disrupt these structurings, called here ‘dissensus’ discourse.”
During the initial stage of my part-time DBA/PhD programme I did some reading that provided me with arguments and words to think through my intuition of being attracted towards the ‘local / emergent’ and ‘dissensus’ quadrant. One of them is Lyotard.

Lyotard’s work was introduced during one of the initial workshops when Hans Frederiks, a fellow student, presented a critical book review called ‘Lyotard’s postmodern condition – A report on Knowledge’. This introduction triggered me to read more about this French philosopher so I bought his book on the postmodern condition, in Dutch (Lyotard, 1988).

I learned from Lyotard’s perspective that science is neither more necessary nor less necessary than non-scientific (narrative) knowing.

Lyotard (1988) posed that metanarratives delegitimate themselves performatively: these narratives cannot keep up with the speedy technological developments. They thus encounter problems in prescribing or performing. Small stories are the medium for scientists to announce their fancy inventions. These inventions may lead to new moves, no rules, to new games. It is the paralogy42 that is the legitimate proof of postmodernism. This legitimate discourse has to be held on a dissensus base, not on consensus. Consensus neglects the people who are not heard.

Interpreting Lyotard I took and still accept that narrative knowing based on dissensus offers the opportunity of acknowledging each person’s small, local and emerging story as a medium for announcing fancy inventions. These inventions may lead to new moves, new rules and new games. This understanding of Lyotard’s argument underlines and even boosted my intuitive attraction to the local / emergent and dissensus quadrant of Alvesson & Deetz (2000).

Positioning and confronting the phenomenological approach as interpreted by me and the narrative approach from Lyotard’s perspective, I recognised they are both situated at the local / emergent side of the horizontal axis (Alvesson & Deetz, 2000). Vertically however I perceived the phenomenological approach focusing on the consensus axis; the narrative approach moves on the dissensus side of the axis. That is how I understood and communicated my intuitive attraction to focus on exploring emerging differences.

Yet, inspired by Lightfoot (2008) I have to make a relativistic point here regarding the Alvesson & Deetz scheme (2000).

So far I have taken the 2x2 matrix for granted, but if I take my attraction to the local, emergent and the dissensus quadrant seriously I have to question a tool that demarcates and comprehends the complexity of social sciences a priori in solid lines.

In retrospect, while writing this text a couple of years after I studied the Alvesson & Deetz (2000) matrix for the first time, I understand my use of this matrix. My use is dictated by the scheme’s ability to structure the complexity of social research programmes. Its structure helped and still helps me to explain and communicate my thoughts, ideas and experiences. The matrix’ limitations became clear when coaching students who questioned and crossed its ‘solid lines’, and while I reflected on my own part-time DBA/PhD programme.

The scheme opened the door to new insights; that is how the scheme is helpful for me. I applied the matrix in the emerging phase of my exploratory process while I tried to explore my exploratory process: what am I doing? It helped me to understand my focus on the emerging, local dissensus quadrant without directly realising its impact on my exploring process. The impact materialized when I woke up in a hotel in Leicester early in the morning of 2 November 2010: I realised I made a narrative turn overnight.

Time to raise another autobiographic voice, again not for self-justification reasons but as a way of communicating my exploratory process (Freeman, 2007). Raising My Interlude Sculptor Voice communicates my reinforced attraction to the dissensus. My Interlude Sculptor Voice emerged from a daily routine in the environment of our home village, Termunten.

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42 Paralogy – “Means literally ‘contrary to calculation’. This concept normally means ‘aberration’ or ‘mental disorder’ and therefore has a negative connotation. However with Lyotard it has a positive meaning. The literal meaning of paralogy is important here: it concerns an unexpected, contrary ‘move’ in the language game; that changes the rules of play and consequently the language game. The paralogy is therefore ‘opening up new horizons’ and is at the basis of new insights, of intervention. In the language game of science the invention is always caused by a paralogy, contradicting a statement, breaking through or turning upside down the accepted rules of play of logics. Also in the language game of art the avant-garde breaks through accepted play rules or conventions, by which it organises innovation of innovation. According to Lyotard the paralogy model ought to be more recognised in society. The focus should not be put on the accepted rules of play, not on the consensus, but on the disagreement, the dissensus.” (Braembussche, 2007, 239,240) (Transl. CG).
My reflective, interlude sculptor voice

In May 2001 a new waterway was opened between the Oosterhornhaven in Delfzijl and the river Termunterzijldiep next to the centuries-old neighbourhood of Wartum, nowadays shrunken to a mound with a single farm on the top. Alongside the new waterway lies a new footpath. For my wife Marola and me this new footpath is of more added value than the waterway itself and of decisive importance for this text on my reflective, interlude sculptor voice.

Since the footpath has opened the previously impenetrable arable Groningen land, a five-mile walk has extended our Termunter walk repertoire. We frequently use this new opportunity, as we did on 24 October 2008.

After about three-and-a-half miles we normally followed a narrow track in the cutting path between the Temunterzijldiep and a family house called ‘Wartumerhof’ built in the Jugendstil in Borgsweer. We were completely taken aback when we discovered this small track to be fenced. As a result we had to take a detour around the ‘Wartumerhof’.

Challenged by the improvised and ramshackle character of the fence and our disbelief that somebody was able to, and was deliberately willing, to steal our scenic passage, we decided to ignore the barrier and continue our walk as we were used to. We realised we may enter a private area. We saw a man in the ‘Wartumerhof’ garden and we presumed he might be the owner who had frustrated us. We decided to make his acquaintance and discover his motive for putting a spoke in our walk.

The new owner explained he had closed the footpath because youngsters from the village used it as a hangout place with all inconveniences this entails: shouting, waste and so on. Nevertheless he liked to meet and to make acquaintance with us. He told that somewhere in his life he had decided to become a sculptor and a master for that one thing is for sure: some of my Termunter friends claim my hands are attached to my body as fakes, so how could I intend to create a sculpture with these notoriously awkward hands? Nevertheless Marola thought it was typical of me to give such an unexpected touch to my exploratory process. I agreed.

In June 2009 I told our son Tom about my plan to attend a week’s workshop on sculpting within the framework of my exploratory process into appropriate education. He wanted to join the workshop.

Just before the start of the workshop I decided to take photos of the creation of my sculpture as a way of supporting further reflections afterwards. The photos might assist me in retelling the story of creating a sculpture so as to reinforce my emerging reflection on my exploratory process into appropriate education.

While sculpting I reflected on the role of creating a sculpture in my exploratory process. As a result alongside the ethical role I identified an exploratory role as being to find an image enabling me to understand and communicate my exploratory process. And I identified an aesthetical role by creatively cutting out of the stone an image that symbolised the process of my exploratory process.

These unexpected emerging and slowly expanding side effects of my sculpting process as a means to reflect on my exploratory process, made its initial ethical intention less prominent.

Tom and I ended up with two totally different sculptures. The question I posed myself was what I saw when I looked at the two sculptures. Answering this question I made use of the photo elicitation technique as described by Bohnsack (2008).

I described Tom’s sculpture denotatively as follows: it is a 33-centimetre high sculpture, weighs 8 kilos and is cut from a 15-kilo green serpentine stone. The sculpture contains the images of five beer bottles, one wine bottle with a broken cork, a glass and two fingers holding three aces playing cards. The sculpture is a unit. There is no front, no right, no back and no left. There is an upper side and a bottom side. The highest point is a broken cork of a wine bottle. The rough surface of the broken cork is the only unmodified part of the stone.

Iconographically what is presented in this sculpture is Tom’s theme, a party. A party in

43 Here I paraphrase Riessman (2008, 141):

“Several investigators tell a story with images, others tell a story about images that themselves tell a story.”

44 Harper justified photo elicitation techniques while using other visual images.

“Most elicitation studies use photographs, but there is no reason studies cannot be done with paintings, cartoons, public displays such as graffiti or advertising billboards or virtually any visual image. But at this point nearly all elicitation research has been based on photographs and that shall be the focus of my paper.” (Harper, 2002, 13)
progress, what’s more: the sculpture, although well balanced, is not upright but is inclining, the bottles swing together, stressing a party image in progress: neither the order of the beginning, nor the chaos at the end.

For Tom, his sculpture was the image of the party he and his four brothers organised for 25 July 2009, the day after finishing his and my sculpting workshop. They expected around eighty friends. It was a party one may expect to be organised by students and young urban people. Tom’s sculpture showed the alcoholic aspect of the party. White lines in the green serpentine stone wind around some bottles; they look like garlands, coincidentally reinforcing the intended party image of the sculpture. The playing cards strengthen the playful character Tom likes to attribute to parties.

Looking through the stone I saw a sculpture that exudes sculpting talent of the sculptor. In an elegant style Tom managed to create a sculpture appealing to the viewer’s eye by its almost casual composition of party elements as bottles, a glass and playing cards. Its warm, deep green colour and smooth surface persuaded viewers not only to look at but also to stroke the sculpture. People did not believe it was the first time Tom had created a sculpture. And they did not believe Tom when he said it was his also his last sculpting attempt. People tended to like Toms sculpture at first glance.

I described my sculpture denotatively as follows: it’s a 29-centimetre high sculpture, weighs 9 kilos and is cut from a 13-kilo red serpentine stone. The sculpture contains three different parts. The top consists of brains, with deeper cut coils; the brains run ‘at the back’ almost on to the bottom, and end in a small piece of unmodified surface of the original stone. There is also a large question mark ‘at the back’. The ‘front’ of the sculpture is the back of an old book with the word ‘book’ cut in it. The ‘right side’ of the book contains the brains again at the top, an ear with a small question mark in it, three differently-coloured eyes under each other (top-down a touch of green, blue, and red), and a vertical mouth with small lips. At the ‘left side’ a vertically-cut apple laptop with a small horizontal Apple logo, and on top of the laptop a photo lens in a smooth and capriciously formed extension at the top. The surface structure goes from smooth to rugged, from glossy to dull.

Iconographically what was represented in this sculpture was my exploratory process. Just as I began my part-time DBA/PhD programme with my head by reading books and books, I started my sculpting process at the top, by cutting brains, and to the front, cutting the back of a book. Then I explored daily practice by interviewing people and asking them to bring a symbol representing appropriate education. The differently-coloured eyes referred to the fact that not only did I use my blue eyes to read and look at the interviewees and their symbol, but I also looked into the multi-coloured eyes of the people I interviewed. The ear with a question mark inside it referred to my curiosity and interest in hearing the stories of the people I interviewed and the meetings I attended. The little mouth referred to my task of collecting information by asking questions and continuing dialogues where and when needed. I also used my eyes, ears and mouth during the workshops of the University of Humanities; there I forwarded my ‘stuff’ for feedback and follow-up. So it was not only my brains, but also the brains outside my head that composed and directed my exploratory process so far. And it is not only brains that direct my exploring process; it is also my feelings. The question mark ‘at the back’ showed my uncertainty about the direction I took, about the decisions I made and the next steps to take. And my sculpture referred to technological devices I needed such as a laptop. I used an Apple because Apple is easy for storing photos. Although I was not unique in how I designed and conducted my exploratory process iteratively, and not unique in being uncertain about my exploratory process, the process is unique and the sculpture is unique.

Looking through the stone I saw that the sculpture exuded a cognitive approach. The sculpture was not a unity at first glance; it might be characterised as multi-layered. The story made people curious and hearing my story tended to lead to a cognitive re-assessment of the sculpture.
My five sons organised their second ‘20-brother party’\textsuperscript{45} the evening Tom and I ended our sculpting workshop. Some eighty people saw our sculptures and gave their comments. Whereas Tom’s work was met with great enthusiasm, people were at least inquisitive about my sculpture. Its abstract nature deviated from Tom’s clear expression, and its shape and style were less accessible than Tom’s sculpture. These comments made the sculpting workshop unexpectedly successful from the perspective of my exploratory process although I didn’t realise this impact in full that evening. I didn’t record the comments, yet the full impact emerged while rethinking the comments the following day. It made me realise the enriching impact of the differences between the two sculptures, enriching my valuation of our sculpting process. That was how making the sculptures strongly confirmed my idea of focusing my exploratory process on the dissensus of what emerges locally.

Since I took photos I decided to produce a digital photo story to further reflect on the creating process, enabling me to relive it (Jansen & Linden, 2006). My digital story consisted of digital photos, some of them modified, and music. I did not use texts in my digital story since the photos and music had to speak for themselves\textsuperscript{46}.

I searched restlessly and in vain for music for many hours. Then my wife advised me to look in more detail through the two CDs that inspired me the most at that moment, which were the CDs of Fish (2006b) and Steve Wilson (2009a). Suddenly the sixth song on Steve Wilson’s CD\textsuperscript{1} opened my eyes. The title of this sixth song is \textit{SIGNIFICANT OTHER}, which expressed the feeling I experienced strongly at the end of the sculpting week. And that is where I ended the digital story; with five photos of two totally different sculptures: aesthetically, philosophically, and conceptually.

\textbf{SIGNIFICANT OTHER} made me relive what Peperzak (1987) wrote about the work of Levinas and what I had read some months before. The argument that enchanted me most was about ‘the other’. The other is presented by: ‘\textit{Autrui me vise’}, the other who casts a glance at me, and by ‘\textit{Autrui me parle’}, the other who talks livingly to me. From that perspective my identity is the way I am touched by the glance another casts at me, by the words another talks to me. I have to respond to the glance and words; that is who I am.

Since then I have maintained this perspective, which I consider to be an honourable way most worth pursuing of finding my way in a complex world. It has coloured my view of humanity, my way of dealing with the complexity of humanity. It is a way I understand and explain the complexity of humanity these days. The way I understand that the significant other appeals to me becomes one of the threads in how to understand and communicate the complexity of my exploratory process. I feel responsible for each of the significant others I invited to speak freely and to be photographed with the symbol.

The most significant role the making of the sculpture process has played in my exploratory process was making me conscious of my responsibility towards the significant other. It is back to ethics again, and time to continue to tell with my ethical voice.

\textbf{My ethical voices}

My explorer’s position shifted due to the combination of my raised awareness of my responsibility towards the significant other and my narrative turn. I did not acknowledge this shift overnight; the awareness of these positional shifts took time before acquiring a firm position in my train of thoughts.

I started my exploratory process as an educationalist in heart and soul, loaded with a backpack of educational experiences, engagement, passion. One of the first books I read is by Todorov. He wrote:

\begin{quote}
“Those who know the past from the inside have the obligation to pass its lesson to those who have no knowledge of it. But what is the lesson?” (Todorov, 2002, 20) (Transl. CG)
\end{quote}

Exploring appropriate education, I knew and know the past from inside. So I was interested in the three inside positions Todorov distinguished. The first insider position is the witness one. The witness is not accountable:

\begin{quote}
“Nobody has the right to impose the image we have of our past on us, even if the problems are numerous; in a certain sense our recollections are irrefutable, because they are important due to the fact that they exist and not to the reality to which they point.” (Todorov, 2002, 173) (Transl. CG)
\end{quote}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=0.5\textwidth]{significant-other.png}
\caption{The significant differing sculptures of Tom (r) and me (l).}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{45} We have five sons; each of them has four brothers.

\textsuperscript{46} In Riessman (2008) terms: the digital story tells its own story.
The second insider position is the historian’s one. The historian tries to look at history in an impersonal way. Yet each historian is fallible, and to a certain level determined by the circumstances of space and time and the tools he has at his disposal.

The third insider position is the commemorator one. Like the witness she is led by her own interest, like the historian she collects data from the public domain. She pretends to appeal to the ‘collective recollection’ but recollection is an individual matter as such. A commemorator covers her interest by giving a semblance of objectivity.

Witnesses and historians have a latent conflict due to their commitment. The witness is led by her own interest to make public what she thinks is interesting; the historian is led by her commitment to truth, and if not she is a propagandist.

Todorov (2002) challenged me to take a position. However, before taking my position I challenged his position.

Todorov’s position is to find the lesson from the past and to pass it to those who do not know the lesson, whatever the lesson may be. However I started to question whether I wanted to look for the lesson or essence of the appropriate education phenomenon. I questioned whether I felt the obligation to pass a lesson, to become an appropriate education specialist.

I became aware that I had given up the idea of looking for a lesson at all. As a result I felt Todorov’s positioning to be less relevant. I turned to another way of perceiving and questioning my explorer’s position. Nevertheless Todorov’s contribution was still valuable to me and had a significant importance in my exploratory process. Paraphrasing Todorov, I did and do not have the right to impose my image on others. In other words: everybody has the undeniable right to expose his own image.

My next and current positioning stemmed from the shift I made from focusing on appropriate education as such, to focusing on stories told by people who are involved in the implementation of the appropriate education policy.

Since appropriate education is the site where I am also involved, I have to reflect on my explorer’s position towards people who I interviewed and photographed, and to whom I had easy access. That is why I turned to literature on auto-ethnography.

I explored potential positions auto-ethnographic explorers can take. In chronological order of my reading I discovered four positions: Guillemin & Gillam (2004) distinguish two types of auto-ethnographic ethics, procedural ethics and situational ethics; Ellis (2007) adds a third type, relational ethics; and Holman Jones (2005) reveals a fourth one: the performative ethics.

Analysing the four ethics I came to the following ethical positions to take during my exploratory process, leaving from the position that I am expected to be ethical and want to be ethical:47

My thoughts: “I want to be ethically correct as seen by the (qualitative) research community”; “What is necessary for me to be ‘true to my character and responsible for my actions and their consequences on others’?” “When I write about myself, I also write about others; how can I honour relational responsibilities?”; “How may my disclosures in print affect the lives of the people about whom I write?”

My feelings: Sensitivity

My actions: I ask permission to collaborate; I organise as comfortable a way as possible to collect information from people I interview and photograph with their symbol; I guarantee privacy; I investigate myself to see my own part in the situation and relation; I ask ‘What should I do?’ rather than ‘This is what you should do’; I mention power; I reflect; I handle multiple perspectives / voices / interpretations; I write texts in the context of my own learning, interpretations and practices; I include local actions; I use civic dialogue performance, that is: I put identities and positions in conflict and conversation; I generate action in the world; I write a text that enacts the very act of writing; I instruct the reader on how I see the world and create a chorus of discordant voices I make a difference by expressing knowledge, meaning and resistance by embodied, tactil, intonational gestural, improvisational, co-experiential and covert meanings; I use ekphrasis by symbols describing appropriate education.

The ordering of ethical positions into thoughts, feelings, actions, and consequences in the short term, consequences in the long term and facilitating factors, stems from my period of writing social skills training methods (Grol & Zengerink, 1990; Grol & Zengerink, 1995). It is based on the behavouristic approach as described by Ringrose & Nijenhuis (1986). From my experiences I know this ordering goes beyond cognitive reflections alone – it appeals to emotions and daily practice. So I used this ordering to reflect on my ethical position beyond a cognitive-ethical position alone.
I related my ethical positions to my Todorov (2002) lesson that I do not have the right to impose my image on others. In a nutshell I concluded that I should construct a civic practitioner’s dialogue (Holman Jones, 2005) on appropriate education, putting identities and positions in conflict and confrontation, on two conditions: preventing participants from recognition and without imposing my image. As a result I try to be true, that is: to be “true to my own character and responsible for my actions and their consequences on others” (Ellis, 2007). To nuance my ethical analysis: it does not provide me with a number of prescriptions; it created a profound awareness of the ethical character of my exploratory process into voices exploring appropriate education. The analysis was a means to create and establish this awareness.

I decided to call the civic dialogue I construct a ‘polylogue’. According to Kessels, Boers & Mostert (2002) a dialogue can be held with a group. However, when I look for the equivalent of dialogue in my Van Dale Dutch dictionary (Geerts & Boon, 1999) the first description indicates it is a conversation between two persons; the fifth description refers to a deliberation between (two) groups of people. The reason that I called my civic dialogue a polylogue is to emphasize the participation of multiple people in the practitioners’ discourse on appropriate education. Yet this deliberation has a dialogue character in so far that it is not focused on finding solutions (Kessels, Boers & Mostert: 2002). That is why I called my civic dialogue a polylogue, where positions and identities are put in conversation and confrontation (Holman Jones, 2005).

I acknowledge the significant role the other plays in my exploratory process and since I am responsible for my actions and their consequences on others, I have to avoid ‘Othering’. ‘Othering’ is critical pedagogy’s argument to avoid producing others and subjects to confirm my own story in the discourse of power producing (McLaren & Kincheloe, 2007). How can I deal with my explorer’s power in such a way that I do justice to the richness of the variety of others? In other words: when I create my polylogue, where is the power in the polylogue, how do I relate to the persons I put in conflict and conversation in the polylogue I create? To tackle these questions I turned to the work of Bakthin and Boje. Both played an unmistakable role in my exploratory process.

**My voice tapping from Bakhtin’s voices**

When I start to discuss Bakhtin (1895-1975), I have to explain that his ideas on language and about the position of the author have become of significant importance for me since I started to read about him and his work. Bakhtin published under many names as a result of the political and academic adversity he experienced, and the communities in which he lived and with whom he worked (Holquist, 1981; Wertsch, 1991). Additionally and due to poor circumstances, manuscripts got lost. So there are some controversial opinions on what Bakthin has written and what he has not. Nevertheless I tap from his work as published under his name to reflect on two issues: which literary powers play a role when I construct a polylogue, and how do I relate to the polylogue’s characters I construct and who I put in conflict and conversation (Holman Jones, 2005)?

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49 Wertsch (1991, 49): “In Bakhtin’s view, the notion of sole, isolated authorship is a bogus one. An essential aspect of his construct of dialogicality is that multiple authorship is a necessary fact about all texts, written or spoken.”
I focused on Bakhtin’s dynamic process of giving meaning to words50 when it comes to literary powers in the polylogue I construct.

In his essay on Discourse in the Novel51 Bakhtin (1981) wrote among other things about the internal stratification52 of language: social dialects, characteristic group behaviour, professional jargons, generic languages, languages of generations and age groups, languages of the authorities, and whatever languages serve the specific socio-political purposes of the day, even of the hour. To put it more powerfully: each day has its own slogan, its own vocabulary, and its own emphasis. They stratify language internally. The internal stratification is present in every language at any moment of its historical existence. It is the indispensable prerequisite of the novel as a genre; the novelistic author acknowledges more languages.

The novel is not objectivistic; it is subjective expressiveness. The several subordinated unities are relatively autonomous.

“… the centrifugal forces53 of the life of language, embodied in a ‘unitary language’, operate in the midst of heteroglossia54.” (Bakhtin, 1981, 271)

Stratification and heteroglossia are both a static invariant of language and ensure its dynamics.

“Alongside the centrifugal forces, the centrifugal forces55 of language carry on their uninterrupted work; alongside verbal-ideological centralisation and unification, the uninterrupted processes of decentralisation and disunification go forward. Every utterance56 of a speaking subject serves as a point where centrifugal as well as centrifugal forces are brought together. The process of centralisation and decentralisation, of unification and disunification, intersect in the utterance; the utterance not only answers the requirements of its own language as an individual embodiment of a speech act, but it answers the requirements of heteroglossia as well; it is in fact an active participant in such speech diversity. And this active participation of every utterance in living heteroglossia determines the linguistic profile and style of the utterance to no less a degree than its inclusion of any normative-centralising system of a unitary language. Every utterance participates in the ‘unitary language’ (in its centrifugal forces and tendencies) and at the same time partakes of social and historical heteroglossia (the centrifugal, stratifying forces).” (Bakhtin, 1981, 272)

Dialogising57 may compensate the normatising58, centrifugal force in the process of meaning giving.

“Against the dialogising background of other languages of the era and in direct dialogic interaction with them (in direct dialogues) each language begins to sound differently than it would have sounded ‘on its own’, as it were (without relating to others).” (Bakhtin, 1981, 412)

I questioned whether I wanted to dialogise appropriate education and, by doing so, to compensate for the normatising, centrifugal force in the process of meaning given to

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50 To further explain some of the terms used by Bakhtin I tap from the glossary (Bakhtin, 1981, 423-434) as compiled by Michael Holquist, editor and translator, and Carol Emerson, translator. In their introduction to their Glossary they wrote: “Bakhtin’s technical vocabulary presents certain difficulties; while he does not use jargon, he does invest everyday words with special content. In the interests of a smooth translation we have rendered these words in a variety of ways; here we collect and summarise the terms most central to his theory.” (Bakhtin, 1981, 423)


52 Glossary: stratification for Bakhtin is a process, not a state. Under pressure of centrifugal forces languages are continuously stratified, challenging fixed definitions everywhere. Authors coordinate stratifying impulses of represented characters in a novel to find, reject, and redefine a stratum of their own. It destroys unity in a cheerful way, not in a negative or negating way: the express purpose of art is to create new strata so ‘art is a magnificently organised generator of languages’. (Bakhtin, 1981, 433)

53 Glossary (Bakhtin, 1981): centrifugal forces are the centralising forces, the homogenising, hierarchising influences as exercised by rulers and high poetic genres. The novel is a normatising, centrifugal force.


“The base condition governing the operation of meaning in any utterance. It is that which insures the primacy of context over text. At any given time, in any given place, there will be a set of conditions – social, historical, meteorological, physiological – that will ensure that a word uttered in that place and at that time will have a meaning different than it would have under any other conditions; all utterances are heteroglossia in that they are functions of a matrix of forces partially impossible to recoup, and therefore impossible to resolve. Heteroglossia is as close a conceptualisation as is possible of that locus where centrifugal and centrifugal forces collide; as such it is that which systematic linguistics must always suppress.”
appropriate education. My answer to my question was and still is unequivocally no.
I like to do justice to the rich variety of information I got when I interviewed people
involved in the implementation of the appropriate education policy, and when I at-
tended meetings on appropriate education. In my polylogue I focus on the centrifugal
forces in the stories I collected.
Yet, since I am the author of the polylogue I have to be aware of my role as author.
What were my roles?

One of my roles as author was being the constructor of the polylogue’s chronotope.59
In this complex constructing process I sought ‘responsive understanding’, that is:

“The author can never turn his whole self and his speech work to the complete and final
will of addressees who are on hand or nearby …, and always presupposes … some higher
instancing of responsive understanding that can distance itself in various ways. Each di-
alogue takes place as if against the background of the responsive understanding of an in-
visible present third party who stands above all participants in the dialogue (partners.)”
(Bakhtin, 1986, 126)

I distinguished two threads to handle this complexity.

The first thread is my relational ethic in relation to the people I interviewed and other
participants. I have to construct a polylogue in a way that prevents them from recog-
nition (Ellis, 2007), and as such I am responsible and I am expected to be responsible
for my actions and their consequences on them.

The second thread is my performative ethic in relation to: the people I interviewed
and other participants who have to be heard in my polylogue; the academic commu-
nity to whom I present my thesis who have to recognise their academic standards; and
the readers of my thesis who have to be able to recognise the way I constructed my
polylogue.

Another role as author is that I am the constructor of the characters who perform the
polylogue60. How do I relate to these characters?
To analyse this I turned to Bakhtin (1984b) who tapped from Dostoevsky’s poetics
where Bakhtin refers, amongst others, to The Brothers Karamazov61.

In his exploration of Dostoevsky’s work Bakhtin (1984b) recognized that Dostoevsky
created a new novelistic genre, the polyphonic novel. Bakhtin argued that Dostoevsky
constructed a voice exactly like the voice of the author in this fundamental new
genre.

“A character’s word about himself and his world is just as fully weighted as the author’s
word usually is: it is not subordinated to the character’s objectified image as merely one
of his characteristics, nor does it serve as a mouthpiece for the author’s voice. It possesses
extraordinary independence in the structure of the work: it sounds, as it were, alongside
the author’s word and in a special way combines both with it and with the full and
equally valid voices of other characters.” (Bakhtin, 1984b, 7)

So while constructing a polylogue I had to create free characters, independent from
me. To construct this freedom in my polylogue I tried to fuse its chronotope into one
carefully thought-of, concrete whole as ‘an organic unity that has nothing to do with
the plot’ (Bakhtin, 1984b, 20). My polylogue needed the dialogism of a polyphonic
novel.

My aesthetic role was a final role as author I would like to explore shortly.

As an author I impose the form. The other who is situated outside the life of the author
pronounces and justifies the form (Bakhtin, 1990). I interpret as the other outside the
life of the author the characters in the polylogue, having in mind the interviewees
from whom I received the information to construct the civic dialogue, the academic
community, and the readers.

Here my exploration of Bakhtin stopped. I am intrigued by his life. His contribution to
the framework of creating a polylogue lies in the direct connection I made between my
polylogue and my relational and performative ethics, and in the necessity to free my

“Literally, ‘time-space’. A unit of analysis for studying texts according to the ratio and nature of the
temporal and spatial categories represented. The distinctiveness of this concept as opposed to most other
uses of time and space in literary analysis lies in the fact that neither category is privileged; they are
utterly interdependent. The chronotope is an optic for reading texts as x-rays of the forces at work in the
culture system from which they spring.”

60 The creation of characters was a second emplotment step I took to grasp the complexity of the
information I collected by interviewing people and attending meetings. For the underpinning of
creating characters I danced to the music of Boje’s voice as described in the next paragraph, and
refer specifically to Boje’s (2001) theory on emplotment.

61 I read Dostoevsky’s book The Brothers Karamazov some thirty years ago. I bought and read a
new edition (Dostoevsky, 2009) to get a sense of what Bakhtin was writing about, focusing on the
fragments as referred to by Bakhtin (1984b). Bakhtin particularly elaborated the freedom of the
attorney in ‘The indictment of attorney Kirillovitsj’ as created by Dostoevsky.
civic dialogue characters. The chronotope of my story is of significant importance, and the lacking of a plot.

I started my study of Bakhtin by addressing the following question: if I construct a polylogue, as I call the civic dialogue (Holman Jones, 2005), where is the power in the polylogue, and how do I relate to the persons I put in conflict and conversation in the polylogue I create?

Bakhtin guided me especially in the peculiarities of writing a dialogue, focusing my attention on the dynamics of language and the positions I may attach to the characters I create in the polylogue I construct.

Boje is the next author I turned to in addressing the power issue in relation to my polylogue. Like Bakhtin Boje played and plays an unmistakable role in my exploratory process. However Boje has a broader position; his work affects my exploratory process leading to the broader construction process of my polylogue beyond the polylogue text construction.

I started my study of Boje to address the following question: how can I methodologically / philosophically / scientifically construct a polylogue with free characters independent of me?

My voice dancing to the music of Boje’s voices

I learned about Boje’s work in the 2006-2007 academic year. Albert Ligtenberg and Lies Ypkema, two of my students, joined an explorative, narrative research project into pedagogical sensitivity. One of the analysing schemes the students used was based on Boje’s work.

In the spring of 2008 another student, Sietse Durkstra, applied the same Boje scheme to analyse verbatim transcripts he made of interviews that he voice-recorded. We analysed the verbatim transcripts in our learning team, consisting of four students and me. The first time we analysed a particular verbatim transcript individually and then compared our results. We analysed the next transcript together. Both approaches led to a richer and deeper insight into the text. I never expected it to be possible to elicit so much information from a text.

Boje’s work intrigued me. Paraphrasing and dancing to Boje’s 2010 voice, that is why I decided to explore how integrating his voice with my voice might illuminate my polylogue and exploratory process so as to understand and communicate their complexities.

Boje burst ‘onto the storytelling scene with two major articles’ (1991, 1995)62. I began studying his work by studying these articles, and then I went through his work chronologically63.

In his 1991 article Boje studied how storytelling organisations tell their stories.

“By focusing on in situ everyday performance behaviour, this study goes on more frequently and differently than might have been suspected in previous storytelling studies.” (Boje, 1991, 24,25)

The justification of this argument was: (1) it is the storyteller who picks the aspects to abbreviate and to gloss; (2) it is the teller and the listener who manage the sense-making by sending cues for how much is told, what is left to the imagination, what interpretation is applied; and (3) it allows for multiple interpretations on the part of the receivers.

As a result of linking Boje’s 1991 voice to my exploratory process I observed two layers to understand and communicate my polylogue process.

The first layer is the constructing of my polylogue. Boje provided me with tools for how to construct a polylogue based on in situ performance behaviour. Being the constructor I picked the aspects to abbreviate and to gloss in this layer level. The second layer starts once my polylogue has been written down and made public. Boje taught me that in this follow-up readers and I make multiple interpretations ending in multiple interpretations of my polylogue. This way of storytelling “… gives us insight into the complex and varied ways organisation members use storytelling in their work world.” (Boje, 1991, 206)

Yet this follow-up is beyond the scope of my exploratory process that ends where the first layer ends: the constructing and writing of my polylogue.

Boje’s 1995 voice went beyond the instrumental level in his second ‘major article’. He communicated a theoretical framework by positioning and confronting the premodern, modern, and postmodern discourse. Boje began his article with the statement:

“Two people can even be in the same room and – if they came there by way of different rooms and character-sequences – each can walk away from the same conversation with entirely different stories.” (Boje, 1995, 999)


63 I did not read all his work exhaustively. I picked those elements that made me understand and explain the way I acted, thought and dared as truly as possible, that is: “true to my own character and responsible for my actions and their consequences for others” (Ellis, 2007, 3).
To understand and communicate this argument he referred to the Tamara play⁶⁴.

“In Hollywood, a play called Tamara puts the audience in a special relationship with an experimental fiction. In Tamara, Los Angeles’ longest-running play, a dozen characters unfold their stories before a walking, sometimes running, audience. Tamara enacts a true story taken from the diary of Aelis Mazoyer. It is Italy, 10 January 1927, in the era of Mussolini. Gabriele d’Annunzio, a poet, patriot, womaniser and revolutionary who is exceedingly popular with the people, is under virtual house arrest. Tamara, an expatriate Polish beauty, aristocrat, and aspiring artist, is summoned from Paris to paint d’Annunzio’s portrait. Instead of remaining stationary, viewing a single stage, the audience fragments into small groups that chase characters from one room to the next, from one floor to the next, even going into bedrooms, kitchens, and other chambers to chase and co-create the stories that interest them the most. If there are a dozen stages and a dozen storytellers, the number of story lines an audience could trace as it chases the wandering discourses of Tamara is factorial 12 (479,001,600).

For example, when attending the play I followed the chauffeur from the kitchen to the maid’s bedroom; there she met the butler, who had just entered the drawing room. As they completed their scene, they each wandered off into different rooms, leaving the audience, myself included, to choose whom to follow. As I decided which characters to follow, I experienced a very different set of stories than someone following another sequence of characters. No audience member gets to follow all the stories since the action is simultaneous, involving different characters in different rooms and on different floors. At the play, each audience member receives a ‘passport’ to return again and again to try to figure out more of the many intertwined networks of stories. Tamara cannot be understood in one visit, even if an audience member and a group of friends go in six different directions and share their story data. Two people can even be in the same room and – if they came there by way of different rooms and character-sequences – each can walk away from the same conversation with entirely different stories.” (Boje, 1995, 998,999)

This introduction into Tamara influenced my understanding and communicating of my exploratory process profoundly. To illustrate its influence I refer to the verbatim transcript⁶⁵ of my first interview when I used Boje’s Tamara metaphor to communicate the way I looked – and still look – at my research:

“Transcript interview with Mia, special educational needs coordinator
Venue: Mia’s office.
Date: 7 October, 9.00-9.45 p.m.
Present: M, interviewee
C, interviewer

C. i do not want to discover laws what eh i like to do is to give a description of how appropriate education is eh at this moment the image what i have now of it but that can change is that eh that image i got from eh an author eh called boje eh and he says there is a eh play performed in los angeles that is called tamara it starts on one podium and then the players all go to different podiums and public has to choose
M. where you
C. who you
M. go
C. like to follow and eh at the end of the evening the players come together again the public comes together as well they saw the same play⁶⁶ however totally different plays” (Transl. CG)

Elaborating on his Tamara play metaphor Boje developed his Storytelling Organisation Theory. He claimed that Tamara play is a discursive metaphor. It highlights:

“... the plurivocal interpretation of organisational stories in a distributed and historically contextualised meaning network — that is, the meaning of events depends upon the locality, the prior sequence of stories, and the transformation of characters in the wandering discourses.” (Boje, 1995, 1000)

An organisation as storyteller can be univocal and tell an oppressive ‘grand story’, but an organization as storyteller can also be plurivocal,

“... a pluralistic construction of a multiplicity of stories, storytellers, and story performance events that are like Tamara but are realised differently depending upon the stories in which one is participating.” (Boje, 1995, 1000)

Boje argued that organisational life is indeterminate, differentiated and chaotic. He explained how the premodern, modern, and postmodern discourses struggled with this indeterminate, differentiated and chaotic life. I summarise this struggle with the following quote:

⁶⁴ ‘Tamara was a production of Taniara International, 2035 N. Highland Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90068.’ (Boje, 1995, 998).
⁶⁵ The transcript is ‘de-grammatised’, that is: without capitals and interpunction. I argued this approach in Chapter Three: Exploring voices exploring appropriate education.
⁶⁶ Transcript 3+4, p.5, line 122-134. (Transl. CG)
⁶⁷ Here my voice recorder showed 1 minute.

Boje wound up his theoretical framework by stressing that he did not take the linear chronicle path to explain the relations between the premodern, modern and postmodern discourses; he rather stressed the active-reactive qualities of these discourses. Each of them struggled with storytelling organisations.

In his conclusion and post text he compared and positioned monologue and dialogue, quoting Bakhtin:

“Since the dialogues construct plurivocal meaning and interpretations, there is no finality to the meaning-making (Bakhtin, 1986).” (Boje, 1995, 1029)

His premodern, modern, and postmodern dialogue made his storytelling without a final meaning making. Here I saw a direct link with my polylogue. I strived to construct and write it in a way such that there is no finality to the meaning making of appropriate education.

Boje ended his article with the following argument:

“In deconstruction, socially constructed stories open to reveal their multiple meanings. Instead of a grand narrative, all this deconstruction leads storytelling organisations to be retheorised as a plurality of differences, a history of differences erupting into yet more differences. A single discourse can weave a multiplicity of stories into a storytelling.” (Boje, 1995, 1031)

In this argument I identified the second layer of my polylogue for a second time, yet in a more elaborated way. Once my polylogue is written and public, the reader and I have to reveal our multiple meanings, to be retheorised as a plurality of differences, a history of differences erupting into yet more differences. Our single discourse can weave a multiplicity of stories into a storytelling. Yet this second layer is again beyond my exploratory process, speculating on the performativity (Holman Jones, 2005) of my polylogue text.

Summarizing Boje’s 1995 Voice I took the Tamara play metaphor of the practitioners’ appropriate education discourse: the multiplicity of stories to be processed in my plurivocal interpretation of this discourse; and the infinite polylogue’s process of meaning-making that goes beyond my exploratory process.

In 1996 Boje, Gephart & Thatchenkery discussed the crises of representation. The authors asserted that emerging alternative views on representation challenged the superiority of scientific knowledge and their claim that there is only a single scientific method. They advocated:

“... development of alternative representations that challenge the dehumanised representations that emerge from objectivistic science (Gephart, 1988).”

(Boje, Gephart & Thatchenkery, 1996, 8)

The authors mentioned amongst others the power / knowledge discourse (Boje, 1995) as alternative to this dehumanised and abstract way of representing. From this point of view my exploring process leading to a polylogue might be perceived as an alternative representation challenging the dehumanised representations that emerge from objectivistic science. So alongside Bakhtin, Boje, Gephart & Thatchenkery’s 1996 voices assisted me in reflecting on my power position as constructing author of the polylogue.

In 2001 Luhman & Boje further challenged the dehumanised representations that emerged from objectivistic science. They explored complexity science and the way narrative research might be an answer to this way of thinking. According to the two authors complexity science shifted away from, or beyond, the Newtonian, deterministic, reductionist perspectives. The complexity science’s presuppositions are: life systems are very complex and ever-changing; and order emerges out of chaos, irregularities emerge out of order.

The role of attractors in chaos appeared to be important in understanding and communicating complexity science.

68 Boje (1995) referred here to:


70 Boje (1995) referred here to:
* Derrida, J

71 The identification of the two layers of my polylogue replicated the lesson I drew from Boje’s 1991 Voice.
“Attractors describe a complex system’s movements through space and time. These movements are at once varied, leading to change and innovation while, at the same time, being sets of patterns preventing the system from falling off the edge of chaos into disorder (Frederick, 199872). Attractors emerge out of the interaction of individual components within a complex system, and may emerge out of a coherence effort of these individual components.” (Luhman & Boje, 2001, 163)

Discourse emerges due to two attractors: change in the organisation’s context, and storytelling power based on the ‘micro-level hegemony’ of individual discourses.

“…, micro-level hegemony is the power of individuals to tell stories and make them stick, and the power of stories to inscribe or constrain individual action. We view storytelling power as a ‘will to power’ of a selective seeing that benefits over others. The ‘will to power’, a concept proposed by Nietzsche (195673), is the struggle of the individual to actively reinterpret and re-story meaning from one event to the next.”
(Luhman & Boje, 2001, 164)

So what is the position of my exploratory process leading to a polylogue confronted with this complexity science theory?

To answer this question I linked Luhman & Boje’s (2001) possible narrative answer to complexity science to Lefebvre & Letiche’s (1999) managing complexity to chaos.

Lefebvre & Letiche (1999, 8) argued:

Complexity is the (social) field of bricolage. It is a form of experimentation wherein meaning and (dis)similarity match. Only by positing the emptiness of chaos is the necessary space for complexity and organising found. Managers are experts in dealing with the emptiness of chaos … They create abri, from the anxieties of the possible, i.e. in the ‘emptinesses’ of ‘conceivable significance’.”

These abri are plateaux of order. Managing from a plateau is temporary and does not prevail for long. An empty space arises behind each plateau, a complex space where disorder (Frederich, 199872). Attractors emerge out of the interaction of individual components within a complex system, and may emerge out of a coherence effort of these individual components.” (Luhman & Boje, 2001, 163)

To further position my polylogue I leaned on the following quotes:

“… our narratives are ongoing linguistic formulations, composed in the moment, and responsive to the circumstances of a particular time and space. This is not necessarily a linear or a cyclical process, but a responsive one. As Bakhtin (198675) notes, meaning occurs in the interplay between people’s spontaneously responsive relations, to each other and the otherness of their surroundings.”
(Luhman & Boje, 2001, 166)

From Lefebvre & Letiche (1999) I took that my polylogue is never definitive but emerging. From Luhman & Boje (2001) I took that my polylogue represents a partial, temporal, situational emerged dialogue as a result of two attractors: the implementation of appropriate education and the storytelling power of the people involved in the implementation of appropriate education in daily practice. Both sources are embed-

72 Boje (2001) referred here to:

73 Boje (2001) referred here to:

74 Luhman & Boje (2001) referred here to:

75 See my bibliography
ded in the complexity science, where I positioned my exploratory process into voices exploring appropriate education as well.

In 2001 Boje published his book *Narrative Methods for Organisational & Communication Research*. He explained the traditional distinction between story and narrative to introduce his ‘antenarrative’ and ‘antinarrative’ concepts.

A story is unemplotted, simple, and chronological. A narrative is a story with a plot. Antenarrative is improper, a wager that a proper narrative can be constituted; an antenarrative is a fragmented, non-linear, incoherent, collective, unplotted and pre-narrative speculation, a bet. The narrative’s problem is that it stands above story and antenarrative. A narrative is modern; a narrative cannot deal with living storytelling that is fragmented, polyphonic and collectively produced.

Boje stated that a story is an antenarrative, however sometimes an antinarrative that is: when the story refuses to become coherent. The purpose of an anti-narrative is 

“not only to deny any overall meaning or plot (as telos or process) but to display fragmentation, discontinuities, partial and temporary understandings, and the lack of fixed meanings while equally claiming to mimic or evoke the nature of the past world as experienced” (Pluciennik et al., 1999: 653). Anti-narrative and antenarrative do share this in common: both are beyond the closure required of narrative theory.” (Boje, 2001, 3)

Here I sensed a difference between Morson’s (1994) grades of narrative freedom of antenarrative and antinarrative respectively. Morson focused on the human dimension of time; he was interested in

“the relation of temporalities to how people live and think about their lives.” (Morson, 1994, 4)

It’s not about physical time, but about determinism or indeterminism. Morson distinguished three shadows of time affecting the freedom of narrative: sideshadowing, foreshadowing and backshadowing. Sideshadowing conceptualises an open sense of morality, without foreshadowing of backshadowing. It admits a middle realm

“of real possibilities that could have happened even if they did not. Things could have been different from the way they were, there were real alternatives to the present we know, and the future admits of various paths. By focusing on the middle realm of possibilities, by exploring its relation to actual events, and by attending to the fact that things could have been different, sideshadowing deepens our sense of openness of time.” (Morson, 1994, 6)

“By restoring the presentness of the past and cultivating a sense that something else might have happened, sideshadowing restores some of the presentness that has been lost. It alters the way we think about earlier events and the narrative models to describe them.” (Morson, 199, 6, 7)

In foreshadowing time is closed. Things happen as a consequence of things to come, future must already be there. In daily life however we do not believe in backward causation. And in a well-constructed story everything (will turn out to) point to the ending and the patterns to be revealed. In backshadowing, present results unavoidably from events in the past: if predecessors could have sensed the right signs they should have known what we know now.

“Our time becomes the privileged moment for judging earlier events, and the values of the present are endowed with unique, and unearned significance. Backshadowing derives from chronocentrism, from the natural egotism attendant on taking one’s own time as special.” (Morson, 1994, 13)

Morson’s ideas are based on his perception of time as ‘becoming’ in the true Bakhtian way as he argued. He argued that we can make ourselves in connection to conceptions of both moral and political human freedom rather than being determined by an ‘unfolding’ world. We may expand our temporal horizons by sideshadowing and dialogue with alternatives. It might make us more attentive to historical opportunities.

So I sensed I have to create a sideshadowing polylogue, without foreshadowing and backshadowing. To be really free the polylogue characters have to forward any alternative argument they like to forward, no closure at all. An antenarrative presupposes a hint of foreshadowing, backshadowing may make sense in retrospective, yet more sensemaking keeps displacing closure (Boje, 2001, 3). Antinarrative refuses to close.

From this position I took that I had to construct and write an antinarrative polylogue re-contextualising the stories to the place and time when they were told. When someone tells a story he does not inhabit, it is a different type of narrating than the one who inhabited the story. So when I tell my polylogue on the practitioners’ discourse on appropriate education, it is a different type of narrating than the way of the practitioners who inhabited the appropriate education story. Therefore I narrate as well.

75 Boje (2001) referred here to:
My narrated polylogue is not embedded in the appropriate education phenomenon, if this phenomenon exists at all, but in the information I collected from the stories of the persons who told me about appropriate education. So the core is to construct and write an antinarrative polylogue that negotiate knowledge and keeps it open, while most so-called academic case studies rely upon sequential, single-voiced stories, on the hypothetical-deductive approach (Boje, 2001).

Boje strived for going beyond linear, one-voiced stories by focusing on the antenarratives’ accounts of experiences so as to improve the narrative of organisations. What I take from Boje’s 2001 Voice is that I perceive my polylogue not as a narrative, nor as an antenarrative, but as an antinarrative. A narrative is not open, providing me as author the power to close; and for me an antenarrative contains a flavour of closing because a bet foreshadows a possible plot. Avoiding authorial power I strive to avoid any flavour of authorial power when it comes to the practitioners’ appropriate education discourse. Constructing and writing an antinarrative polylogue is constructing and writing a story that refuses to become coherent, leaving the floor to its sideshadowing characters. An antinarrative confirmed my understanding of the first layer of Boje’s 1991 and 1995 voices. I as the polylogue’s constructor picked the aspects to abbreviate and to gloss. Yet the polylogue has to be infinite and present to be open to all alternatives as argued by the characters.

The second layer, the significance of my polylogue, is beyond the scope of my exploratory process; it arises in the interplay between the text and the reader leading to a yet unpredictable plot or no plot at all. From this second layer perspective I see my polylogue might become an antenarrative, however it might appear to be an antinarrative as well; I cannot foreshadow the result if there is any.

The perception of my polylogue as antinarrative positioned my exploratory process as the story power (Luhman & Boje, 2001) between two plateaux (Lefebvre & Letiche, 1999), its impact as unpredictable and incomprehensible as is complexity thinking (Cilliers, 1998).

Yet, in spite of my antinarrative perception of the polylogue I applied Boje’s theory of emplotment in an attempt to handle the complexity temporarily to construct and write the polylogue.

“Emplotment … is the ‘grasping together of the elements (events, factors and time episodes) to enact narrative figuration and thereby accomplish the mediation between the earlier and latter stages of mimesis.’” (Boje, 2001, 114)

My emplotment consisted of two layers.

The first layer of my emplotment consists of plotting stories I perceived temporarily and as such elicited from the texts of my verbatim transcripts of interviews and notes of meetings. By plotting stories I grasped complex information about thoughts, feelings, actions, their consequences as revealed during interviews and meetings. I explain this process of destruction and construction in the next chapter (Chapter Three: Exploring voices exploring appropriate education).

My second layer of my emplotment consisted of distributing the elicited antenarratives and their attached plots amongst five characters I created. I perceived these five characters as five ways to grasp the information about the stories and their plots in my polylogue. Dancing to Boje’s 2001 voice I mediated by synthesising the heterogeneity into five perspectives; a mediation to understand the unpredictable and incomprehensible complexity (Cilliers, 1998). This second emplotment enabled me to put characters in conversation and conflict (Holman Jones, 2005) by telling alternative and competing stories and arguments. Paraphrasing Ashton (2001, xiii) I constructed the polylogue ‘to achieve clearer conception and a more active admiration of those vital elements which bind’ and divide practitioners involved in the implementation of the appropriate education. By temporarily plotting stories and creating characters I attempted to construct and write a polylogue to handle the infinite complexity of the appropriate education discourse and to convey the information I deconstructed. Yet in my plot of constructing and writing a polylogue, the polylogue as such is constructed and written as an antinarrative. Boje’s 2001 voice taught me to draw a distinction between the polylogue content as a plot of my thesis narrative to convey the information I destructured from information I collected on one hand, and the polylogue form as an antinarrative from the ongoing appropriate education discourse perspective on the other hand”.

77 This distinction reminded me of one of the tentative axioms of communication of Watzlawick, Bavelas & Jackson (2011/1967, 35):

“Every communication has a content and a relationship aspect such that the latter classifies the former and is therefore a meta-communication.”

The polylogue content conveys the information I deconstructed from the information I collected, and is as such the plot of my thesis. My relational ethics challenged me to do justice to the variety within and between the practitioners’ voices I heard, recorded and analysed. My performative ethics led me to construct and write a civic dialogue, which I called a polylogue. The form of the polylogue is an antinarrative to prevent the polylogue becoming my plane (Bakhtin, 1984b). I needed to forward this antinarrative information about the conveyed information to do justice to my relational ethics. Bateson, Bevals & Jackson called this information about information metacommunication.
I made use of the work of Tufte (1997) to understand and communicate the complexity of my ongoing exploring process. Tufte specialises in visualising research. I drew a rectangle to visualise borders of the situational, temporary context of my exploring process into the practitioners’ discourse on appropriate education. My rectangle in the ‘Ocean of the Streams of Story’ (Tufte, 1997, 121) is arbitrary and open to discussion, as is my polylogue. Yet I have to nuance this image. It is too linear, too much from the left to the right, simply complicated instead of complex so the image had to be improved. At the end of 2009 however the image was sufficient for me to understand and communicate my exploratory process; it illustrated my exploratory process including its arbitrary and open lines.

A compelling impact of this Tufte (1997)-based line of reasoning was that, as explorer, I was in charge of drawing the lines. The danger of power lurked in no uncertain terms. Boje & Rosile (2002, 326) reacted in their article on the Enron scandal to this moral dilemma by arguing that:

“... it is impossible to separate our narrative method from the political choices that come into play when we choose what characters and events to select and say ‘that one there is the Enron’ plot."

To position my choices with Boje & Rosile (2002), I agreed that the unavoidable choices I had to make were connected with the micro and macro context I had to deal with. Translating the micro and macro context to my exploratory process into the practitioners’ discourse on appropriate education, I had and still have to deal with insiders and the outsiders of this particular practitioners’ discourse.

I connected this argument with Bakthin’s (1986) responsive understanding. I took the insiders context into consideration while I constructed my polylogue. My audience to which I related here consisted and still consists of participants of the meetings I attended and the people I interviewed. I connected the unavoidable choices I had to make to my relational ethics (Ellis, 2007) by representing the richness and variety of information I got from the people as truly as possible. I strived for preventing people from recognition by reshuffling the antenarratives I elicited from their information, and distributed them amongst five characters I created. And I connected the unavoidable choices I had to make to my performitivity ethics (Holman Jones, 2005) by representing the richness and variety of information I got from the people in the form of free characters, positioning and confronting their identities independent of me.

I took the outsiders context into consideration while composing Chapter Two on

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78 Thomas Basbøll referred me to the work of Tufte. He introduced me to the world of visuals in research during a workshop on ‘Aesthetics and Organisations Series’ as organised by the Copenhagen Business School and the University for Humanistics in Copenhagen, in November 2009. Back in the Netherlands I mailed him to ask for more information on visuals and research; Tufte was his response. Tufte’s 2006 work (2006a, 2006b; the 2006a chapter on PowerPoint is also available as a separate booklet, 2006a) appeared to be focused on the same topic as Gabriël’s 2006a article; both attack the straitjacket character of PowerPoint, implicitly prioritising lay-out to content. Both Boje & Rosile (2002) and Boje & Rosile (2002) 326 reacted in their article on the Enron scandal to this moral dilemma by arguing that:

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I took the outsiders context into consideration while composing Chapter Two on

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79 About Enron:
Retrieved 29 March 2009 from Wikipedia:

“Enron Corporation (formerly NYSE ticker symbol ENE) was an American energy, commodities, and services company based in Houston, Texas. Before its bankruptcy in late 2001, Enron employed approximately 22,000 staff and was one of the world’s leading electricity, natural gas, communications and pulp and paper companies, with claimed revenues of nearly $101 billion in 2000.[1] Fortune named Enron ‘America’s Most Innovative Company’ for six consecutive years. At the end of 2001, it was revealed that its reported financial condition was sustained substantially by institutionalised, systematic and creatively plannen accounting fraud, known as the ‘Enron scandal’. Enron has since become a popular symbol of wilful corporate fraud and corruption. The scandal also brought into question the accounting practices and activities of many corporations throughout the United States and was a factor in the creation of the Sarbanes–Oxley Act of 2002. The scandal also affected the wider business world by causing the dissolution of the Arthur Andersen accounting firm.”

“Enron Creditors Recovery Corp.’s sole mission is to reorganise and liquidate the remaining operations and assets of Enron following one of the largest and most complex bankruptcies in U.S. history.”
Voices and Chapter Three on Exploring voices exploring appropriate education. The audience to which I related was and still is the audience in the framework of my thesis. This audience consists of the academic community. That is why I underpinned my process of making choices by using literature referrals, by using autobiographic elements, by referring to my journals and photos.

I also agreed with Boje & Rosile (2002) that the unavoidable choices I had to make were connected with the impossibility of exploring the whole practitioners’ appropriate education network. Within this network my exploratory process was temporarily and situational reduced, as visualised in my Tufte (1997) -based image.

I deviated from Boje & Rosile (2002, 326) in that the unavoidable choices I had to make were connected to emplotment. One of their four key areas of emplotment is ‘the causal chain that links events together into a narrative’. In my polylogue I avoided drawing causal links between the characters I created since I wanted them to be free, independent of me. The characters did not speak on my behalf because then I stepped into the trap of moving from my ‘authentic’ I into an unquestioned so violent ‘we’ (Holman Jones, 2005). I was responsible for creating the characters of the polylogue I constructed and wrote; the two-layered emplotment of my polylogue is ‘authored and performed as I (CG) closed the curtains’ (Boje & Rosile, 2002, 326). I used emplotments to grasp information, not to draw causal links between characters.

To underpin the emplotment of my polylogue I turned to Boje’s Storytelling Organisations (2008).

My attention was drawn to a remarkable sentence in Boje’s ‘Acknowledgement and dedications’ at the beginning of his book (Boje, 2008, vi):

“Thank you SAGE for allowing me the use of Story in the title, and letting story out of narrative’s prison. When I wrote Narrative Methods for Organisational and Communicative Research (2001), I was told to use narrative, and not story.”

For me this sentence furnished the key for this book. The element Boje stressed, reinforced and sharpened is the difference between narrative and story.

Boje (2008) linked narrative to modernity and centring forces, aspiring to abstraction and generality; he links story to interplay with the world and decentralising counterforce of diversity, and to generativity. Narratives cohere and stories disperse. I associated these descriptions with Bakhtin’s terminology: narratives concentrate on centripetal forces, and stories revolve around centrifugal forces. Looked at from the perspective of my exploring process these associations led to new perceptions.

I perceived my interplay with the insider context as centrifugal forces. I also perceived my interplay with the readers as centrifugal. They generate new ideas and meanings from the polylogue after I closed the curtain, yet this is beyond my exploratory process. It is a recurrence of the first and second layer of my polylogue as I identified in my dance to the music of Boje’s 1991, 1995 and 2001 voices.

And I perceived my interplay with the outsider context as centripetal forces when it comes to accountability and readability, ‘audit trail’ (Riessman, 2008, 192) or ‘transparency and traceability’ (Jansen, 2009, 83).

Boje then introduced systemicity in a generative way, that is: the meaning of systemicity grew in his book:

“Systemicity is defined as the dynamic unfinished, unfinalised, and unmerged, and the interactivity of complexity properties with storytelling and narrative processes.”
(Boje, 2008, 2)

“Systemicity is defined as the dynamic unfinished, unfinalised, and unmerged, and the interactivity of complexity properties (such as dialogic, recursion, and holographic yielding emergence and self-organisation) constituted by narrative-story processes, in the dance of sensemaking.”
(Boje, 2008, 29)

In this dance of sensemaking my polylogue as antinarrative travels from context to context and develops between two plateaux. The polylogue morphs its content infinitely and independent from the constructor during travelling and while developing. I just closed the curtain to finish the description of my exploratory process the moment I wrote these words, that I just closed the curtain to finish the description of my exploratory process. I did not close the polylogue. My polylogue is a constructed anti-narrative: it can be cited yet it is not a stable ‘object’. My polylogue is infinite and after being constructed and written, is not mine anymore.

80 Here Boje reminded me of the same Watzlawick, Bavelas & Jackson (2011/1967) axiom of communication about content and relationship once more. Taking the relational ethical insiders context I deconstructed the polylogue as information to plot my thesis. Taking the relational ethical insiders context I opted for deconstructing an antinarrative polylogue. This information I elaborated in Chapter Two on My exploring voices and Chapter Three on Exploring voices exploring appropriate education. I perceived as super-addresses (Bakhtin, 1986) of the meta-communication of these two chapters mainly the outsider world of the academic community.
When I read about the story turn I recognised my polylogue.

Boje, 2008, 189

“Dialectic convergence of thesis and antithesis into unity-making themes in ways that are reflexive; this type of restorying in resistance to narrative order (story turn).”

My polylogue

Once the characters are created their identities are positioned and confronted; in this way I restoried the stories of the people I interviewed resisting narrative order.

Dancing to the music of Boje’s 2008 Voice I took the systemicity character of my polylogue and my story turn. My exploratory process went beyond the narrative turn.

In Dance to the Music of Story (Boje & Baskin, 2010) the authors positioned narrative past as living stories whereby events are related in the now, and antenarrative in the future. Yet they may shift and exchange their identities. The antinarrative concept disappeared from Boje’s direct sight.

From Boje 2011 Voice I took the re-emerging time-shadowing perspective as described by Morson (1994). I applied this perspective to sharpen the difference between antenarrative and antinarrative; the former hinting at coherence and the latter refusing coherence.

In the next chapter I elaborate the (f)actual deconstructing process towards my polylogue. Before coming to this deconstructing process I summarise what I took from my dance to Boje’s voices, alongside each other:

- **Grasping stories in situ**, enhancing my sensibility by analysing in different ways, sensing signs when people assume I know a particular story I do not know, communicating my relations towards the people I interview, communicating that I am interested in their story, and noticing the qualifiers to stress the personal touch of each story.

- **The Tamara play metaphor and the infinite process of meaning-making**

- **The perception of my polylogue as anti-narrative**

- **Making unavoidable choices when I construct a polylogue leading to my choice to not include a plot but again: isn’t this a paradox?**

- **The double layered-ness of my polylogue**

- **My polylogue represents a partial, temporal, situational emerged dialogue attracted by the implementation of appropriate education and the storytelling power of the people I interview and photograph**

Dancing to Boje’s Voice my exploratory process danced in the area of systemicity and the story approach beyond the narrative turn.

**Introduction**

I perceive this chapter on ‘Exploring voices exploring appropriate education’ as a spiral antenarrative (Boje, 2011) towards the construction and writing of a polylogue. Sometimes the antenarrative moved away from the construction of the polylogue, as it did when I analysed photos that appeared not to be relevant for the construction of my polylogue. In other cases the antenarrative moved straighter forward to the plot of my exploratory process; a plotless polylogue or antinarrative as explained in the previous chapter.

Meandering towards the factual construction of the polylogue rooted in the practitioners’ discourse the first step was: collecting stories from practitioners.

**Collecting process of stories needed to construct a polylogue**

I started my part-time DBA/PhD course at the University for Humanistics in Utrecht formally on 1 January 2008.

Up to September 2008 I focused on the theoretical side of research, studying phenomenology, French postmodern philosophers, and narrative and ethnographic methodology. During the same period I presented four assignments.

My first assignment was an initial portfolio in the form of a digital story, the second a critical book review in the form of a PowerPoint, the third a reflection on ideals to live and to die for in the form of an oral story, and the fourth my research ideas and plans in the form of a paper presentation.

Just before presenting my paper I noticed that my research plan was too restrictive. The ideas might be reasonable but captured in a strict referral network moulding my exploratory process into a fierce structure. This structure left no opportunities to adapt to what might emerge during my research ‘in situ’ (Boje, 1991). I decided to start the presentation of my paper by announcing that I choose to leave my ideas and plans for what they were.
The feedback I got after my presentation was encouraging. It confirmed my emerged idea of leaving the theory. The feedback encouraged me to start to explore practice as an alternative. This feedback was repeated during the set-up group at the end of the same workshop, in September 2008. So then the collecting process of stories could start, needed to create my polylogue.

I started the process of collecting stories by buying a recording device for my iPod. The next day I recorded an item on appropriate education of a general board meeting of a coordination association of which I am the secretary. It was a pilot recording, and I found out the recording device for my iPod worked well. I made my first verbatim transcript.

The second story I recorded was a public meeting on appropriate education as organised by the board of a small Education Centre of which I was the chairman. I announced the recording in the framework of my exploration of appropriate education, which was received well. After the meeting I asked Mia, one of the special educational needs coordinators, if she was willing to cooperate in my exploration. She reacted positively. She was even enthusiastic when I told her about my plan to explore appropriate education from an inner perspective. In those days I was still in my educational stance, focusing more on the appropriate education phenomenon than on the practitioners’ discourse.

When I called for a specific appointment I bore in mind to ask for a symbol to be brought. I had some slight doubts. I wondered whether a symbol might not be too childish, and too demanding. I questioned whether I put people in too much of a vulnerable position by asking them to bring a symbol in addition to asking them to tell their appropriate education story. As a result I suggested that Mia bring a symbol, a question between the lines; I did not ask her straightforwardly.

On the agreed date and time I arrived at her school to talk about appropriate education. As an introduction I told her I would like to interview her, to talk to her about her appropriate education drive and the impact of appropriate education on her daily practice. We started at 9.00 a.m., but within a minute the recording device failed. After rearranging the device the conversation began in earnest.

Rereading the verbatim transcript I observe I asked Mia whether she brought a symbol that might represent appropriate education after more than 34 minutes. I can sense my prudent and cautious approach from the hesitating and ambiguous way I suggested my idea of bringing a symbol, or an image as I called it then. The verbatim transcript reads:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>cg</th>
<th>do you have a certain no what i try to do in my research is also to eh create</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cg</td>
<td>nice photos or eh do you have something at school of which you say that's nice because it symbolises to me appropriate education or something you uses a lot or eh or eh that's nice to add to it</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>yes yes yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cg</td>
<td>because images often even more again</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>yes yes yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cg</td>
<td>could</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>yes i like that (laughter) yes yes i eh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>what i what did you think about yesterday evening</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>yes yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cg</td>
<td>I like</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>i don't hope you like it this very minute but i certainly want to because it might well be that me that eh later or tomorrow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>m</td>
<td>fully all right yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The last sentence was after exactly 35 minutes on in the second sound track of this conversation.

After Mia’s positive response to looking for a symbol she explained her enthusiasm. She surprised an audience of fellow students a couple of years ago. She used blues music as a symbol for her Master Special Educational Needs course during her presentation of her educational research. Nobody expected her to use this particular symbol. The transcript reads:

83 In retrospect I can see I collected stories needed to construct my polylogue. From that point of view, constructing a polylogue emplotted (Boje, 2001) my collected stories. When I started the stories collection I did not know this plot; I started this process openly.

82 I bought the voice-recording device in a media market. Since I am not technical at all I asked the first salesman I saw for support. He countered my question by asking me if I had been his teacher for two years at a special school attached to a paedological institution. I was, although to my shame I did not remember him at first sight; then we talked for over half an hour in his boss’ time to reminisce.
This positive, anecdotic response persuaded me to ask all interviewees to bring a symbol representing appropriate education.

I made an appointment with Mia to return to her school as soon as she had a symbol. It might be any symbol: a picture, a music fragment, a book, whatever. At the very end of the conversation I impulsively put forward the photo issue. The transcript reads:

mg o maybe just one thing i make a photo of your object is it all right as well if eh ther
745 added a photo of you**
mg yes
mg yes
mm i think everything is all right
mg nice that we will do then
750 mg yes

Due to this positive response once again, I asked all the subsequent people I interviewed to be photographed with a symbol representing appropriate education.

This open and flexible approach (Baarda, Goede & Teunissen, 2009; Maso & Smaling, 1998), without a fixed plan in advance and making decisions during the research (Boeije, Hart & Hox, 2009), is characteristic for qualitative research in general; “No set format exists” (Creswell, 1998), especially not when exploring complexity (Brohm & Jansen, 2010).

I applied this open approach during my whole exploratory process and consequently to all interviews I carried out to explore the practitioners’ appropriate education discourse.

I approached interviewees directly when the opportunity represented itself; when I met somebody I knew, he or she is involved in the implementation of appropriate education as happened with Mia. Selecting interviewees directly, I strived purposefully for maximum variation to highlight the diversity (Baarda, Goede & Teunissen, 2009; Boeije, Hart & Hox, 2009; Evers, 2007; Maso & Smaling, 1998) of the practitioners’ appropriate discourse.

Additionally I used the ‘snowball method’ (Boeije, Hart & Hox, 2009; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000; Evers, 2007; Maso & Smaling, 1998) by asking interviewees to direct me to other people involved in the implementation of the appropriate education policy**. That is how I interviewed for example Maria, Patricia and Sibbele through the mediation of Mia. Rianne joined unexpectedly when I interviewed Sibbele. According to Sibbele ‘Two know more than one’.

From the twenty-eight people I interviewed I approached fourteen directly and fourteen by mediation of, or referred to by, other interviewees. For an overview see Appendix III: ‘Paths of conversations’.

Sometimes I was referred to people I knew already**, and as a result I knew over fifty per cent of the people I interviewed. Appendix II: ‘Internal connections amongst the interviewees’ shows the internal connections amongst the interviewees as far as I know: these connections might be more extensive.

It is a small world where people tend to know each other (Ellis, 2007), which makes my explorer’s concern for their privacy urgent (Clandinin, 2007).

I interviewed three primary school teachers, five special educational needs coordinators of primary schools, one primary school teacher of a special primary school, two directors of primary schools, one team leader of a special school for children with severe emotional and behavioural problems, was to coordinate the ‘On the track’ project on behalf of her school. This was a project to temporarily take children on her special school who had such urgent problems that the normal application process took too much time. I was referred to her and/or her school by amongst others Mathijs, Antoon, Carol, Tom, and Guus and Ric. I approached her directly. I felt ashamed at learning she was so deeply involved in appropriate education as a side effect of my exploratory process into voices exploring appropriate education.

** I have two comments about the ‘snowball method’. My first comment refers to Evers (2007). She argued the disadvantage of the snowball method was that as a researcher, you might get stuck in a certain circle of people. Maso & Smaling (1998) interpreted the snowball method as a specific generalising sample method. Since I strived for variety within the circle of interviewees the snowball method was just a part of my sampling approach alongside the direct, purposeful selection of people (Baarda, Goede & Teunissen, 2009; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000; Evers, 2007; Maso & Smaling, 1998) involved in the implementation of the appropriate education policy. My second comment refers to Evers (2007) and Maso & Smaling (1998). They considered the snowball method as a sampling method of interviewees by asking an interviewee to refer to a subsequent interviewee. Baarda, Goede & Teunissen (2009) added to this the sampling of literature: consulting the references of a book may lead to a subsequent literature source. Here I refer to the interviewee sampling. Yet I have applied the literature sampling method as well since I started my exploring process.

*** I did not consider the issue of anonymity from the onset. So when one of the interviewees asked to see the photos I e-mailed all previous interviewees for permission to use their photos. Within three days all interviewees responded positively. With the people I interviewed afterwards, I asked permission at the end of each interview. All agreed.
school for children with severe emotional and behavioural disorders, one director of a special school for children with severe learning problems, one interim sector manager of a primary education department, one above-school special needs coordinator, one above-school appropriate education coordinator, one senior executive officer of a primary education board, one appropriate education policy maker, two education aldermen, three education lecturers at a university of applied sciences, and one special education department director. Some of the interviewees fulfilled two functions, I do not make this explicit to prevent recognition (Ellis, 2007)87.

I carried out nineteen individual interviews and five group interviews. The shortest interview was seventeen minutes, the longest ninety-one minutes. My total set of collected stories contained: the notes of three general board meetings of cooperative associations; three verbatim transcripts of speeches of cooperative association coordinators on ‘appropriate education’; nineteen verbatim transcripts of individual interviews; five verbatim transcripts of group interviews; a verbatim transcript of a self-interview (including a symbol); and my answers to a questionnaire88; two official documents, that is: a polite yet definite refusal letter from the State Secretary of Education sent a refusal letter by post.


All the people I approached directly were willing to collaborate; each one who cooperated did so voluntarily (Baarda, Goede & Teunissen, 2009).

Two out of sixteen indirect persons refused due to time constraints. Two aldermen and the inspectorate did not respond at all to my electronic request for an interview. The State Secretary of Education sent a refusal letter by post.

I interviewed people when and where they wanted to meet. Eighteen times I travelled to schools or office buildings, four times I visited people in their home, three times the interview took place in my home, four times we met in a pub, and once in a conference building.

I started each interview with settling down. I took time to get to know each other when we met for the first time, or sharing memories and exchanging news or gossip when we knew each other.

Then I explained the context of the interview. I told about my study at the University for Humanistics in Utrecht and the match between its part-time DBA/PhD programme and my research perspective namely: postmodern and narrative89.

Next I introduced the story about the Tamara play (Boje, 1995, 2001), as a metaphor for the polyphony I was seeking. Consequently I stressed the fact that I would like to listen to their story without any reservations. I would like to hear and record their story on their appropriate education drive, or the lack of it, and the impact of this policy in their daily practice89. I wanted to get their emic perspective (Boeije, Hart & Hox, 2009).

To depict my exploratory process (Baarda, Goede & Teunissen, 2009; Creswell, 1998) I explained that my problem or challenge was how to do justice to the variety of information within and between the stories I collected this way; that I liked to put this emic research alongside existing researches and policy papers90 at the end of my exploratory process.

87 More generally, literature on qualitative and narrative research mentions the ethics of doing no harm to participants (Baarda, Goede & Teunissen, 2009; Cohen, Marion & Morrison, 2000; Clandinin, 2007; Evers, 2007; Maso & Smaling, 1998). To go beyond this rather ‘passive’ ethics as I perceived it, I added Guillemin & Gillam’s situational ethics (2004), Ellis’ relational ethics (2007) and Holman Jones’ performative ethics (2005) as I explained in my previous Chapter Two on My exploring voices.

88 The addition of a self-interview (recorded on 25 October 2008) and my answers to a questionnaire (completed on 10 February 2009) was provoked by Guba & Lincoln’s suggestion (1988). They suggested describing my own thoughts periodically for the sake of research integrity. The 1989 work of Guba & Lincoln was about the fourth generation evaluation. This generation was rooted in social constructivism, and is advocated by Abma in the Nethelands (Abma, 1996; Aham & Broere, 2007). The idea of social constructive evaluation prompted me to ask people I interviewed whether they were willing to be more involved in my exploratory process than only providing information.

Maria was the first interviewee to whom I posed this question. Due to time constraints she abstained, which appeared to become a more or less standard reaction except for referring to other people who might have contributed to the research. When I interviewed Pieter he suggested writing newsletters. So that is how I started to produce newsletters: (1) 20 December 2008, (2) 20 August 2009, (3) 30 March 2010, (4) 17 December 2010, and (5) 2 September 2011.

I got yet another reaction from Theo. He granted me the opportunity to publish the photos of the interviewees and their symbols on a national education website. I asked all interviewees for permission, and all agreed. For one reason or the other I lost contact with him so it never materialised. I stopped asking for suggestions when I sensed that I was moving towards the narrative turn, making my own story. I perceived this shift as moving from social constructivism.

I stopped asking for further referrals when I did not know how to process the bulk of information from the stories I had already collected while doing justice to the variety within and between voices I heard talking about appropriate education.

89 I tried to establish ‘mutual trust’. What I did is to communicate my intentions as clearly as possible, explaining that I tried to understand the interviewee’s intentions. I did not pursue faults or imperfections (Maso & Smaling, 1998).

90 I strived for ‘mutual responsivity’ by respecting and appreciating what was said (Maso & Smaling, 1998).

91 Voluntary cooperation based on full information is called ‘Informed consent’ (Boeije, Hart & Hox, 2009; Clandinin, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).
Procedurally I promised a guarantee of privacy (Baarda, Goede & Teunissen, 2009; Cohen, Marion & Morrisson, 2000; Creswell, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Ellis, 2007; Guillemin & Gillam, 2004). I asked permission to voice-record the interview and to take a photo of the interviewee and his or her symbol representing appropriate education. One interviewee refused the voicerecording. She feared the information might emerge at the wrong time at the wrong place. She allowed making notes, she had no symbol and did not want to be photographed, yet provided me with some official policy documents.

I experienced that most people were talking intensively within a short time after the interview started. They sat on the edge of their chair, cheeks flushing, gesticulating to underpin arguments. That was how I sensed the emergent discourse as an interplay between change due to the implementation of the appropriate education policy on one hand, and the practitioners’ power to tell (Luhman & Boje, 2001) on the other.

At the end of each interview I asked whether everything was told that had to be told. Sometimes it led to another argument, another time to the conclusion that everything had been discussed, and incidentally to a suggestion to continue to talk the rest of the day, and even then not everything might have been said. Just one of the interviewees needed considerable prompting to continue the interview.

One interviewee advocated the position of special educational needs coordinator knowing I was an employer. One interviewee took a slightly student-lecturer perspective. One interviewee stopped when he came to a highly personal episode in his education career. I proposed pausing the recording, and he agreed. When he continued his appropriate education story after a while he indicated I could start the recorder once more.

All interviewees granted their permission to use the photo of themselves and their symbol and their explanation by e-mail afterwards. The remaining two interviewees sent a photograph of their symbol representing appropriate education. One interviewee refused the voicerecording. She feared the information of silence might emerge at the wrong time at the wrong place. She allowed making notes, she had no symbol and did not want to be photographed, yet provided me with some official policy documents.

I did not use information ‘shared off the record’ (Creswell, 1998, 132), even although I was not doing a case study.

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Before leaving I asked each interview how he or she had experienced the interview. Most commented by saying it felt more like a conversation than an interview. One of the interviewees said he had been interviewed many times when he was a professional sportsman. He had never revealed so much information as during this interview. He liked my approach of it being more a conversation than an interview.

Six interviewees forgot to bring a symbol. Four of them collected a symbol immediately from their environment. The remaining two interviewees sent a photograph of their symbol and their explanation by e-mail afterwards. All interviewees granted their permission to use the photo of themselves and their symbol.

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I did not know this interviewee in advance, and I do not know whether he knew I happened to be an employer. Yet I sensed a kind of second agenda during the interview. The moment I left he notified me of this second agenda, which I cannot reveal (Ellis, 2007).

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After some months my colleague Loes Houweling advised to put the verbatim transcripts in double line spacing. This would enable me to write between the lines what I read between the lines while I deconstructed the texts. I reformatted all the verbatim transcripts thus far, and applied this suggestion to the verbatim transcripts still to be done.

On 26 May 2009 I finished the last verbatim transcript of the last interview I held and recorded on 15 May 2009.

I met Steve Brown, one of the part-time DBA/PhD programme core tutors. One of his items of advice was to omit grammar from the verbatim transcripts. I linked this advice to a comment by Derrida (2002, 1) I had previously read:

“Title, chapter, chapter heading, heading, capital, capital letter: questions of title will always be questions of authority, or reserve and right, of rights reserved, of hierarchy and hegemony.”

It took three days to ‘degrammatise’ my verbatim transcripts. It marked the end of the verbatim transcript process so I printed them. Then the verbatim transcripts were ready to be deconstructed; however, I was not in the mood to start this process. My attention was drawn to two other elements of my exploratory process.

Verbatim transcripts

I processed the recorded interviews into verbatim transcripts. I started the verbatim transcript process the same day I started recording voices, including a dot per second of silence.

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Then I read Riessman (2008). She suggested adding literal minutes to the transcripts. This facilitates retrieving written information from the verbatim transcript in the electronically voice-recorded interviews. I decided to adapt all the verbatim transcripts and to apply this idea to the few verbatim transcripts I still had to produce.

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94 I offered to mail the transcript to each interviewee as a reminder of what was said. I specified it might be odd to read grammatically incorrect sentences and stories. All wanted to have their transcript, so I mailed them their verbatim transcript.

95 I transformed most of the interviews into verbatim transcripts while travelling in a first class silence compartment of the Dutch railways. Making the verbatim transcript of the interview with Erik, I heard my mobile ringing. I felt embarrassed because I did not want to disturb my fellow passengers. I dived into my schoolbag to switch my mobile off. Then I found out the mobile tone was on my tape, the phone ringing nine minutes after I had started the interview with Erik. It was the first and last time my mobile rang during an interview.
The first was making a sculpture and a covering digital story as a means to reflect on the making process of the sculpture, as I described in the previous Chapter Two: My exploring voices. The very next day after I finished my digital story, space arose in my head to devote attention to a second element of my exploratory process, that is: since I photographed symbols I was eager to learn more about visual analysis. My deconstructing process of the information of the collected stories started with eliciting information from photos.

My photo elicitation process

I started my deconstructing process by consulting literature on photo elicitation (Bohnsack, 2008; Harper, 2002, 2005; Knoblauch a.o., 2008; Riessman, 2008; Sampson-Cordle 2001). The reading made me increasingly eager to learn what information and what kind of information I was able to draw from the photos.

Per photo I described: the anonymised name of the particular person, the function of the particular person, and the relation between the particular person and me; an iconographic description of the symbol; iconologically what concrete story the symbol tells in the words of the person who brought the symbol, what concrete story the symbol tells me looking at the photo and reading the particular person’s own words, and what image emerges.

Simultaneously with the elicitation process I wrote my story about what I called ‘Appropriate education through photo elicitation’. This story was meant as a way of organising my own ‘audit trail’ (Riessman, 2008, 192) or ‘transparency and traceability’ (Jansen, 2009, 83).

While writing I started to wonder how to process the visual elements of photos in my exploratory process. This start marked a period of intellectual wandering and becoming lost. To boost myself I read a novel written by Sebald (2001). The author uses photos in his text to illustrate and underline stories revolving around the life of Jacque Austerlitz. Both the use of the photos and the argumentations are enchanting and fascinating. Reading the book distracted my attention from my confusion. Yet slowly and initially unconsciously I shifted from the phenomenological approach towards the narrative turn, as I described in my previous Chapter Two: My exploring voices.

I decided to present my third and last version story on ‘Appropriate education through photo elicitation’ at an advanced part-time DBA/PhD programme Workshop. An element of my presentation was to show all photos on one PowerPoint slide. The feedback I got after showing this slide was that the photos did not elicit information in the framework of my exploratory process of appropriate education at all, since I took the photos.

After an initial feeling of disillusion, reflection taught that the photo elicitation exercise had not been in vain for a series of reasons. The first reason is that the photos still revived my memories (Jansen & Linden, 2006) of each of the interviewees I interviewed during my exploratory process. This might be of help when doing justice to variety within and between voices I heard, recorded and transcribed.

The second reason is that the photo elicitation might leave ‘thick descriptions’ (Geertz, 1973) because they might revive my memories of the context in which the interviews took place. These thick descriptions were intended partly as a research technique to understand appropriate education as a phenomenon and partly as a way of looking for relationships between the various thick descriptions (Haggis, 2008), both converging and diverging. I was still in-between my phenomenological and narrative approach.

The third reason was that during the photo elicitation process I elicited information from the symbols people brought representing appropriate education for them.

Once photo elicitation was completed, it appeared to be a rhizome story that emerged during my exploratory process appeared, yet not to be relevant. I shifted my attention towards the deconstruction of the verbatim transcripts’ texts.

Constructing a deconstructive tool

My initial focus was on deconstruction as explained by Derrida in his 1983 letter to his Japanese friend Professor Isutzu. Derrida wrote (in Wood & Bernasconi, 1988, 5):

“What deconstruction is not? everything of course! What is deconstruction? nothing of course!”

It was for me an enchanting description of what deconstruction is. In the same letter Derrida wrote (in Wood & Bernasconi, 1988, 3):

“Deconstruction is not a method and cannot be transformed into one. Especially if the technical and procedural significations of the words are stressed. It is true that in certain circles (university or cultural, especially in the United States) the technical and methodological ‘metaphor’ that seems necessarily attached to the very word ‘deconstruction’ has been able to seduce or lead astray. Hence the debate that has developed in these circles: can deconstruction become a methodology for reading and for interpretation? Can it thus let itself be re-appropriated and domesticated by academic institutions?”

The photo elicitation method can be applied to any visual image (Harper, 2002).
Although triggered by Derrida’s deconstruction I concluded it might better to abandon this idea for two reasons. The first was the extended studies I felt I needed to better understand the semi-concept of deconstruction (Braembussche, 2007). I understood that Derrida explained what deconstruction is not rather than what deconstruction is. The second reason was that if I was able to deconstruct texts, I sensed I did not have the time and energy to deconstruct all the texts I collected. I wondered how I would be able to do justice to the variety within and between voices I heard, recorded and transcribed.

I decided to shift from Derrida’s deconstruction to a kind of destructive process. I discussed this shifting process away from Derrida several times with my supervisor Peter Pelzer. One of his comments was to look for remarkable notes and cracks by going quickly through a text a first time. I called this approach ‘Global reading’ and decided to include it in my deconstructive process.

I presented my progress to my tutors and fellow-students, discussing my shift from a phenomenological approach towards thick descriptions of the particular, and how I ordered two books written by Fairclough (1995, 2003).

I first read the editor’s preface to Fairclough’s 1995 book on critical discourse analysis as a way of exploring a possible match between Fairclough’s ideas and my exploratory process into the practitioners’ appropriate education discourse. The editor argued that Fairclough highlighted:

“… the tension and struggle between the creativity potential of Bakhtin’s heteroglossia, the centripetal-centrifugal intertextuality of texts, and Gramsci’s hegemony, that ‘stabilised configuration of discursive practices’ as Fairclough puts it, which acts to control and constrain creativity in discourse.” (Candlin, 1995, x)

I read a connection between the works of Fairclough and Bakhtin, and sensed a close relation between this characterisation of Fairclough’s book and my focus on the complexity of daily life discourse between two plateaux of order (Lefebvre & Letiche, 1999). My interest was aroused.

In his book on Critical Discourse Analysis Fairclough (1995) elaborated on the relation between language, ideology and power. He explained that an imbalance existed between participation in discourse events and the control of production, distribution and consumption of texts.

“The heterogeneities of texts are a sensitive indicator of social-cultural contradictions, and a sensitive barometer of their revolution.” (Fairclough, 1995, 2)

His plea was to address discourse analysts outside language. He included intertextual analysis, to look how available discourses were processed and interwoven. This connectedness reminded me of the deep ecological connectedness of Bateson (2000/1972)100, and confirmed the connection between Fairclough and my Institution for Ecological Pedagogy as laid down by Steve Brown. I decided to continue reading.

Fairclough (1995, 6) explained that a text has two functions:

“Texts in their ideationally functioning constitute systems of knowledge and belief (including what Foucault refers to as ‘objects’), and in their interpersonal functioning they constitute social subjects (or in different terminologies, identities, forms of self) and social relations between (categories of) subjects. Any part of any text can fruitfully be examined in terms of co-presence and interaction of these constitutive processes. … to capture the interplay between cognition and interaction, which is a crucial feature of textual practice.”

97 Rhizome is about a world full of ramifications scattering into all directions. New forms develop along the segmentation lines. It is a fruitful life and an ongoing state of decomposition (Lutters, 2006). So where my phenomenological view decomposed, the narrative perspective shot up and started to flourish.

98 About Norman Fairclough. Fairclough writes:

“Since the early 1980s, my research has focused on critical discourse analysis – including the place of language in social relations of power and ideology, and how language figures in processes of social change. My main current interest is in language (discourse) as an element in contemporary social changes which are referred to as ‘globalisation’, ‘neo-liberalism’, ‘new capitalism’, the ‘knowledge economy’ and so forth” (Retrieved 19 March 2012 from http://www.lancs.ac.uk/ias/profiles/norman-fairclough)

Wikipedia adds (retrieved 17 May 2011):

“Norman Fairclough (born 1941) is emeritus Professor of Linguistics at Lancaster University. He is one of the founders of critical discourse analysis, a branch of sociolinguistics or discourse analysis that looks at the influence of power relations on the content and structure of writings.”

99 I started to read Gramsci’s 2001 book. His book consisted of notes written by Gramsci while he was imprisoned between 1925 and 1931. Gramsci lived from 1891 till 1931. Like Bakhtin he had severe physical problems and he also suffered from political suppression. He wrote about the tendency of groups to exercise hegemony once they came into power. Then I realised I had started to lose track again and had to turn back to the use of Fairclough in the framework of my exploratory process.

100 Bateson (2000/1972) is referred to in the anthropology of part-time Master Course Ecological Pedagogy (Jansen & Linden, 2010). He is mentioned as an example of an author who wrote inspiringly about the inextricable mutual interconnectedness between human and environment.
He added that attention should be paid to what was said implicitly.

I opposed explicit to implicit and linked this opposition to the tension between Gramsci’s hegemony and Bakhtin’s heteroglossia (Fairclough, 1995), and between order and complexity (Lefebvre & Letiche, 1999) respectively. I concluded that following the Fairclough track might provide me with a rich tool to support my deconstructive process within the framework of my shift from phenomenological towards narrative research.

Reading Fairclough’s (1995, 2003) books I developed a form as a supportive deconstruction tool. The tool consisted of six parts:

- **Part I: Personal**
  - Forms of self
  - Arguments explicitly underpinning forms of self
  - Arguments implicitly underpinning forms of self

- **Part II: Textual**

- **Part III: Analyses**

- **Part IV: Genres**

- **Part V: Discourses**

- **Part VI: Styles**

Each of the six parts contained detailed guidelines to deconstruct texts. To illustrate the form exemplarily, Part I ‘Personal’ guidelines consisted of:

**I. Personal**

**I.1. Intrapersonal**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forms of self</th>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arguments explicitly underpinning forms of self</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arguments implicitly underpinning forms of self</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**I.2. Interpersonal**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forms of identities</th>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arguments explicitly underpinning forms of identities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arguments implicitly underpinning forms of identities</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Forms of social relations</th>
<th>Rule</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arguments explicitly underpinning forms of social relations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arguments implicitly underpinning forms of social relations</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Summary of the personal**

The left column contained guidelines to elicit forms of self, identities or social relations from the verbatim transcripts or other texts. The middle column pointed to the line of the verbatim transcript or another document where I noticed a text phrase about forms of self, identities or social relations. The right column offered space to cite the particular phrase. Under ‘Summary of the personal’ I summarised my deconstructive personal information.

Once I finished the Fairclough deconstructive tool I put two boxes at its top.

The first box consisted of my text code referring to the verbatim transcript or another document, and the dates of analysis101. The second box I called ‘Global reading’ to write down my findings as a result of my global reading of the text concerned.

The development of this form marked the beginning of my deconstructive process of my texts, however not the end of developing a tool.

**An explorative use of my deconstructive tool**

I wrote and used a manual to enable me to understand the extensive deconstructive form I constructed. The manual explained Derrida’s specification of ‘Global reading’ and Fairclough’s explanation of each of the six parts and their respective detailed guidelines. Yet my underlying idea of developing a deconstructive tool was to have a means of uncovering stories in the Bojean sense: as antenarratives ‘told without the proper plot sequence and mediated coherence’ (Boje, 2001, 3): unstructured and fragmented.

The word ‘paragramme’ (Gabriel, 2008a, 271) inspired me to develop an explorative attitude towards using my form.

“**The term ‘paragramme’ has been proposed for flexible routines, around which users improvise, innovate and reconfigure to create new and unique solutions, new and unique performances.**”

A form is a means to be used flexibly. The Fairclough-inspired form provided me with guidelines on how to deconstruct texts to tackle my ‘deconstruction embarrassment’, to handle my inability to deconstruct texts without a tool. Deconstruction was my goal, the tool just a means to reach my goal.


101 The extent of the format made deconstructing a text a labour-intensive task that took many hours and sometimes several part-time days per verbatim transcript or other documents.
linguistic theories correctly. Additional theories and emerging approaches could enrich my deconstructive process.

My deconstructive tool consisted of a scheme constituting the form. This schematic approach might suggest one-to-one connections between Fairclough-inspired guidelines and text phrases; this suggestion is misleading. Changing times and places made me change the way I interpreted guidelines. For example in the beginning of my eliciting process I wrote ‘Joining contact’ under arguments implicitly underpinning forms of self.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code: 3+4, Mia</th>
<th>Rules</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arguments implicitly</td>
<td>45, 72, 217, 219</td>
<td>Joining contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>underpinning forms of self</td>
<td>574, 596, 602, 714</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The rules I referred to contained explanations or confirmations of Mia to clarify to me what she meant. So in the beginning one of my interpretations of this Fairclough guideline was how Mia identified herself in relation to me. Later I tended to focus on the way interviewees used pronouns like ‘you’ when speaking on behalf of other people. Then I interpreted the same Fairclough guideline as to how the interviewee identified herself in relation to everyone. And I replaced an emplotted way of schematising by a listing of relevant literary antenarratives.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code: 23, Ad</th>
<th>Rules</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arguments implicitly</td>
<td>633</td>
<td>Sometimes you have to choke a scar [if you want to invest in the potential of people looking at the world problems – CG]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Interpretations changed. Dissemination (Oger, 2005) of the form’s text through time and space prevented direct connections between Fairclough’s guidelines and text phrases. The scheme enabled me to track my connections between the concerned guidelines and the text phrases I used to elicit texts in search for antenarratives. It served as my ‘audit trail’ (Riessman, 2008, 192) or ‘transparency and traceability’ (Jansen, 2009, 83).

My deconstructive process followed the chronological sequence in which I collected the stories. Additions to the tool emerged during the explorative use of my deconstructive tool next to the disseminative character of its text; changes in content and approaches occurred throughout the deconstructive process.

Deconstructing the second verbatim transcript text of Marije and Mathijs I sensed an overall break in the text. It concerned a break between a technically-described approach towards the imposed implementation of the appropriate education policy, and an emotional appeal to appropriate education for all children. This break in the text reminded me of Czarniawska where she drew a distinction between ‘what does the text say’ and what ‘does the text do’ (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1994, 244; Czarniawska, 2004, 60). This particular part of Czarniawska’s theory might also elicit information from other texts. I decided to add this ‘Text says / does’ part of Czarniawska’s theory to Fairclough’s deconstructive process, being retroactive as of the first deconstruction.

When I started the deconstructive process of the eighth verbatim transcript of my interview with Maria, I sensed my mind started to wander while I read her text globally. I was not focused on the text. I decided to enact, that is to read aloud the verbatim transcript. Especially the degrammatized organisation of the text without capitals and punctuation forced me to slow down and to start concentrating well. From then on I enacted all the texts during the first or global reading part of the deconstructive process.

When I reflected on the deconstruction of the verbatim transcript of Carel and went through the results, I found out that the personal way he addressed me was remarkable since he was an indirect interviewee. Anton referred me to Carel – I did not know him previously. Yet he addressed me in a familiar and friendly way, revealing more information about me than I expected him to know.

I decided to add a ‘remarkable’ box to each form, to start with the deconstruction form of Carel and the forms I completed so far. ‘Remarkable’ connected to the particular guideline that elicited the most remarkable information from the particular text.

When I finished the deconstructive process of the verbatim transcript of an individual interview with Alexandra, I found out she had referred to our relationship during the interview. She was a student master ecological pedagogy and I was her coach. I linked this finding to a conversation I had with fellow students and core tutors. I told them about the enthusiastic way interviewees tended to tell their stories from the moment they were given the floor. The audience suggested identifying where people became excited while talking to me. The identification of these moments might reveal covered meanings, stories, antenarratives.

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I limited Czarniawska’s contribution to my exploring process to this part of her theory. My problem with Czarniawska is that she linked stories to reality, looking for the essence of the stories. As an example: explaining the Polish, Finnish and Italian stories she collected (Czarniawska-Joerges, 1994) she presented her different interpretations of the stories’ essences as polyphonic. I argued and still argue that by her interpretations Czarniawska ‘monophones’ the distinguished polyphones. I strived for polyphony to do justice to the variety of information I collected; the variety of information within each interviewee, the variety of information between the interviewees. In spite of our different perspectives I sensed an enriching of my deconstructive process by applying this particular part of Czarniawska’s theory: It might support me in revealing hidden cracks at text level in the texts I deconstructed; Fairclough supported me in revealing cracks and uncovering antenarratives at more detailed and deeper level.

102 I limited Czarniawska’s contribution to my exploring process to this part of her theory.
I decided to add another box to the form called ‘Naming’. In this box I wrote down the rule numbers and passages in which the interviewee addressed me. Mentioning me might be directly by mentioning my name or indirectly by referring to – assumed – shared experiences or knowledge. I went back through all verbatim transcripts so far. The same day I started the deconstructive process of the verbatim transcript of Danielle, director of a primary school. While I enacted the text I marked the ‘naming’ passages, killing two birds with one stone: ‘global reading’ and ‘naming’.

When I deconstructed the verbatim transcript of Guus and Ric I focused first on the contributions of Guus. I found out that in my deconstructive process my attention was revolving increasingly around how social actors were being represented by the interviewees. I still completed the whole form per text; yet my outlook was focused increasingly on the social relations of the interviewee towards the persons and organisations they mentioned and their underlying hierarchies.

The last verbatim transcript I deconstructed was of the interview with Maarten, attended by Katrijn and Wilfried. I focused on the contribution of Maarten. After the deconstruction of this last transcript I started to elicit information from the symbols. I used the following guidelines as derived from my photo elicitation process:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person</th>
<th>Code and anonymous name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Function</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Relation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Symbol</td>
<td>What concrete story the symbol tells according to the interviewee in his or her own short words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What concrete story the symbol tells according to me looking at the photo and reading the interviewee’s own explanation in short words</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Emerging image

This symbol-eliciting process only took two days since I did a lot of the work during the photo elicitation.

Once I finished the symbol eliciting process I put all information per text and symbol in a scheme, after which I copied and pasted all schemes in one document. For the scheme see Appendix I: ‘Analysis scheme per person’.

I composed and used a deconstructive tool, but I agreed with Creswell (1998, 139) when he wrote:

“Analysing text and multiple forms of data presents a formidable task for qualitative researchers. Deciding how to represent the data in tables, matrices and narrative form is challenging as well.”

My next task was to find ways to construct a polylogue as a way to present my data. Boje’s (2001) emplotment concept appeared to be of great help.

**Emplotting antenarratives [1]**

**Destructing analyses and elicitations into paper slips**

I bought a case to store the printed verbatim transcripts and other documents, coloured paperclips to order fragments, and borrowed a paper cutter from Ongering Art Trade as mediated by my eldest son Herman.

Just before I started to destruct the verbatim transcripts by cutting them into paper slips I realised I had to code the slips according to the coding of texts to enable tracing back the loose slips to their original text. I once more created my own ‘audit trail’ (Riessman, 2008, 192) or ‘transparency and traceability’ (Jansen, 2009, 83).

I had nineteen verbatim transcripts of individual interviews. Each interview was initially fragmented in nineteen paper slips according to the deconstructive scheme. For me each paper slip represented a story I elicited from the original verbatim transcript text. So I had to handle nineteen by nineteen making two-hundred-and-sixty-one stories on loose paper slips. The challenge was to make a polylogue out of these stories.

My first step towards the construction of a polylogue consisted of Boje’s (2001) emplotment process. I read the stories and attached plots to them as a step towards my narrative figuration, that is: the construction of my polylogue.

**Initial attempts to construct a polylogue out of the paper slips**

The day of my first attempt to construct a polylogue was a nervous one. I felt a knot in my stomach and found reasons to postpone this decisive and for me unknown area of constructing stories in an unpredictable way.

I started the day with summarising Curry (2006) from 6.45 to 8.45 a.m. Then I started weeding which was not a wise thing to do since I had severe pains in my hips and I would probably have to stand when emplotting as a way of handling all loose paper slips. I managed to cease my avoidance behaviour at 9.10 a.m.
Then I put two CDs of Fish (2006a, 2006b) in my CD player to deepen my concentration. Boosted by the music I listed the slips or stories along the deconstructive scheme. It led to five blank A4 sheets to pile the antenarratives accordingly:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Naming</td>
<td>Text: global</td>
<td>Fairclough</td>
<td>Symbol (description)</td>
<td>Symbol and words image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relation</td>
<td>Text: Czarniawska</td>
<td>Emerging image text</td>
<td>Short words</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Remarkable</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Function</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Once I had piled all stories according to the deconstructive scheme I rearranged the paper slips on six new blank A4 sheets in order to get more orderly stacks of stories:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The persons I talked to</td>
<td>Global reading</td>
<td>Fairclough</td>
<td>Czarniawska</td>
<td>Symbol description short words</td>
<td>Symbols emerging image</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relation</td>
<td>text does text says Emerging image text</td>
<td>Remarkable</td>
<td></td>
<td>what the symbols and words do to me</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Function</td>
<td>Naming</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Yet before dividing all the paper slips I decided to focus on the ‘global reading’ antenarratives only to remain in control of my construction process. Shifting the ‘Global reading’ antenarratives I made a scheme on a ‘landscape-format’ A4, assuming I got a lot of paper slips on this sheet.

The first plot I found to handle the stack of Global Reading paper slips was ‘Format’, later replaced by ‘Formal.’ The second was ‘Teachers’, the third ‘Pitfalls’, the fourth ‘Drives’ and the fifth ‘Not other specified’.

Fish stopped at 11.50 a.m. I took a restless break and restarted at 12.35 a.m. Then I put on music by Wilson (2009a, 2009b) to enhance my concentration.

I realised I missed the global reading stories of the texts 22 and 23 after I scrutinised all the global reading stories several times. I added these paper slips. During the continuing process I added a sixth category: ‘Where does appropriate education play’?

When the Steve Wilson music stopped at 2.20 p.m., I rearranged all global reading paper slips and completed pages of schemes; and yet I felt stuck. I felt it did not make any sense in the way I piled the Global Reading paper slips, or emplotted the Global Reading stories. I did not have the slightest idea of how to proceed.

I took refuge in literature by Clandinin (2007) and Denzin & Lincoln (2005). At the end of this frustrating day I concluded that my first attempt to construct my own story out of the deconstructed information had failed.

I decided to spend the next day attempting to go through all the Fairclough paper slips, including global reading.

I cleared up our two pub tables, claiming to be my study desk for the time being in Termunten. I informed my wife Marola that I might leave the world of the phenomena, referring to Arendt (1980), to return maybe after twelve hours.

I started my revised, second attempt by taking one paper slip, putting it on my desk, taking the next paper slip, putting it at the same or another place on my desk depending on the similarity or difference of the story told by the paper slip, and so on. It might be that another method would emerge. And it appeared some paper slips contained more stories, leading to a further destruction of paper slips while working on the construction process.

As inspiring music I chose Vivaldi (1716). The music boosted as expected, but I underestimated the time needed to explore the deconstructive texts; it took two sixteen-hour working days.

**1. A first exploration to emplot the Fairclough paper slips**

At random I took a first paper slip, and read its degrammaticised story text.

**Code: 13, discourses**

**Text:** let us be silent about appropriate education because it’s a rather infected concept

For me the plot of the story on this paper slip might be ‘Attitude towards appropriate education’. I wrote this on a memo and laid the paper slip on the memo.

I took a second paper slip, and read the story text.

**Code: 15,+16, genres**

**Text:** the key issue is if the behaviour is acceptable other problems tend to be functional and can be handled by organising just something extra from time to time attention for a child with behavioural problems may be at the cost of the teacher’s attention for other

---

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Chapter 3

Exploring voices exploring appropriate education

children and that's not workable from practice. I can say my conservative class system
practice is at right angle with living learning and appropriate education. I'm not advocat-
ing that system at the moment you're in it

For me the plot of this story might be 'Practical problems, excuses'. I wrote this on a
memo and laid the paper slip on the memo.

The third paper slip I picked up read: “the main appropriate education focus of a teacher is
the focus on a child” (Code: 6, style). I took the text of the paper slip as an antenarrative for
a discourse plot. I wrote 'Discourse' on a memo and laid the paper slip on the memo.

I looked back at the first paper slip emplotted under 'Attitudes towards appropriate
education'. It might also be an antenarrative to discourse plot, so I moved the particu-
lar paper slip to the discourse plot.
In a similar way I reconsidered the second paper slip, moved it to a 'Problems' plot,
and by bringing it back I found a third possible plot: 'Good practices'.
That is how I managed to emplot the global reading and Fairclough (1995, 2003) sto-
ries, by moving them around while emplotting and re-emplotting.

In my process of emplotment I followed Boje (2001, 14):

“Emplotment ... is the 'grasping together of the elements (events, factors and time
episodes) to enact narrative figuration and thereby accomplish the mediation between
the earlier and latter stages of mimesis.'

By moving the paper slips around I tried to grasp them together to construct plots as
an in-between stage. It was a stage between the information I collected from verbatim
transcripts and the latter stage of a plotless polylogue as a way of representing the
practitioners' discourse on appropriate education.

The first exploration of emplotment was rough and rather non-specific so far. It helped
me to grasp together the global reading and Fairclough antenarratives. A second explo-
ration revealed more specific plots once I formulated them in 'a sentence that states a
sequence of events that will get enterprise from mission to vision' (Boje, 2008, 261).

As the mission I took the introduced implementation of appropriate education by the
State Secretary (2007a, 2007b). Paraphrasing Boje (2001), I perceived his mission as
the formal strategy plot, the implementation of appropriate education. So each plot
started with the mission to implement appropriate education, the official plot, follo-
wed by a statement that was provoked by the mission. This provoked statement I
called the emerging competing plot to the formal plot.

These sentence-formulated plots were the results of how I grasped the global reading
and Fairclough paper slips in emerging competing plots; each citation in my polylo-
gue was a literal repetition of a story as written on loose and sometimes further frag-
mented loose paper slips.

This emplotment was an initial medium to construct my polylogue as my way of col-
lecting knowledge about the practitioners' appropriate education discourse in daily
practice.

2. A second exploration to emplot the Fairclough paper slips

I started this second exploration by scrutinising the 'discourse' stories, then the 'pro-
blems' stories, followed by 'good practice' and 'emerging images' stories.

Four plots emerged from the 'discourse' stories: 'Appropriate education is told to be
implemented and that gives me hope, I approve'; 'Appropriate education is told to be
implemented, however it is dominated by the financial agenda'; 'Appropriate educa-
tion is told to be implemented, its top-down implementation provokes feelings of
unfairness and outrage'; and 'Appropriate education is told to be implemented, yet it
demands redesigning primary education, special primary education and special edu-
cation all together'.

In this way nine additional competing plots emerged from the 'problems' stories, the
'good practice' stories and the 'emerging images' stories, making a total of thirteen
plots.

Adding more paper slips to construct a polylogue

I added the paper slips from the 'Remarkable' and 'Text says / does' boxes of the indi-
vidual interviews. The question lurked as to why these sources.

Boje argued that Czarniawska's approach and her 'petrified narrative' as a backbone of
strong organisational culture left less space for the complexity of emergent situations.
Then he nuanced this by writing that Czarniawska's approach involves (Boje, 2011, 58):

“... watching how stories are being made; collecting the stories; interpreting, analysing
and deconstructing the stories, putting together your own story and comparing with
other stories. Indeed, different methods of doing narrative research are not mutually
exclusive; they may add up and overlap, as the whole process of organising can be seen
as storytelling.”
My intention of looking through Czarniawska’s perspective to the texts of my verbatim transcripts and notes of meetings was to look for additional stories printed on loose paper slips and emerging competing plots to enrich my polylogue. That is why I also added ‘remarkable’ stories and plots. I found these stories in the form of loose paper slips and competing plots when reading through notes I made from the whole of the information I collected from one person or meeting.

I was aware that I could add more stories in the form of loose paper slips and emerging plots to the whole process of exploring voices. For example I had some experience with the deconstruction method as proposed by Boje (2001) or Gee (2005). I could also apply them. Yet unpredictability and incomprehensibility of complexity (Cilliers, 1998) can never lead to an exhaustive list of antenarratives. So for reasons of handling information rather than for reasons of saturation I decided to leave my searching process for stories and emerging plots to the paper slips I cut from the global reading, Fairclough, Czarniawska, and ‘remarkable’ boxes of the deconstructive scheme at this stage, added by stories from the symbol elicitation.

1. **Remarkable stories**
   I listed the remarkable stories emerging from the Fairclough deconstructive scheme. I did not plot them; I sensed I might add them to create a ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973) while constructing and writing my polylogue. In retrospective these stories did not contribute to the polylogue.

2. **Text says / does stories and plots**
   From the Czarniawska antenarratives one additional competing plot emerged, the plot of convictions and ideas. I put all stories I elicited from Czarniawska’s (1994, 2004) question ‘What does the text do?’ under this new plot. Most of the stories I elicited from Czarniawska’s question ‘What does the text say’ also contributed to this plot, however some of these other stories contributed to other plots.

3. **Adding symbol elicitation stories**
   The process of symbol elicitation had two different layers.

   The first layer consisted of the stories interviewees told to explain how their symbol represented appropriate education. The interviewees told about appropriate education with the help of the symbol (Riesmann, 2008). In this way the symbols had a social function by, as a boundary object (Fenton, 2007; Fischer, Giaccardi, Eden, Sugimoto & Ye, 2005), enabling the interviewee and me to talk about appropriate education.

The second layer consisted of arguments as mentioned by Bohnsack (2008) and Harper respectively (2002). Bohnsack argued that to elicit information from a photo you might look at and beyond the photo; Harper (2002) added that what counted for photo elicitation might also count for any visual image.

I did not plot the stories I elicited from the symbols for the same reason, as I did not plot the ‘remarkable’ antenarratives. I used them to create a ‘thick description’ (Geertz, 1973), describing the stories the polylogue characters told as to how they looked for an appropriate symbol as a way to seek relations between the different thick descriptions (Haggis, 2008); the stories about various symbols are positioned and confronted while telling their stories.

### The interlude, emerging positioning of my polylogue

I attended the Leicester workshop on *Bodies of Theory* organised by the part-time DBA/PhD programme of the Utrecht University for Humanistics and the Centre for Philosophy & Political Economy (CPPE) of the University of Leicester at the University of Leicester in November 2010.

I suddenly woke up in my hotel room early in the morning of 1 November 2010. I was wide-awake immediately. In one brainwave I knew what I wanted to present during this workshop.

I wanted to present my story shift (Boje, 2008) towards the polylogue with the use of a PowerPoint presentation. I made an eleven-slide presentation right away, which I presented to an audience of nine fellow students and five core tutors.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slide</th>
<th>Content presentation</th>
<th>Reception by audience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The image of streaming voices</td>
<td>Tufte’s (1997) image worked well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Study January – September 2008</td>
<td>Explanation was clearly understood</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Interviewing September 2009 – May 2009</td>
<td>My explanation of how I interviewed generated a lot of interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Photo of myself in mirror with flash light</td>
<td>Everybody was interested and recognised my confusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Appropriate education</td>
<td>Valued as crucial contextual information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>Fairclough, what the text says / does, naming et cetera well received and appreciated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Boje</td>
<td>Explanation of ‘antenarrative’ well received</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Bakhtin and Dostoevsky</td>
<td>My story was emotional and touching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9, 10</td>
<td>Functional analysis</td>
<td>Tutors seemed to grasp this issue more easily than students</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Sculptures</td>
<td>Received as a fascinating element</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Between the moment I got the idea of presenting my exploratory process and the moment I presented it, I processed the fourteen emerged competing plots and their antenarratives into functional analyses as a means of positioning myself in the per-
spective of each of the fourteen storytellers. I did this exercise before when studying four different auto-ethnographic ethical perspectives as I described in my Chapter Two: My exploring voices. It worked well for me, making me profoundly aware of the scope of each of the plots and the constituting antenarratives.

After the presentation and feedback I had a meeting with my supervisor Peter Pelzer where we discussed a possible thesis content outline for the first time:

Preface:
- What is the topic, why this topic
- Introduction into appropriate education for laymen
1. Academic – methodology
   Narrative, Boje (antenarrative), Czarniawska (and my objections), Bakhtin, Holman Jones and the importance of polyphony → revealing the plot of my story
2. Academic – analysis process
   Explaining the perspectives around which I organise my dialogue (Fairclough, what the text says / does, symbols) → the analysing tools I developed to achieve my goal of polyphony. I may refer to texts from my story to underpin arguments
3. Creative – writing my story
   - Dialogue / polylogue
   - I may reduce the numbers of plots, or introduce some plots if they have an additional significance
   - I may take the observer perspective using the interior monologue
     [Here I may need the help of Carel104]
4. Conclusion (… if needed)
   E.g. a quote from Dostoevsky of Bakhtin or …

Constructing my polylogue I relied on the work of Bakhtin and Boje. They challenged me to construct a plotless polylogue, a polylogue without a plot. The absence of a plot in my polylogue should be the plot of what I nowadays call my chapter two on My exploring voices. That is how I positioned my polylogue overnight, and that is how I stored the picket poles of my polylogue next to my ethical relational and performative positions as I described in my chapter two: My exploring voices as well.

Emplotting antenarratives [2]

After Leicester I restarted the deconstructive process of collected information by cut-

ting the two keynote speeches and two duo interviews into loose paper slips. I listed the destructed information the way I did with the destructed information of the individual interviews. It was highly intensive work; to raise my concentration and to focus my attention I needed music and chose Ferry (2010). As expected Ferry’s music did its inspiring work, and I left the world of the phenomena once again. As a result another competing plot was added to construct a polylogue.

After the verbatim transcripts I destructed in a similar way: the notes of three general board meetings of cooperative associations; the questionnaire used by a cooperation association to make an inventory of the actual status of appropriate education in their area; and the notes I made from an individual interview with an interviewee who did not want to be voice-recorded yet allowed me to make notes. This exercise added the last of sixteen competing plots.

At last I destructed my self-interview and a questionnaire I completed to conclude that no other stories and competing plots emerged. So then I had sixteen emerging competing plots105.

1. Appropriate education is told to be implemented at the regional and local level, that gives me hope;
2. Appropriate education is told to be implemented: from my previous experiences with newly-announced policies I look at this announced implementation with disregard and I act according to how I know and see the children;
3. Appropriate education is told to be implemented: I feel the obligation to implement appropriate education in the field so I stimulate, organise, and network;
4. Appropriate education is told to be implemented: from the beginning I have sensed barriers in the field so it is hard to implement, bureaucracy rules and I blame managers and decision-makers for not listening;
5. Appropriate education is told to be implemented; this concept cannot be questioned so I approve and offer each child the opportunity to develop herself to the fullest;
6. Appropriate education is told to be implemented, however it is dominated by hiccups between the educational intentions and the budgeting of these interventions so I promote feasibility research;
7. Appropriate education is told to be implemented, its top-down implementation provokes feelings of unfairness and outrage: it should be organised bottom-up, teachers listening to children and managers leaving their offices in metropolitan areas and turning organisation plans upside-down;

As such the numbering of this and succeeding lists of stories is nominal. I “simply assign numbers to different categories in order to show differences” (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996, 143). Yet I have to acknowledge an underlying order, that is: the chronological order of eliciting the plots from the stories.

104 Carel is my second son who works as a journalist for the Dutch equivalent of the Financial Times: Financieel Dagblad
Chapter 3

Exploring voices exploring appropriate education

8 Appropriate education is told to be implemented, yet it demands redesigning primary education, special primary education and special education all together: connecting to the Dutch educational context instead of proceeding from practice abroad; children should attend as much primary education as possible;

9 Appropriate education is told to be implemented: my concern is it’s the general state of art of teachers, although they are in charge they stick to their own vision instead of daring to leave fixed paths to make appropriate education feasible;

10 Appropriate education is told to be implemented; from the perspective of feasibility in daily practice I connect this implementation to how teachers are supported in school when they reach their limit, focusing on the question as to whether the school culture is child-focused or teacher-focused;

11 Appropriate education is told to be implemented: whatever appropriate education might be my focus is on how to be successful as a teacher in class by working hard, offering appropriate programmes to children, networking, and so on;

12 Appropriate education is told to be implemented; whatever is told my focus is on surviving by just organising appropriate programmes, stretching legislation and being humble when needed;

13 Appropriate education is told to be implemented: seen from my inclusive education ideal and the excessive teacher workload, appropriate education has turned into a tragedy leaving me disenchanted;

14 Appropriate education is told to be implemented: from the beginning it has been about all types of convictions and ideals exercising all types of forces and power play during the implementation process;

15 Appropriate education is told to be implemented: its success depends on the special educational needs coordinator and the level to which she is able to demonstrate and effectuate her expertise;

16 Appropriate education is told to be implemented: from the introduction I have seen appropriate education control so I have to develop vision, strategic plans, group plans and so on.

To grasp the new plots better, I decided to transform the new plots and their constituent stories into functional analyses as I also did with the other plots.

Then I still had one verbatim transcript of a life-story of a blind man in Turkey and one verbatim transcript of an interview with a Ghanaian lecturer. I did not destruct them: I might or might not use them anecdotally to establish a connection with my experiences abroad.

The time was ripe to position and confront the plots (Holman Jones, 2005). It appeared that creating characters enabled me to grasp the antenarratives and their emerging competing plots as a second emplotment (Boje, 2001) step towards my narrative figuration, that is: the construction of the polylogue.

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8 Due to knee surgery Tom, our fourth son, lived at our home for over a month. He had some cabaret experiences and was willing to be my ‘critical friend’ during this process of writing a scenario and enacting the polylogue.

107 To get a sense of what Bakhtins writes about I started to read fragments of Rabelais’ (1956, 1980) book about Garantua en Pantagruel, first published between 1532 and 1552. The book is based on old and unpolished folk tales containing countless provocative descriptions.

108 This work was originally published in 1983, making Sloterdijk ‘the shooting star of German philosophy’ (Sorgner, 2003, 1).
Stories and plots emerging from an interview with a teacher or a cooperation association board meeting might be attributed to the special educational needs coordinator since it is not about representation but about conversation and conflicting positions (Holman Jones, 2005).

As a next step I created an environment, combining some of the venues where I interviewed people. A mixture of special educational needs coordinator offices I visited emerged from my images of these places.

Then I started to embody the characters in my mind, again combining people I interviewed, leading to the following scheme:
Chapter 3

Then I reflected on how the ‘Cees’ character could introduce the polylogue to the other characters performing the polylogue. I thought ‘Cees’ had to play a dominant role at the beginning of the polylogue because he is the organiser of the meeting. I made some notes on how I sometimes chaired a meeting109.

1 Welcome
2 Invitation in the framework of the research
3 Agenda: appropriate education
4 Focus: appropriate education discourse in practice
5 Track of invitations. Cees invites Joan and Anne. He asks both to invite another appropriate education stakeholder, preferably with another function.
6 Vote of thanks to Joan. She puts her office at the polylogue’s disposal

A last step towards a scenario was a refined distribution of plots and antenarratives to the characters. Once I had finished an overview of a refined distribution of plots and antenarratives, I wrote various scenarios. A scenario consisted of combining stories, plots and characters. That is how I positioned and confronted the created characters (Holman Jones, 2005). I asked our fourth son Tom for feedback on each version.

In the ‘final’ scenario the distribution of antenarratives and plots amongst the five characters served as Gabriel’s ‘paragramme’ (2008a), including flexibility, improvisations and innovative reconfigurations to construct a polylogue. For example: a story might provoke an interruptive story that did not constitute the same plot. Tom and I looked for positioning and confronting antenarratives, leaving the plots as a means of grasping the stories as elements (Boje, 2001) for the polylogue and not as leading principles. We deconstructed the antenarratives in plots to construct a polylogue in ‘realistic style’ (Holman Jones, 2005).

I asked Tom and my wife Marola whether they were willing to enact the scenario with me. They agreed. We distributed the characters. Marola played the roles of the teacher (Rosemary) and the administrator (Anne), Tom played the role of the director (Paul), and I played the roles of the special educational needs coordinator (Joan) and the researcher (Cees). Then the rehearsals and recording took place during an exhaustive winter afternoon:

12.45 - 14.30 First reading and refining the scenario of the polylogue;
14.45 - 16.00 Second reading and refining the scenario of the polylogue;
16.50 - 17.50 Third reading recording the enacted polylogue.

I made a verbatim transcript of the recorded polylogue. The process of writing and polishing the polylogue text could start in earnest.

Writing and polishing the polylogue text

I began the writing of my polylogue by reflecting on the language: Dutch or English?

My argument for using Dutch was that this medium does justice to the people who provided me with their information on appropriate education in daily practice. They gave me their information in Dutch.

My argument for using English was that my thesis is written in English. During the part-time DBA/PhD programme I presented all my texts to my supervisors, tutors and fellow students in English, therefore I felt an obligation to use English to be accountable for my final result.

I could have decided to write both a Dutch and an English version; however in the framework of my thesis I decided to choose an English version only; within this framework I prevailed my procedural ethics to my relational and performative ethics, which obliges me to organise a follow-up after finishing the thesis.

I forwarded my first draft polylogue text to Marola and my second son Carel. They gave me feedback after their first global reading of the polylogue. They focused on the readability. Processing their comments I discovered I needed more connecting sentences between the arguments. Alongside this alternating between direct and indirect speech might make the text more vivid.

I e-mailed a subsequent version to Carel. I asked him for merciless feedback and comments. He agreed. After a couple of days I met him in his house in the centre of Amsterdam. My Intervision Journal 2011 reads (p.2):

150111 Feedback Amsterdam, Zeedijk, 14.40-15.30
I. 361 comments, most focused on language
   English grammar, punctuation
II. General comments:
   1. The polylogue has to be an independent chapter
   2. From a journalist’s point of view it has to be possible to roll the text backwards without losing the point
   textual ‘first things first’ and

109 The numbers are ordinal (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1996). Whenever I prepared a meeting with an agenda I deliberately reflected on the sequence of points to be discussed, including a welcome as number one and closing remarks like thanks as the final number.
Processing Carel’s comments took two weeks.

I met Dr. Leemans of the University for Humanistics in Zwolle. We discussed the relation between auto-ethnography and my exploring process. An option might be to include an interior monologue in the polylogue as a way of revealing my own position. My challenge should be to prevent my monologue taking power over or directing the voices of the characters I created.

My colleague Renée van der Linde offered to be a critical friend. I asked her to comment on my polylogue in construction. She liked to work on this issue since she had been a director for some years. We made an appointment to meet at her home.

I reflected on the coming meeting with Renée while I travelled to her by train. My objective was to make the polylogue more performative than only providing daily appropriate education information. The created characters had to be brought to life, evoking emotions, feelings, and confirmative and contradictive reactions, in line with my pre-knowledge (Boje, 2001) of the practitioners’ discourse on education in daily practice – and to do justice to my interview experience that ‘within a short time most people were talking, sitting on the edge of the chair, with flushed cheeks, gesticulating to underpin arguments’.

Along with my ideas I travelled with a backpack containing the polylogue in 1.5 line spacing to make notes while working on the text, and the functional analyses of my self-interview and the story of my completed questionnaire to eventually construct an interior monologue.

My colleague and I discussed the materials while having a tasty dinner and some wine. The main learning result was the idea of making the polylogue polyphonic by writing it from different perspectives.

Then the idea of Tamara arose, making the different perspectives approach clearer. I could grant the reader the opportunity of following five different perspectives: Anne’s, Cees’, Joan’s, Paul’s and Rosemary’s perspective. It could make the text more performative while the content did not change. The idea settled down, and it made sense to call the ‘meervoudig perspectief’ in Dutch literature about literature. The next day the idea of Tamara arose, making the different perspectives approach clearer. I bought and started to read some novels written by two different writers. One is the contemporary South African author Coetzee (2009), the other one is Eliot (1994) whose work Middlemarch was recommended by Morson (1994) for a series of reasons. One of them is that Bakhtin regarded the novel as having the richest and most convincing sense of time. Another argument is its multiple plotting.

While rewriting the polylogue from five different perspectives, the idea emerged to leave abbreviations and professional terms untranslated as a means of emphasising the Dutch and the educational character of the polylogue. I decided to produce a glossary to explain these untranslated abbreviations and terms: not as an expert,

A week later friends of ours paid a visit to our cottage. I told them about the different perspective approach. Their daughter Karin Boestra explained that this approach is called the ‘meervoudig perspectief’ in Dutch literature about literature. The next day on the internet I found that the equivalent English term for writing from different perspectives is writing from alternating views. I felt I had taken a subsequent step towards the construction of my polylogue. To obtain a refreshed idea of alternating views after my secondary school period when I was initially taught on this topic, I bought and started to read some novels written by two different writers. One is the contemporary South African author Coetzee (2009), the other one is Eliot (1994) whose work Middlemarch (1994) was recommended by Morson (1994) for a series of reasons. One of them is that Bakhtin regarded the novel as having the richest and most convincing sense of time. Another argument is its multiple plotting.

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110 Reflecting on the meeting I had with Dr Leemans of the University for Humanistics, an unintended yet significant side effect of this alternating views approach was that I could introduce the researcher’s story as just one of the story lines. It offered the opportunity to reveal the role a researcher might play during a polylogue. This story-line reflected my researcher’s role during the polylogue, based on the voice recording of the enacted polylogue; since this researcher’s story-line is just one of the five story-lines it is not intended to dominate the other four story-lines. Instead of using the interior monologue to reveal my position, I used the researcher’s polylogue role to reveal it.

111 Ashton (1994) explains Middlemarch was first published in 1871-2. Reading Eliot, I noted she played with multiple perspectives or alternating views as Dostoevsky did: within and between characters. The novel’s chronotope provoked ‘a certain slowness’ as advocated by Cilliers (2008).

Reading, leaving it for weeks, reading, leaving it for a couple of days, reading; the plot did not urge hurrying up. Whenever I take the book to read, reflective thoughts arise about the author’s ability to alternate views within and between characters.

112 I perceived compiling the glossary as a form of contextualisation that reminded me of Latour (1996, 18, 19).

Of course, a historian of technology ought to work back toward … origin and replace it with groups, interests, intentions, events, opinions. She would sketch the enormous fresco of guided transportation. She would reposition Aramis (*) ‘in its historical framework’; she would determine its place in the entire history of guided-transportation systems. She would go further and further back in time. But then we would lose sight of Aramis, that particular event, that fiction seeking to come true. Since every study has to limit its scope, why not encompass it within the boundaries proposed by the interviewees themselves? To position and confront my Chapter One on Appropriate Education and the glossary: the contextualisation of the appropriate education discourse by Chapter One is limited by Discourses; the contextualisation of the appropriate education discourse by the glossary is limited by the practitioners’ use of abbreviations and slang.

(*) Aramis was the project Latour explored. Latour’s (1996, 304) glossary reads: "Acronym for Agencement et Rames Automatisées de Modules Indépendants dans les Stations ("arrangement in automated trains of independent modules in stations"). The name is an allusion to one of the four heroes of Alexandre Dumas’ well-known novel The Three Musketeers."
but to do justice to the reader who is not familiar with the Dutch appropriate education discourse. When I revised my polylogue for a second time, my attention was focused especially on a consistent use of the character’s perspective in his or her polylogue text.

A subsequent move was prompted during a supervision session with my tutors Hugo Letiche and Peter Pelzer. Their comments challenged me to reflect on the lack of direct interactions between the polylogue characters. As a result I started to destruct the five different perspectives into loose paper slips. A following step was to restore the loose paper slips into one polylogue. While doing so I realised I was writing a play, like Krizanc’s (1981/1989) Tamara and Pirandello’s (1996) Six Characters in Search of an Author. This perspective took me by surprise.

I told this story to my wife Marola who associated this renewed version of the polylogue with bricolage. I had the warps and now I wove them together. As a result the play version looked like my first version, but now from five different perspectives and one guest actor: Rob the janitor.

Voices exploring appropriate education

Characters

Anne
Anne is the administrator of a regional education office. Anne knows Cees because he is the secretary of her office’s Cooperation Association Board. Cees invited her to participate in the meeting on appropriate education. Anne knows Paul from their shared teaching past. She invited him to participate in the meeting on appropriate education. She does not know the other two polylogue participants. Anne had teaching experiences ages ago. Then she married. Her administrative career started when she came back into the educational field.

Cees
Cees is a lecturer, chair of an education association, secretary of cooperation-associations, and researcher. Anne and he are fellow board members. Rosemary and he know each other, Cees is her employer. He invites Anne and Rosemary to participate in the meeting on appropriate education. He does not know the other two participants who are invited by Anne and Rosemary. Cees called for the meeting on appropriate education in his role as researcher. He has educational backgrounds. His focus is on hearing the stories of the practitioners, keeping his own appropriate education story on the background when not asked for.

Joan
Joan is a special educational needs coordinator at a primary school in a deprived urban area, geographically at the centre of today’s meeting. Rosemary invites her to participate in the meeting on appropriate education; they live in the same village. She does not know the other participants. Joan still works at her first school – first as a teacher and now as a special educational needs coordinator.

Paul
Paul is the director of a special primary education school in a rural area. Anne invites him to participate in the meeting on appropriate education. He does not know the other participants.
Paul is tried and tested in practice. He was a teacher at two schools, the current school is his second school as director.

Rob
Janitor of the school where the meeting takes place.

Rosemary
Rosemary is a teacher at a small primary school in a rural area. Cees and Rosemary know each other because she is one of his teachers. Cees invited her to participate in the meeting on appropriate education. Rosemary in turn invited Joan to participate in the meeting on appropriate education; they live in the same village. She does not know who the other participants are. The current school is her second school as a teacher. Rosemary has always been committed to teaching toddlers.

Acts, scenes

ACT ONE: Towards the meeting
Act one, scene one: Anne
Act one, scene two: Cees
Act one, scene three: Joan
Act one, scene four: Paul
Act one, scene five: Rosemary

ACT TWO: Voices exploring appropriate education part I
Act two, scene one: Anne, Cees, Joan, Paul and Rosemary

ACT THREE: Voices during break
Act three, scene one: Anne and Paul
Act three, scene two: Anne
Act three, scene three: Paul
Act three, scene four: Anne and Paul
Act three, scene five: Cees
Act three, scene six: Anne, Cees and Paul
Act three, scene seven: Joan and Rosemary
Act three, scene eight: Rosemary
Act three, scene nine: Joan
Act three, scene ten: Joan and Rosemary
Act three, scene eleven: Cees, Joan and Rosemary
Act three, scene twelve: Anne and Paul

ACT FOUR: Voices exploring appropriate education part II
Act four, scene one: Anne, Cees, Joan, Paul and Rosemary
Act four, scene two: Anne, Cees, Joan, Paul and Rosemary
Act four, scene three: Anne, Cees, Joan, Paul and Rosemary
Act four, scene four: Anne, Cees, Joan, Paul, Rob and Rosemary
Act four, scene five: Anne, Cees, Joan, Paul and Rosemary

ACT FIVE: Leaving the meeting
Act five, scene one: Anne, Cees, Joan, Paul and Rosemary
Act five, scene two: Cees, Joan and Paul
Act five, scene three: Cees and Joan
Act five, scene four: Joan

Glossary
The glossary explains abbreviations and educational slang used in the polylogue. The words and slang concerned are typed in italics.
ACT ONE: TOWARDS THE MEETING

Act one, scene one: Anne

BEDROOM, CAR, SCHOOL, JOAN’S OFFICE

[As always I wake up at 6.45 a.m. and doze for a while. I wonder whether I have to go to Groningen today for a meeting on appropriate education; or whether this meeting takes place tomorrow. I realize it is today.

To make the half-hour drive to and from Groningen more profitable I managed to combine it with a visit to the inspectorate later in the day. Yesterday I prepared the symbol asked for by Cees to present appropriate education; I am eager to see the reactions after my presentation.

Driving to the city of Groningen I remember that Cees told about his study during a general board meeting of our SWV some time ago. I volunteered because this policy has to be fully implemented in 2011. As administrator I have to organise networks to make it successful so it may interesting to join a research meeting into this topic.

Cees asked me if I could arrange another participant, preferably not an administrator but somebody involved in the implementation of appropriate education in daily practice. I liked him a lot, as a colleague and as a person.

After a couple of years I married so left school, which was routine in those days. We lost touch although we occasionally meet at a party of a mutual friend. So I am interested in how he is doing these days and how he perceives appropriate education.

I invited him. He was immediately enthusiastic about joining today’s meeting.

When I arrive at the venue it appears to be a school. A janitor opens the door. He shows me the way to the office where our meeting is organised. Although there is still plenty of time, a quarter of an hour at least, two persons are already there.

The first is Cees who welcomes me and then introduces me to Joan. Joan is an IB-er, and we are in her office. I assess she is around fifteen years younger than me.

Cees asked Joan whether her office could be the place to meet today. That is why we are here now.

Churchill comes in just before eleven, carrying a big shopping bag. I welcome him and introduce him to Cees, Joan and Rosemary. After a short talk with Cees Paul puts his bag in a corner of the office.

Cees invites us to find a place in the seating area.

Act one, scene two: Cees

BEDROOM, BIKE, SCHOOL, JOAN’S OFFICE

[My alarm goes off at 6.30 a.m. I wake up and know immediately it is the day of the meeting of people who are involved in the implementation of the appropriate education policy.

Since I am the initiator and organiser of this meeting, I am excited and nervous at the same time.

Before leaving I phone Joan to check that everything is all right. While cycling to the venue I review the four participants.

Rosemary Jones is a teacher at one of the two schools governed by the board I chair.

Anne Graves is an administrator of a huge public education board that is in an initial stage towards privatisation. Her board and mine are members of the same SWV. Both Rosemary and Anne invited another participant at my request.

Joan Smith apparently works as an IB-er at an SBO in my hometown, geographically the central place today to meet. Paul Dillon is the director of an SBO in a rural area.

Finding a date was more troublesome than finding the venue but we managed. I am really eager to meet them all.

Arriving at Joan’s school I find I am too early. It is still half an hour before we start. The janitor opens the door and takes me to Joan’s office.

Joan appears to be a woman around her fifties, some five to ten years younger than me; I’m 57.

After shaking hands and making acquaintance I look more closely at Joan’s office, our meeting place today. From that perspective the most important element is a seating area for adults with two sofas in the dated colours of orange and beige, and two seats around a low table.
Around a quarter to eleven Anne arrives.
I assume Anne is some five years older than me. I welcome her and introduce her to Joan who also welcomes her.
While Joan and Anne still introducing themselves Rosemary comes in. I welcome her first and then Joan welcomes her. Joan introduces Rosemary to Anne. While Rosemary explains I invited her, and that she invited Joan as her fellow villager, my thoughts wander for a while. I estimate Rosemary is around her forties, which would make her some twenty-five years younger than Anne.
Then Paul arrives shortly before eleven. Now it is Anne's turn to welcome and introduce the new participant, and she offers him a cup of coffee. Paul asks me where he can leave his bag containing his symbol. I tell him we will discuss the symbols later so he puts the bag in a corner of the office.
When Anne returns with coffee she asks Paul and me how old we are since she has the feeling we are of the same age. It appears both Paul and I are 57, which makes us laugh.
I invite Anne, Joan, Paul and Rosemary to find a comfortable place in the seating area.

Act one, scene three: Joan

SCHOOL, JOAN'S OFFICE

[It’s 9.30 a.m. when Cees phones about today’s meeting on appropriate education. I almost panic – for a split second I think I have organised nothing. I check my diary; it’s there. Then I realise I made arrangements for coffee and tea with our janitor a couple of days ago. So I check with him and it’s okay. What I apparently wasn’t aware of this morning is that the meeting is today. Now I know and at the same time I know I am not prepared.
I reflect on appropriate education as a last-minute opportunity to anticipate the coming meeting.

Appropriate education, what is that for me? I am not sure. As such I am not against appropriate education. How could somebody object to appropriate education anyway? What I do know however is that in my view the appropriate education policy is designed behind a drawing board, not from consulting daily practitioners. As an experienced teacher, IB-er and AB-er, and a woman of almost fifty, I have the right to be heard. Yes, I will take the floor during the meeting to unburden my heart. I think Rosemary will wonder whether I am the same person as the one she knows as fellow villager and who she invited to join this meeting.

While I think I still have some time to do some paperwork the janitor announces Cees has arrived. I welcome a middle-aged man; I estimate he is towards his sixties, some ten years older than me.
After shaking hands and having made a first acquaintance he asks me what I do. I tell him I am not only an IB-er but also an AB-er. As IB-er I coordinate the care in my school, and as AB-er I counsel colleagues from primary schools who participate in the same SWV.
I notice Cees’ attention wanders towards my office, because it is today’s meeting place I presume.

Then the second guest arrives. She is warmly welcomed by Cees before he introduces her to me. She is called Anne Graves. Cees and Anne know each other since they are members of the same SWV. Then I welcome her in my office.

Rosemary comes in while Anne and I are still being introduced. Cees and I welcome her warmly. I then introduce Rosemary to Anne. I explain I know Rosemary because we live in the same village. Rosemary explains she invited me to join the appropriate education conversation. Although we do not know each other professionally she knows I work in primary education, as I know she does. Cees adds that he knows Rosemary because she works at one of the two schools governed by the board he chairs. Then I explain how Cees requested that my school be the venue, which is why we are now in my office.

The last participant arrives shortly before eleven, carrying a big shopping bag. It appears to be a man who looks to be Cees’ age.
Anne welcomes and introduces him. His name is Paul Dillon. Anne has known Paul for ages and just as Rosemary invited me to join, Anne asked Paul to join.
Paul talks briefly to Cees, then he puts his bag in a corner of the office.

Cees invites us to take a seat in the seating area.

Act one, scene four: Paul

SCHOOL, CAR, SCHOOL, JOAN'S OFFICE

[As always I arrive at 7.30 a.m. at school, and as usual I check my diary for the current daytime schedule as soon as I enter my office. Along with a lot of administrative tasks I see I have an appointment to share ideas about appropriate education.
I remember I was asked by Anne to join this meeting. I am looking forward to seeing Anne again. She introduced me to the daily teaching practice when I started to teach. She was a walking encyclopaedia when it came to how to organise daily class routine in
those days, called class management nowadays. And she was, and still is, an attractive woman. It's a pity I see her only occasionally once in a while, so it is nice to talk with her about appropriate education, a hot issue nowadays. Why did she invite me?

The meeting is in Groningen at eleven, and I recognise the address; it is a fellow SBO. I have to leave around ten, now it is time to get through the daily bureaucracy.

When I leave our little town I wonder what the function of the symbol is. Anne asked me on behalf of a certain Cees Grol to join the appropriate education conversation and to take a symbol. I never met this person called Cees, yet I happen to know his wife Marola works at RENN 4; I meet her once in a while. As far as I understand the symbol is used to get more information about how I think and feel about appropriate education.

When I drive through the East Groninger landscape I always sense the poverty, the suffering of the people who cut peat and lost their jobs when the peat cutting was finished; imagine, a hundred years ago the surface was metres higher! Later there was also the suffering of people who worked in the potato starch industry and strawboard factories till these industries deteriorated. That's why special education already began in the early 1950s in this area. And now State Secretary Sharon Dijksma implements a new policy called appropriate education.

When I arrive at the SBO shortly before eleven the door is opened by the janitor. Our school is never locked during the day; it might be a difference between an urban and a rural SBO. He directs me to the office of the IB-er who looks familiar to me. It's possible I met her once or twice somewhere, as the SBO-world is not that big.

Anne welcomes me, and she introduces me to the participants by saying that we have known each other for ages and ages. The IB-er is called Joan Smith, Cees looks like a man of my age, and Rosemary Jones is teacher at a rural primary school. While Anne pours a cup of coffee for me I ask Cees where I can put my bag containing my symbol. He says we can discuss the symbol later during the conversation, so I may put the bag in a corner of the office.

Cees invites us to look for a comfortable place in the seating area

Act one, scene five: Rosemary

BEDROOM, CAR, SCHOOL, JOAN’S OFFICE

[When I wake up I realise it is Thursday, my traditional ‘mother day’. It is the day I am home to lunch with my two daughters.

Today is also a special day. I have to be in the big city of Groningen because I agreed on joining a conversation on appropriate education. Cees asked me, the chairman of our new board. A month ago the board organised a so called ‘open board’ meeting on appropriate education. I was doubtful because I am quite ignorant when it comes to appropriate education. That was not an issue for him. So then I agreed.

Once I accepted his invitation Cees had two other questions. His first was whether I could take a symbol representing appropriate education for me. His second question: if I knew somebody to join the conversation, preferably not a teacher. I liked the idea of working with a symbol. When I graduated as a teacher I used a symbol to represent my study process. It was hard rock music, which nobody expected. A symbol may reveal unexpected sides of a person, so I was immediately positive about bringing one to the meeting. Looking for another participant in my network took some time until I met Joan. We live in the same village where we meet occasionally. I know she is an IB-er in Groningen, and commutes every day. She was willing to participate. I notified Cees. He was glad to hear my positive message.

In the meantime I was puzzled about appropriate education and everything I heard during the open board meeting. I asked my husband for some more information; he works at an OBD. He referred me to some useful websites. And I got some information from my colleagues. Finding a symbol was a harder job than I anticipated. When I present my symbol I will tell about the alternatives I reviewed.

To make my half-hour drive to and from Groningen more profitable I phoned a friend for some shopping. As soon as I know when the appropriate education conversation is finishing I will contact my friend. We still have to decide when and where we meet. She lives in a village close to the city of Groningen; any time is fine for her.

Once I arrive, to my surprise the school is locked. It must be an urban thing to lock buildings. A janitor opens the door and shows me the way to Joan's office. My first impression is that the office is bigger than in our school. A minor point is that it is kept less in good repair. Joan and Cees warmly welcome me. They introduce me to Anne Graves who appears to be a fellow SWV board member with Cees.

Joan explains she knows me because we live in the same village. I explain I invited Joan to join the appropriate education conversation. Although we do not know each other professionally we know we both work in primary education. Cees adds that he knows me because I work at one of the two schools governed by the board he chairs. Then Joan explains how Cees requested that her school be the venue, so that is why we are now in her office.
A final participant arrives shortly before eleven. He carries a big shopping bag. He is welcomed and introduced by Anne. His name is Paul Dillon. Anne has known Paul for ages. Just as I invited Joan to join this meeting, Anne asked Paul to join. Paul talks briefly to Cees, then he puts his big shopping bag in a corner of the office.

Cees invites us to look for a place in the seating area]

Act two: Voices exploring appropriate education part I

Act two, scene one: Anne, Cees, Joan, Paul and Rosemary

SEATING AREA OF JOAN’S OFFICE

[Everyone sits on a couch or seat]

Cees
“I’d like to welcome you to this meeting on appropriate education. A meeting that revolves around your appropriate education stories. I am very grateful that you are willing and able to contribute to this meeting. I am seriously interested in your stories about appropriate education, your views and experiences. Does this make any sense to you?”
[See all nodding]
“I propose we introduce ourselves. To break the ice I will begin by introducing myself.”

Rosemary
[Since I know him I am eager to hear how he introduces himself]

Cees
“My name is Cees Grol. I am a coach at a Master Course Pedagogy. I am also voluntarily chairman of a Catholic Education Association and voluntarily secretary of two SWVs. That is how I am involved in appropriate education. I initiated this meeting in the framework of my part-time DBA/PhD study at the University for Humanistics. I collect stories about the implementation of appropriate education by practitioners, what I call a narrative approach.

My most challenging problem at the moment is how to do justice to the variety of the voices I hear talking about appropriate education. I have many roles: student, researcher, coach and employer. My role during this meeting is the researcher’s one. So although I know about appropriate education and I am involved in its implementation, I am above all interested in your stories on appropriate education and therefore my intention is to leave my stories out. Let’s continue this short introduction round anti-clockwise.”

Paul
[He did not mention that his wife Marola is involved in appropriate education. Maybe I will return to this later].

Rosemary
“My name is Rosemary Jones. From the onset of my educational career I have been a kindergarten teacher. That is still what I like doing best. I work at a school for PO. It is my second job but I have already been committed to education for ages and ages.”

Cees
“Sorry to interrupt but Rosemary works at one of the schools of which I am the chairman of the board. From that perspective I happen to be her employer too. I hope it will not prevent you from speaking freely.”

Rosemary
[I laugh]
“We have talked about various topics. Therefore Cees you might know that I am used to telling what I want to tell.”
[My response provokes some laughter.]

Anne
“Shall I?”

Paul
[I am curious as to how she introduces herself]

Anne
“My name is Anne. I am an administrator of an education office. I was a teacher for a couple of years before I married. When I went back to work again I shifted towards administration. So I have some field experience but now I am mainly an administrator.”

Cees
“I apologize for interrupting once again. I know Anne because we are fellow board members of an SWV.”

Anne
[Point to Cees]
“And he invited me to join this meeting.”
Chapter 4

Voices exploring appropriate education

Paul

“My name is Paul Dillon. I am the director of an SBO. It is my second job as director; the first was as director of a PO school. Before that I was a teacher at two different PO schools. Anne invited me for today’s meeting. We have known each other since we were teachers at my first school. We rarely meet, and the last time was some years ago. I have been through a lot in my personal life. Anyway, what is relevant for this conversation today is that I have also been through a lot during my professional career in the educational field.”

Anne

[He laughs apologising while he looks at me. I presume he is talking about his wife who passed away quite recently. It might be that he does not know I know. I hope we have an opportunity to talk in private for a moment today.

When my thoughts return to the meeting I hear Paul still talking].

Paul

“I went through BuO and the ISOVSO and their many types of special education, through WSNS and SWVs, WSNS+ and its 1-zorg route, WPO and WEC and its RECs. Nowadays we go through a new yet similar transition towards appropriate education.”

Joan

“I’m Joan Smith. I was invited to participate in this meeting by Rosemary. We live in the same village. I really like to exchange thoughts about appropriate education, to share ideas, to tell my story. Actually this is my first school; I worked as teacher for over eighteen years here, and now I have been an IB-er more more than eight years and an AB-er for a couple or years as well. I like my work.”

Cees

“Joan, thank you for allowing us to use your office. Your school is geographically at the centre of the participants, the ideal place to be today.”

[See Joan smiling approvingly. Then from speaking directly to Joan I turn to everyone]

“I would like you to know that I expect you to talk in your personal capacity today, not as representatives of your respective jobs if that is possible at all. We will first focus on exchanging stories before showing and explaining the symbols. Then the storytelling can start. Is the organisation clear to you so far?”

[See all nodding affirmatively]

“Let’s start. Who likes to take the floor?”

[People look at me, I look back and then …]

Paul

[While people look at Cees I decide to go first, to take the opportunity to launch the discussion]

“I believe appropriate education is for the sake of the child of course. Yet I must qualify that it is not feasible to get all children to the same school in the neighbourhood. From my position as director I have to enable teachers to deal with differences, so I have to support my teachers. I have to qualify things for a second time. We have to take into consideration that appropriate education is not an easy solution to all problems we have encountered in education so far. From my perception appropriate education ends up on the shoulders of the teachers. Actually they, the teachers, should pull the strings and yet they are ignorant. And yet they, the teachers, have to carry out the imposed and newly-branded appropriate education policy.”

Rosemary

[So I conclude that I am ignorant. But before responding I would like to know where his argument is going]

Paul

“Full stop!”

[Looking around the circle I see that nobody reacts. So I continue]

“What almost nobody knows and what I learned from a national educational authority I recently met, is that: the previous century was the century of the child, and the present century should be called the century of the teacher. I support this statement and that is how I would like to launch the discussion with this statement.”

Joan

[I hope Rosemary reacts. Fortunately she does. She starts by addressing Paul directly]

Rosemary

“ Apparently I am such an ignorant teacher. Seen from an appropriate education point of view the teacher is the key person when it comes to implementation. It makes me conclude that appropriate education is teacher-dependent. Nevertheless I have to conclude at the same time that the real appropriate education debate does not take place at my level, the teacher level. I believe this debate occurs at the IB-ers’ level and at the directors’, managers’ and administration level. Joan, what’s your opinion on this?”

Joan

[I smile at Rosemary to reassure her]

Rosemary

“We discuss appropriate education and its implications in our local IB-er platform meetings. We hold the strong opinion that the development of appropriate education is above the heads of the teachers. We believe appropriate education has become the hegemony of managers and administration, clogging up schools with rules. And exactly these people are at too great a distance from the daily routine in the schools, literally.”
I turn to Anne and Cees because they are managers and employers.

**Cees**

[I feel uncomfortable being addressed in my role as employer – a role I do not like to play during this meeting. I decide not to react for the time being, while Joan continues her argument]

**Joan**

“Their offices are hidden in industrial areas, far from the live world of the schools; and they visit inclusive education projects abroad rather than visiting their schools, our schools. My advice should be that they turn the organisational plans upside-down: children and teachers at the top and management and administration at the bottom.”

[I show the ridiculousness of these plans by laughing. Then I switch to a more serious and stern mood]

“I am glad I can spit bile, which is why I am here.”

[I smile at Rosemary again, feeling combative]

**Rosemary**

[I smile back. I like Joan’s fighting spirit and the fact that she addressed Cees and Anne during her critical comment on managers and policymakers. I feel the urge to continue this argument]

“I have to confirm what you said about the distance of managers and policymakers. They are really too far removed from the working field while appropriate education happens in my classroom, everyday. However nowadays it really looks like people in the higher echelons just pull the strings. They sit and sit and manipulate us instead of being proud of what we are doing.”

[While I talk I reflect on what I am saying. I start to realise that this distance and manipulating stuff makes me really angry. To emphasise my point of disapproval I make the following statement]

“This approach makes me think that I will serve my time. After me the deluge!!”

[Anne just looks back, so I decide to continue]

**Anne**

[Within the entire administrative framework each school is allowed to make its own choices. Each school is allowed to implement school-specific elements. For example we as administration develop the vision and strategic planning; we plan to organise care and education near the school and the child at administrative level; but the schools plan at the school level. Yet I have to emphasise the directive and leading administrative discourse within this development of vision and planning. At the same time I acknowledge once again the significant importance of the teacher. Whatever, nevertheless I feel the urge to explain once more that as administrators we need vision, strategy, planning and controlled financial flows because … at the end of the day we have the full, overall responsibility for the implementation of the appropriate education policy.”

[I look to Cees for confirmation. He just nods. While I would like to continue Joan interrupts]

**Joan**

[I think I see a look of good relations between Anne and Cees so I feel the urge to interrupt]

“Cees, do you agree with Anne’s point on the administrators’ final responsibility?”

**Cees**

[I feel embarrassed by this appeal to my role as administrator once more. Now I feel an urge to answer straightforwardly]

“I am interested in all your stories, so I would like to hear Anne’s story. Concerning this part of Anne’s story, yes, indeed, school boards bear the full responsibility at the end of the day.”

[I look at Joan to check whether my answer is all right with her. She nods, so I ask Anne to please continue her story]

**Anne**

[Since I belong to the group of people Rosemary and Joan are addressing I feel obliged to react, cautiously]

“I acknowledge what you said. I received the message about the distance well. Nonetheless, I have to qualify your words.”

[I look at Rosemary]

**Rosemary**

[I am somewhat surprised by Paul’s quick and direct response, and repeat what I said before]
“I have to emphasise once again that as administrator I have the final and ultimate responsibility for developing this vision and these strategic plans.”

Paul
“I know that administrators take on your administrative responsibilities, and I am grateful you do so. Yet I qualify this administrators’ responsibility by suggesting that appropriate education should be about what happens daily in class. To put it more straightforwardly: if your appropriate education debate is not about what happens in class daily, then your debate is not about appropriate education. Take for instance the 1-loket idea as an example. If that idea is not directly connected to daily class management, then in my opinion it is what the author Lans calls ‘fuss’ which is: goings on that hinders rather than facilitates what is happening in the daily classroom.”

Rosemary
[For me Paul’s fuss is becoming too abstract so I interrupt]
“I prefer to return to my distance argument. I make an appeal to educational authorities to bear teachers seriously in mind. They have to look at appropriate education from my perspective, from the teacher’s perspective. These authorities have to wonder what teachers need, to be able to offer good appropriate education. The teacher’s question should be their question.”

Joan
“Sometimes I think even we ought to be silent about appropriate education. It is a rather infected concept due to the top-down way policies are implemented these days. That is my point of concern.”

Paul
“I get also directives from my administrators which I have to follow time and again.”

Cees
[I notice that everybody is now on the edge of their seats, cheeks flushed. The commitment is high]

Rosemary
[I sense my angry point about managerial directives has been made]

Anne
[I am having a hard time. I cannot rely on Cees because he will not join the discussion. Yet at the moment I would like to react, Joan is too quick]
appropriate education at our school. I enjoy the diversity in my team. I am practical, for example when it comes to task distribution amongst team members, or when it comes to money, for instance to control the cash flow. It is not words but actions which count. And I try to keep the child in the neighbourhood school as long as possible, sometimes in spite of our own interest to recruit pupils to our own SBO. So I am in contact with types of schools, and with parents; that is what makes education appropriate for me.”

**Rosemary**

[I think Paul’s list is fair, so I nod]

“All right Paul, you made your point. Maybe I was too harsh.”

**Anne**

[I was surprised by the somewhat wronged tone of Paul’s reaction. It might be that Rosemary had the same feelings of irritation, but now she seems to ease. Then Rosemary continues addressing Paul, and I wonder where we will go this time]

**Rosemary**

“Yet I do not regret what I said. It is even worse. I feel we have taken our daily classroom as a perspective to look at appropriate education. To elaborate further on this perspective I am determined to complete my list. I continue by stating that I am also faithful to my ideals. One of my ideals is that I bear in mind the educational feasibility of what I am doing. I consider what I can change to meet our educational objectives with each particular child in a certain particular situation at a certain particular moment. I bear in mind the expectations, the means, the classroom organisation, the curriculum, and discuss this with the parents. So my second ideal is what you recommended, I organise intensive contact with parents.”

**Anne**

[It looks as though Paul and Rosemary are on speaking terms again. When Rosemary continues she addresses not only Paul, but all of us]

**Rosemary**

“These are the things I am doing. My internal teacher drive is to keep children aboard in the region. That is the appropriate education motor, we teachers are the appropriate education motor; the inspectorate and ministerial statements are of second order.”

**Cees**

“I’d like to hear about each ‘drive’ in relation to appropriate education. I propose this topic to be the next step to talk about.”

**Paul**

[Since this ‘drive’ issue intrigues me I react immediately]

“Appropriate education means the neighbourhood school for all children, except when a child profits more from a segregated setting. Appropriate education is organising education in a way that all children receive an education as close as possible to their homes. Therefore the essence of appropriate education is transcending differences.”

**Anne**

[I like what Paul says, support what he says but for me it is not feasible. I am not able to meet my ideals. So I take the floor hesitantly]

“I am especially worried about the lack of time. I just do not have the time to meet my own ideals to care for all my school directors, let alone for all my teachers and for the pupils. I am sorry to say so.”

[The way Joan looks at me I sense she receives my self-critical and for me vulnerable comment well]

**Paul**

[I admire Anne’s courage being so open and vulnerable. However it is Joan who comments empathetically]

**Joan**

[I feel sorry for Anne so I comment immediately and empathetically on her confession]

“I agree time is one of the main appropriate education bottlenecks.”

[Then I turn to my point]

“Yet appropriate education is about neighbourhood setting. But this has its boundaries. Appropriate education is also about care and about networking, and how to actually organise extra support in class so a child can stay at its school in its own neighbourhood; that is what appropriate education is and should be. We IB-ers are practical people who advocate appropriate education. As a result, for example, we have to prevent a child entering a particular type of school inappropriately due to ambiguous indication criteria. We have to keep children aboard as long as possible so as to prepare them for participation in society. To meet this standard I prioritise the bond between teacher and children as number one.”

[Then I look at Anne because just like her I feel trapped]

**Anne**

[Joan looks at me in a more or less vulnerable way. Why, what might be her next argument? I am sitting on the edge of my seat again]
Rosemary
[I see Joan looking at Anne, and Anne looking at Joan. Cees and Paul look at them both carefully. Everybody is really highly concentrated; it takes a lot of my attention and my energy]

Joan
[I feel I blush and lower my voice]
“I have to admit that what I am doing is not always successful. Nonetheless I persevere. I often feel discouraged because of school resistance to taking a significant step towards inclusive working.”
[After this admission I regain my self-confidence]
“Yet I have to admit here and now as well that my first drive is to be an IB-er and AB-er. To put it more sharply, appropriate education is a derivative interest of especially my position as an IB-er. I like my IB-er position because it enables me to pull some appropriate education strings like networking with schools and youth care like MJD and GGD. And to collaborate with KDCs, which I offer as an additional example. I would like to close that part of my argument that overall appropriate education should contribute to reaching each child’s ultimate potential as far as possible, regardless of background, race, capabilities or whatever, to participate fully in society according to their potential.”

Anne
[I feel the urge to react in a positive way]
“I perceive appropriate education as a challenging mosaic of all kinds of initiatives and their opportunities. These days the whole country is dispersed in regional and local projects with their own objectives. It is up to us to make our own projects and our own objectives. I advocate projects where money can follow the children who have special educational needs. And I talk often about organising special expertise within our organisation so that the support comes to these children instead of the other way as it used to be, where the child has to come to the care. Here I would like to remind you of the time before the PGB in general or LGF or Rugzak in education. Tapping into my teaching experiences, I know that limitations may differ from child to child. Limitations exist as to what you may offer per child. Ultimately appropriate education is about care; about whether the care we offer is the right one, and about how to organise appropriate care in a way such that the care quality remains high. However, appropriate education is especially about the degree to which a school is able to educate a child; specifically to educate that child who does not fit within the school’s concept. A school may have its own ‘nice bright titanic concept’, to cite a senior school counsellor literally, a concept as indestructible as the Titanic. But if the concept is not adaptable to the child …”
[I leave a silence because it is my most fundamental statement that must be clear in its consequences for everyone]

“Then I would like to shift to what I consider to be our core business, the quality care.”

Paul
“I object. I would like to add on my appropriate education drive before we switch to care.”
[I continue without waiting for a response]
“I really hope I manage to organise appropriate education flexibly at the regional and local levels. For instance I hope to organise a regional and local l-zorg route. I would like to celebrate the diversity as long as national blueprints and prescriptions do not overrule local and regional networks, forcing me to work along prescribed ways. So for the time being I am able to organise education in a flexible way. That is how I hope to work towards inclusive education, including the elimination of special education in the medium or long term. For me this new appropriate education format creates new opportunities in which LEAs may facilitate or bureaucratically hinder.”

Rosemary
“What is meant by LEAs? I never heard of LEAs before. Taking my teacher’s ignorance as suggested by Paul, I would ask for an explanation.”
[I turn to Paul, but to my surprise Anne responds]

Anne
[This time I am quicker than Joan]
“LEAs stands for local educative agendas.”

Rosemary
“That answer does not make sense to me. What is meant by these so-called Local Educative Agendas? I need further explanation.”

Paul
“The local educative agenda is a policy tool to organise extra support for disadvantaged people at the local level. I feel challenged to tune the LEA and the local appropriate education policy.”

Joan
“I take our ZAT as another example. Our ZAT consists of people of our school staff and of people outside our school staff such as the local police officer and a social nurse. Together we discuss problematic family affairs.”

Rosemary
“Joan and Cees, do you know whether we have a ZAT at our school?”
[Both gesticulate to me that they do not know]
Paul
“It is even more complicated. In the individual care of people the WMO might also play a role. Do you know what the WMO is Rosemary?”

Rosemary
[I think he really thinks I am that ignorant, and just nod]

Anne
[The resulting deadlock about what is known and what is not known gives me the opportunity to resume my argument on what our educational core business is to me, which is: quality care. I start the resumption of my argument by adding my thoughts on care to Paul’s ideas about new opportunities]

“Appropriate education is broadening and reinforcing the individual care for each child: the child with behavioural problems, the child with learning difficulties, and the so-called ‘normal children’ if these children exist at all. However, if I want to put all children in the regular system I have to re-engineer this system, the whole educational system.

[On my fingers I will list what I think is going on when it comes to appropriate education]
One: SBO is needed for the time being. Two: the core business of education is teaching basic activities where the financial stream follows the needs of the child.
Three: we need a broad organisation offering a broad service during the whole day.
[To my surprise she makes her statement about the deluge for a second time. I feel obliged to react. Again I decide to start cautiously. I do not want to do injustice to her or any of her colleague teachers]
As long as there are no more investments in PO where appropriate education takes place, the gap between PO, SBO and SO will not get smaller let alone being closed. The governmental attempts to pressure special education population downwards result in thwarting appropriate education. The SBO population will increase, has started to increase already, because with the implementation of appropriate education the special education population is fixed. Yet, in the meantime the RENN 4 population increases, consisting of children with behavioural problems like ADHD and/or PDD-NOS. PO refers, SO is full, so for PO, cooperation with SBOs stays being of significant importance to provide appropriate education for the time being.”

Paul
[Paul’s argument makes me laugh scornfully. I address him straightforwardly]
“Of course you may talk about making the gap closer, or even closing the gap on my part. However people from outside the daily school practice can hardly teach me something new. I refer to issues such as how to deal with children, how to care for them, how to handle differences, how to whatever in practice. I question whoever can teach or tell me what to do.
To put it more succinctly: even people in education who stubbornly maintain their view can neither teach nor tell me what to do as well. They cannot, even if they are my very own colleagues. My conclusion is that appropriate education is for the child but has to suit me as well. So, as long as the CITO results are all right, there is no problem for me and after that the deluge!!”

Paul
[I decide to follow-up Anne’s argument by giving an example to underpin the idea of eventually eliminating SBO]
“I would like to share an observation that might undermine SBO, might even eliminate my school in the medium to long term. I have noticed over years and years that regular PO schools are better able to empower children to make the transition from PO to VO than SBOs. As a consequence I hope that actual appropriate education experiments may lead to an increased self-confidence, both in PO teachers and in SBO teachers. I perceive that as a first step to obviate the need of SBO. The existing gap between PO, SBO and SO teachers should be smaller when it comes to children with behavioural problems in their Rugzak like children with ADHD and/or PDD-NOS.”

Anne
[To my surprise she makes her statement about the deluge for a second time. I feel obliged to react. Again I decide to start cautiously. I do not want to do injustice to her or any of her colleague teachers]
“As long as there are no more investments in PO where appropriate education takes place, the gap between PO, SBO and SO will not get smaller let alone being closed. The governmental attempts to pressure special education population downwards result in thwarting appropriate education. The SBO population will increase, has started to increase already, because with the implementation of appropriate education the special education population is fixed. Yet, in the meantime the RENN 4 population increases, consisting of children with behavioural problems like ADHD and/or PDD-NOS. PO refers, SO is full, so for PO, cooperation with SBOs stays being of significant importance to provide appropriate education for the time being.”

Paul
“Anne, I really object to your argument. I am convinced that appropriate education is feasible if and when we approach it from the Dutch context, that is: if it is feasible at all. Recently I heard a local alderman of education saying that the segregated educational system is embedded in the Dutch tradition. I agree with her, but I add in my personal capacity that philosophically appropriate education is embedded in inclusive thinking. Politically correct appropriate education is embedded in the bottom-up communication as announced by the State Secretary in her implementation plan. Above all, in practice I embed appropriate education in my capability to use legal and financial opportunities creatively.”
Anne

[Paul challenges us here and now by stating that for him appropriate education is embedded practically in his own capability to use legal and financial opportunities creatively. Unfortunately for him, nobody reacts so he continues]

Paul

“Based on this pragmatic approach I warn everybody urgently inside and outside this office against some mainstream tendencies of the performance society. The most affecting tendencies are the rat race and increasing regulatory pressure. These two tendencies conflict with appropriate education. Competition, as manifested in publishing CITO school results in national papers and putting international comparisons such as PISA on the internet, clashes with the time and energy needed to offer appropriate education to children with special educational needs. These competitions provoke regulations and short-term SMART objectives, distracting attention that should be paid to what must be done in practice. It might be worse because recently I heard another alderman of education saying convincingly that educational ideals are overruled by the Euro. This startling disclosure by an alderman makes me conclude that appropriate education is Euro-ruled.”

Anne

“It is obvious that in appropriate education there is the hiccup between educational intentions and budget interventions; between the educational intentions we share and how the executions of these intentions have to be paid. Whatever my educational ideals are, they do not rule education. So I underline your conclusion that the Euro or the pennies rule. However I challenge your conclusion by posing that obviously the implementation of appropriate education requires investment.”

Paul

“All right, all right, I am more interested in what she likes to put forward than discussing, is that all right with you?”

Anne

[Since Rosemary just nods, I continue]

I even advocate carrying out more research into the feasibility of appropriate education. These researches should focus on all types of questions. 
[Since Rosemary just nods, I continue]

One: the allocation of the financial power in relation to what has to be done. Who is in charge? Two: the whole tradition of rewarding handicaps instead of creative solutions. From my perspective and referring to my history as teacher I think that creativity should be rewarded, not handicaps. Tradition says that if you have a handicap you get money. I believe there are alternative and more creative ways of steering financial flows. Do not focus on problems and handicaps. Challenge schools to come up with possibilities and alternative approaches.”

Joan

“I hold the very strong opinion that the medical approach still reigns instead of the performance-oriented diagnosis. To illustrate my point I question whether decisions based on IQ are as objective as claimed.”

Anne

“Although I agree with you I would ask you to give me the room to forward my third argument that is on my finger: the freezing of the special education budget from 2008 until 2011.”

Joan

“That is all right with me because it is a very serious topic to discuss.”

Anne

“As a result of this freezing there is hardly any room for any kind of creativity whatsoever in the time to come. I really wonder how we can create opportunities within this tight financial framework. My conclusion is that there is no financial room and still we as administrators have the administrative and the financial responsibility to implement appropriate education. Forget the pedagogical priority of appropriate education, I think pragmatically.”

Rosemary

“I conclude from the discussion so far that we teachers have the key role and yet it is only money that matters. For me this is an awful conclusion!”

Joan

“I also experience how money affects practice daily. We can get much more out of our children from a didactic perspective. For instance we could work in different groups by creating, alongside our ‘normal’ classes, a ‘structure group’ for those children who need and profit from a strict day-to-day structure. But I stress that money obviously plays a significant role here, as always, when it comes to deciding to put plans into effect or not. A ‘structure group’ may have fewer pupils then other groups, adapted learning materials may be needed, which all needs extra money. And alongside this are the school administrators and managers who stuff appropriate education with cupboards full of transparent schemes. I notice that all the
schemes are underpinned with bureaucratic and financial perspectives!”

Paul

[Paul feels the urge to confirm this latter point]
“Indeed, the ministerial minute waltz ensures that in the educational field everything is calculated to ten decimal places: the budgets, the jobs, you name it.”

Rosemary

[As a result, he asks how we are enjoying the appropriate education discussion so far. Initially there is no reaction and then …]
“Paul’s interruption irritates me.”

Anne

“It is always very interesting to hear the extent to which appropriate education is implemented in schools.”

Rosemary

“I take this opportunity to tell my story loud and clear.”

Paul

“As a director I find it very interesting to hear everybody’s story. I must reveal that I am equally intrigued by everybody’s ideals. That’s why I thank everybody for revealing his or her ideals so far.”

Joan

“As an IB-er, a lot of work and responsibility comes to us and to the teachers.”

Rosemary

[After a brief silence and triggered by Joan’s look I take the floor]
“Education has always been appropriate. But since appropriate education has become a policy theme I have felt threatened and forced to do things I actually cannot do. We teachers are forced to do all kinds of bureaucratic things for which we do not have the time. I refer to activities such as completing HP forms, attending meetings, individual learning lines, whatever. We have to do these kinds of activities in addition to our core business, which is teaching children.”

Paul

“I agree that appropriate education has become a political theme. I perceive that, teachers also feel threatened to be forced to do things they are not sure they can handle. As an example I mention raising the burden of responding to the parents who exercise rights as encouraged by appropriate education. For your information, I perceive these parental rights to be justified.”

[Did I add some fuel to the fire again?]

Rosemary

[Paul’s interruption irritates me]
“Whether your parental involvement is ‘correct or not’ is not the question. My point is that my appropriate education is a huge bunch of paperwork that has to be done. And there is far too little expertise to execute appropriate education properly in practice, especially when it comes to Rugzak children with behavioural problems as mentioned before. So in teachers it provokes an enormous feeling of being incompetent. I feel incompetent anyhow. Do you know where this leads?”

[As we look at each other, I look at everyone one by one, and attentively answer my own question]
“A lack of intrinsic motivation!!”

Anne

[If Paul does not react, I will respond. Again, Joan is too quick]

Joan

“I recognise your argument. I feel sympathy for your feelings of incompetence. Yet I think these feelings are not justified. Teachers are often not aware of their competences, they are not aware of the skills they have. I call it the teachers’ unconscious competences. As you will know, a lot already happens.”

Rosemary

[As we look at each other, I look at everyone one by one, and attentively answer my own question]

Joan

“I also notice that your teacher’s workload is too high. For example one day a staff meeting, the next day a meeting about a particular pupil with an LGB or Rugzak and the following day a meeting with a youth health worker. There is too much happening involving teachers. Unfortunately this excessive organisation, this bureaucracy is not exceptional. I’ll give other examples of the high workload at school level. The inspector expects schools to work with development perspectives and particular formats. The CvV wants an HP that has to be discussed with the parents including their signature, before the committee is willing to look at a request to refer a child. This HP has to describe the whole care structure offered to the child from the beginning of his
educational career. Alongside this we also have the teacher meetings, the plans about a structure group structure, and so on and so on.”

[Then I emphasise the point I want to make by stating it word by word, imitating what Rosemary did previously]

“It... is an elaborate process that should be changed by appropriate education, that is what I hope!!!”

Rosemary

“I agree with you, of course! I hope also from the bottom of my heart that appropriate education will stop the bureaucracy. Yet I feel the urge to qualify what I said about incompetence earlier today. I feel indeed incompetent when it comes to handling all the bureaucratic appropriate education demands and rules for a set of reasons. Notwithstanding that, I do feel competent when we talk about appropriate education in class. As teacher I think I even do very well. I’ll list what I am used to do.

I adapt the organisation of lessons to each child. That is what can be done continuously in class in the way I do: by making my pupils work with tasks; by making them learn together in table groups, and by organising opportunities for them to work individually.

My main tip is to design a class in such a way that you have a structure where every child can work and learn in its own manner and its own way. This structure enables me as teacher to offer tailor-made guidance. I keep lines short in time and don’t plan five weeks ahead because a lot can happen in the meantime. I write me as teacher to offer tailor-made guidance. I keep lines short in time and don’t plan

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Paul

“Rosemary’s list is impressive. I deeply admire what she does. Nonetheless I’d like us to move to a so far undiscovered topic.”

[Then I turn to Rosemary to face her for my next argument]

“I perceive a discord between teachers. Some of my teachers indicate in their, or our POP conversations, that they are like you, Rosemary; they are attracted to children with something extra, a challenge to say it politically correctly. Other teachers apparently chose to work with ‘normal children’, to put it that way. These are two different types of children and two different types of teachers at my school. Do you recognise what I am saying?”

Rosemary

“Yes I do. I already mentioned colleagues who are not flexible and who cannot teach me what to do to handle differences.”

Paul

“Thank you Rosemary.”

[Her reaction relieves me, makes me turn back to everyone]

“Regardless of these differences between teachers, I sometimes see teachers lacking intrinsic motivation. These teachers are not interested in schooling and reflection for the sake of children, to reflect on what they need to give children. Then I may try to make the teacher more competent, so that they react more adequately to what is needed, but this has its limitations. For me the teachers are the Achilles heels in the whole story of education in general and in appropriate education specifically. For your information: when I referred to the POP, I had already reached this conclusion long before the invention of POP, that is: when I was a student of the former PA nowadays called PABO.”

Anne

“As an administrator I see that each of my schools has its own culture and history. These histories and cultures play a very important role in teacher counselling. I always wonder what the culture of a school is the moment a teacher thinks, experiences, senses it is not going well in her class. I always wonder whether this acknowledgement is up to the specific, individual teacher, or whether there exists a tradition within school to talk to colleagues when problems emerge, or with experts from outside. Those are the questions I pose.

Teacher counselling should start as soon as a teacher does not meet her expectations and objectives. Then I undermine this comfortable view by noting that whenever I see counselling, I perceive that there is too much organisation around the pupils and too little around the teachers. We really have to stop focusing on the child; we have to focus on the teacher. From that point of view I perceive the replacement of the RT-er by an IB-er as a step forwards.

To be more stringent, the focus should be on the situation using objectives. These objectives should not be put in child or organisational terms, as appropriate education tends to do. They should be put in teacher terms. If not, I predict the educational leadership of teachers might disappear so nothing might change. The threat of appropriate education is that this wrong approach becomes organised formally.”

Rosemary

[Her reaction relieves me, makes me turn back to everyone]

“I know one thing for sure. As a teacher I see the children, I know the children, I have to act accordingly and I act accordingly.”
Anne
[I’d like to react to this comment but Paul responds faster]

Paul
[Rosemary’s comment provokes me to addresses her immediately]
“I acknowledge that you have big classes in your regular schools, thirty pupils or more, unlike the smaller groups in my SBO. This huge class size is likely to disadvantage you, as a teacher, in meeting the educational needs of a particular child, rather than in my school, isn’t that so?”

Rosemary
“Yes it is, but what is the point you are trying to make?”

Paul
“I’ll explain. On our side, appropriate education is the natural attitude of my teachers due to our population. The goodwill is there and everybody does his utmost to broaden and reinforce the offer for each individual child. Unfortunately and in spite of these favourable conditions, in our school some teachers stick to their own fixed visions. Here I refer affirmatively to Rosemary’s similar observations. The point I’d like to make is that teachers have to dare to leave the paved tracks to look for what the child demands from them, to come as close as possible to the child’s needs.

In addition parents have to be notified as early as possible whenever a teacher senses a problem. Involve parents in making choices such as: what type of support is needed and how can this be organised, or where can this be organised in the best way: a regular PO school, an SBO school, an SO school? Anyhow, go through the educational process with the parents.”

Anne
[Although Rosemary nods enthusiastically, I react more quickly this time]
“So far we have talked about appropriate education in the classroom, and we have stressed the key role of the teacher when it comes to appropriate education. As a result I conclude that if we create counselling situations we have to focus on the teacher and not on the child. That is why I promote the best possible teacher counselling. Children may profit from good teacher counselling more than from anything else.”

Joan
[To emphasise each of her tasks Joan slapped her knee for each task mentioned, making her arguments more impressive for me]
“I-B-ers are the engine of quality improvement. Amongst others because we organise direct contacts with all types of supportive institutions, for example with youth care like the CJG, and RECs especially since they are experts in teaching Rugzak children with behavioural problems like ADHD and PDD-NOS. As a result of all these efforts we IB-ers are seen as the engine by both directors and the school team when it comes to education and care. However the gap between the knowledge of the I-B-er and the ignorance of the team makes our position lonely, very very lonely!!”

Paul
[I decide to address Joan directly]
“I recognise your point.”
[Then I turn to all]
“I recognise her point. My I-B-er says the same about her position. That is why I conclude we need harmony. We should stand together in the region to organise education creatively as closely as possible to each child.”

Joan
“Paul, let’s leave your high ideals. I propose to go further towards my direction. What I really dislike is that AB-ers and IB-ers are underestimated. I am aware that my colleagues and I are responsible for all the extraordinary children. If I compare my responsibilities and tasks I just mentioned with those of Paul and his colleague directors my conclusion is that they are almost similar. As IB-ers and AB-ers we are, or speaking in a personal capacity, I am, in a very vulnerable position. Teachers look at me sometimes as if ’She sits nicely behind
Voices exploring appropriate education

Chapter 4

the desk, she does not have to take care of the children’. Rosemary, do you recognise this impression?”

Rosemary
“Sometimes yes, sometimes no, but please continue.”

Joan
“We must not forget what we have to develop and implement a lot. I’ll give some examples. We have to process development perspectives in group HPs and their ever-changing formats due to inspectoral demands. We have to develop and implement the 1-zorg structuur. We have to organise the administrative hassle around the Rugzak pupils so as to avoid improperly followed procedures or incorrectly completed hp forms hampering a support request by the CvI who ignore the work of our PCL. We have to coordinate the means and expertise to cater for pupils with learning and/or behavioural problems. To close my argument I must say that what I do is work hard.”

Rosemary
[Again Joan slaps her knees. This time it is not to emphasise each of the tasks, but to stress each of her responsibilities. And she continues; I again find it to be impressive]

Joan
“I create support and naturalness by informing the team; I organise team discussions on how to implement appropriate education; I organise support to get appropriate education implemented, especially from the directorate and management; I create space inside the school to do more things in class by collecting expertise from outside; I contact the inspector and different types of education and organise referrals to PO or SO. Whatever I do, at the end of the day my key question remains: how we can act in such a way as not to lose children to the lost group that exists due to the dichotomy of society.”

Cees
“What is the dichotomy of society?”

Joan
“I don’t know whether any of you noticed that my school is located in a ‘Vogelaarwijk’.”

Joan
“It is not to emphasise each of the tasks, but to stress each of her responsibilities. And she continues; I again find it to be impressive”

Joan
“I don’t know whether any of you noticed that my school is located in a ‘Vogelaarwijk’.”

Paul
“I break the silence to take another direction]

“Appropriate education should take place in PO, referring to what has been said so far during our conversation. There and then IB-ers play a central role. People can ask them for advice: teachers, sometimes parents of course, AB-ers, whoever. I arrive at a third, probably controversial conclusion, that is that, unfortunately and with good intentions only, IB-ers and AB-ers are often former teachers who tend to take over tasks from teachers although eh, well I can imagine this approach, I think ehm …”

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Joan
“I prompt Paul excitedly, provoke him deliberately]

“Come on. What do you want to say? Be a man! Where do you want to push my colleagues and me?”

Paul
“Let me have me the opportunity to advance my conclusion. I think the teacher should hold and retain the initiative. As mentioned previously by Anne, appropriate education should focus on the teacher and how she acts, not on the child.”

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Joan
“I still feel agitated]

“Did you finish your argument?”

Joan
“Thank you! As an AB-er or IB-er I can offer appropriate programmes for children with all types of problems, as you may know, alongside a little bit of teacher training and a little bit of support for parents.”

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The beginning of their educational careers. As a result they are also in a disadvantaged position when they reach the age to look for a job. To make it even worse, I perceive a widening gap between the haves and the have-nots in society, the ones who have access to the labour market, and the ones who have not. The latter ones are those who are lost.”

[Paul interrupt the discussion]

“Application education should take place in PO, referring to what has been said so far during our conversation. There and then IB-ers play a central role. People can ask them for advice: teachers, sometimes parents of course, AB-ers, whoever. I arrive at a third, probably controversial conclusion, that is that, unfortunately and with good intentions only, IB-ers and AB-ers are often former teachers who tend to take over tasks from teachers although eh, well I can imagine this approach, I think ehm …”

Joan
“I feel agitated]

“Thank you! As an AB-er or IB-er I can offer appropriate programmes for children with all types of problems, as you may know, alongside a little bit of teacher training and a little bit of support for parents.”

Paul
“Yes I have, and I am eager to hear your opinion on this.”

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Paul
“Yes I have, and I am eager to hear your opinion on this.”

Paul
“Yes I have, and I am eager to hear your opinion on this.”
“Especially ... as ... I ... er ... I ... should ... always ... be ... backed ... and ... supported ... by ... the ... directorate ... so ... by ... you!”
[There is only silence, so I can add an extra comment].
“If that is not the case I would pack my bags!!!”

Rosemary
[I feel the tension is growing. I think it is Paul’s move now. I am grateful he makes it]

Paul
[I feel that this time I have to pour oil on troubled waters]
“I am not talking about anyone personally. Nonetheless this does not affect my opinion that generally counsellors tend to focus on the child and then they tend to invent solutions to unload the teacher’s burden. However, I have the strong opinion that teachers have to manage their own class, their own interests.”
[Then I explain that if and when something happens in class]
“I see the IB-er available to listen and to look at what can be done. I believe the teacher has to act, has to do what he has to do. The counsellor may help to make an inventory of the problem, may help to analyse the problem, but the teacher is in charge. The teacher has to act; the teacher bears the responsibility. Nevertheless it may happen the bond is missing between the teacher and the child. That is why a child may ultimately be referred to a colleague teacher.”
[I sense that my explanation relaxes Joan a little bit. And then, to my surprise, it is not Joan who responds, but Rosemary]

Rosemary
“I propose a short break.”
[My proposal is received positively. There is a shared opinion to continue after a break for another three-quarters of an hour, finishing around 1.00 p.m. We will start with the symbols after the break, which is about a quarter of an hour. Joan tells us that there is coffee, tea and some snacks available. Then we break up]

Act three: Voices during break

Act three, scene one: Anne and Paul

SEATING AREA OF JOAN’S OFFICE

Anne
[Reminded of the way Paul talked about personal experiences during his introduction, I turn to Paul]
“Let’s chat during this break.”

Paul
“That sounds fine.”

Anne
“But first I have to make a phone-call.”

Paul
“Me too.”

Act three, scene two: Anne

CORNER OF JOAN’S OFFICE

[Paul leaves the office. I walk to a corner of Joan’s office to call my husband. He is enjoying himself by reading a book, doing some gardening and unexpectedly caring for our grandson who suffers from a light flu. In ending our call I see Paul coming back into the office. He joins me in the corner]

Act three, scene three: Paul

CORRIDOR OUTSIDE JOAN’S OFFICE

[I leave Joan’s office to make my phone call. I ask my deputy how things are going. The school is running smoothly except for some normal pupil tantrums. A new substitute teacher is doing her best, running the class for the best and the worst. The system of support from most nearby colleagues works well – it appears to be a good system once again. After finishing the call I go back to Joan’s office. I see Anne standing in a corner of the office. As I approach her she finishes her call]

Act three, scene four: Anne and Paul

CORNER OF JOAN’S OFFICE

Anne
“How are you doing?”

Paul
“Did you know my wife passed away a year and three months ago?”
Anne
“I feel really sorry. I heard some rumours. It must be a hard time for you. How long were you married?”

Paul
“Over thirty-one years.”
[I take a deep breath and continue]
“One of the lessons I have learned since then is the significant importance of family. So now I have photos of my wife, children and grandchildren in my office. I never had that before. So for me appropriate education is also about family.”
[Again a short silence]
“How is your family doing?”

Anne
“My husband is retired. Do you know my daughter?”

Paul
“Vaguely.”

Anne
“Anyhow, she’s a single mother. So we have a wonderful grandson.”
[A short silence again]
“I use my fingers to create air quotes”

Paul
“Yes, I still advocate Van Doorn’s mediated learning, and Ghandi and his concept of Ahisma.”

Anne
“What does Ahisma mean?”

Paul
“It is a spiritual or philosophical concept. Ahisma is about respect for life and about non-violence. It implies respect for all feeling beings in daily practice. Ahisma inspires me not only spiritually but also practically. I respect each child, each colleague and each parent.”
[I see Cees approaching]
Chapter 4

Voices exploring appropriate education

Paul
“Very interesting, where can I find more information?”

Anne
“Just google Bruikbare rechtsorde.”

Cees
“I am flabbergasted. I definitely will search for more as well. Yet I apologise for leaving. I’d like to talk to Joan and Rosemary as well. Thank you so much for let me joining you.”

Anne
“It was our pleasure.”

Act three, scene seven: Joan and Rosemary

SEATING AREA OF JOAN’S OFFICE

Joan
[I approach Rosemary immediately when the break starts]  
“I have to excuse myself for leaving the office for a few minutes only. I have to arrange something. Afterwards I’d like to talk to you.”

Rosemary
“Sounds great to me.”

Act three, scene eight: Rosemary

FROM SEATING AREA TO PUPIL SEATING IN JOAN’S OFFICE

[Joan leaves. I take the opportunity to call my friend to confirm our shopping arrangement. We gossip and have some fun. When I finish Joan is still not back – it apparently takes more time than estimated. I wait silently and patiently, looking forward to shopping with my friend after this meeting. I sit down in a pupil seat and sip from the next cup of coffee when Joan returns in a hurry]

Act three, scene nine: Joan

WALKING THROUGH THE SCHOOL

[I walk to the staff room to check the statue I like to use. The statue is not there. I look for the janitor; he saw our group 8 colleague taking the statue to her classroom. I check with this colleague who wants to use the statue for a drawing assignment. “When?”, I ask. “At the end of his afternoon” she answers. Of course she agrees that I may take the statue and brings it back before her drawing lesson starts. Then I run to the supply room to check the map and the colour crayons I need. Everything is now in order so I feel comfortable when I return to my office. When I am back Rosemary sits in a pupil seat, sipping a cup of coffee. I sit down next to her]

Act three, scene ten: Joan and Rosemary

PUPIL SEAT IN JOAN’S OFFICE

Joan
“I apoligise for having been absent longer than plannen. To be honest, I forgot to check the symbols I planned to use this meeting. It took more time than I expected to collect all the materials.”

Rosemary
“It doesn’t matter, I don’t mind.”

[Short silence].
“While I drove into town I wondered whether driving up and down every day isn’t exhausting. The closer to town, the busier the traffic. I needed eyes in my forehead and the back of my head. Otherwise it might have been impossible reach your school unscathed. I also noticed that it takes over half an hour to travel from our village, and I assume half an hour back. This must be terrible for the children who have to commute each day.”

Joan
“Because I have to travel during rush hours it takes even longer. But I don’t care, in fact it relaxes me. For one reason or another I start to concentrate when I drive to town, and wind down when driving home. So once at school I am really in the working mood, and once home I have left all school affairs behind me. But then I travel voluntarily. For children who are referred to special schools it’s a different deal. They travel involuntarily, and are sometimes bullied, anyhow sometimes that’s a reason to promote appropriate education.”
“I take your point. What’s your point you’d like to talk about?”

“I’d like to know whether you are surprised by the fierceness of my arguments. It’s a different way of talking than when I’m in the village and meeting people during social events in leisure time.”

“To put it politely, I accept I’m not used to you in the debating role. But to be honest, I like the way you do it. But I would like to know why you are so forceful.”

“It stems from my membership of the AOB, the discussions I attend. It makes me critical about what happens.”

[As I want to illustrate my argument with an example, Cees approaches]

Act three, scene eleven: Cees, Joan and Rosemary

CORNER OF JOAN’S OFFICE

“Hello Cees, would you like to join our conversation for a while. You’re welcome.”

“Thank you. I’d like to join and listen to your stories.”

“Joan, you were about to give an example of abuses in the educational field. Please go on.”

“One of my colleagues works for a privatised public education organisation, just as I do. She is member of the MR of her school and the GMR. The topic she discussed was management’s plan to impose a system of the standard working year scheme on their school as announced during an MR meeting, without proper discussion. When there were counter-attacks against this idea and management was interrogated about its background, they admitted it was not their idea. The plan appeared to have been initiated and imposed by the administration and agreed upon by fellow managers. Consequently we successfully challenged both the standard working scheme and its planned top-down implementation approach during the next GMR meeting. As a result the scheme was postponed and might be deferred.

I’m telling this story just as a random example of how things are organised in our school, in our organisation. I should add that for this reason I am suspicious whenever something new is proposed by management and administration. It’s also why I decided to participate in today’s conversation on appropriate education when Rosemary invited me to join. But I see Anne and Paul returning, let’s also go back to our seats.”

“So break is over again. Time marches on!”

“Let’s go back indeed.”

Act three, scene twelve: Anne and Paul

CORNER OF JOAN’S OFFICE

“An author called Feitse Boerwinkel wrote a book on Inclusion in 1973. It was about some rapid changes in daily life forcing us to change our way of thinking. For example the speed of horse carriages was replaced by racing cars. For instance, the height of the church tower has replaced by flying as high as the moon. For instance the exponential growth of the world population makes the world a village. We become increasingly connected to each other and to the global world; we have to think in terms of including the other, including the environment. So from Boerwinkel’s perspective, inclusion is a requirement.”

“It’s extremely interesting that this modern and what we call ecological approach nowadays stems from around 35 years ago. I’ll write this author’s name in my diary.”

“Unfortunately break might be over. Let’s meet one of these days to take more time to share our thoughts, ideas and insights.”

[Anne agrees, and we return to our seats]
Act four: Voices exploring appropriate education part II

Act four, scene one: Anne, Cees, Joan, Paul and Rosemary

SEATING AREA OF JOAN’S OFFICE

Joan
“Now we are all back, let’s start the second part of our appropriate education discussion, all right?”

[Note agreement]

Cees
“Who would like to start presenting and explaining his or her symbol?”

Anne
“I was both challenged and bothered by the idea of using a symbol representing appropriate education. I asked colleagues to come up with ideas, some did and others not.

One of our SWV coordinators brought an artwork by a child from one of his schools. The work showed a silver shiny spiderweb with tiny small red threads; a spider was connected to the web by a white thread, hanging downwards. The SWV coordinator explained that as coordinator he felt like a spider in the looming appropriate education network web. And he liked to be in his position to pull the strings, as he described it.”

[I turn to Joan]
“You will recognise this position, won’t you?”

Joan
“I do. It resembles my position although I presume your colleague’s position is not at school but at the SWV level.”

Anne
“I was both challenged and bothered by the idea of using a symbol representing appropriate education. I asked colleagues to come up with ideas, some did and others not.

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[I turn to Joan]
“You will recognise this position, won’t you?”

Joan
“I do. It resembles my position although I presume your colleague’s position is not at school but at the SWV level.”

Anne
“You’re right.”

[I address everyone again]
“My next symbol originates from a colleague administrator. This colleague suggested pliers as a symbol. His explanation was that in order to establish an appropriate Dutch education format you have got to cut, to merge and to put together elements of the existing Dutch system instead of importing systems from abroad. With pliers you can cut, merge and put together. I conclude that if I was a handyman, I should take pliers as symbol. But I have to say that since I am neither a man nor handy I have chosen another symbol.”

[After some reactive laughter fades I reflect on the today’s meeting so far. So I resume my argument having in mind the troubling factors like money and the excessive workload of teachers]
“I believe appropriate education has deteriorated into ‘a next step’ instead of ‘the step’ towards inclusive education. My sad conclusion is that appropriate education is a heroic story that slips through our hands like sand. Unfortunately politics has made appropriate education a pale, even very pale imitation of inclusive thinking and working.”

[Note nobody reacting]
“My conclusion was meant as a little extra addition to our discussion before the break. Now I’d like to go on with symbols.

Another colleague simply put his hands upside down facing forwards as a symbol for appropriate education, explaining ‘What you see is what you get’. For him this stands for: you as a teacher, or administrator, or as whatever professional, you are in charge, even empty-handed. You can make the difference so you can make education appropriate. Again a nice symbol, but not mine.”

Rosemary
“What is your symbol?”

Anne
“Thank you, I’d just like to come to my symbol of appropriate education. My symbol is a video clip that I downloaded on my laptop.”

[I get my laptop out of my brown leather briefcase and start it while I talk]
“The particular song is called ‘Flowers are red’. For me the lyrics are both touching and unsettling. Do any of you know this song?”

Cees
“I’ve never heard this song. Whose is it?”

Anne
“Harry Chapin is the artist, and Gerard Maasakkers made a Dutch version entitled ‘Bloemen zijn rood’. If you go to YouTube and type ‘flowers are red’, you’ll find several versions of this song. I’ll show you a particular YouTube cartoon version with children’s voices. I like these voices, and I like the cartoons.

When I put the laptop in front of me, can all of you see the screen?”

[In response I see Rosemary and Paul moving towards Cees and Joan]

Joan
[Shall I Anne]

Anne
[Note amiable]

Anne
“I believe appropriate education has deteriorated into ‘a next step’ instead of ‘the step’ towards inclusive education. My sad conclusion is that appropriate education is a heroic story that slips through our hands like sand. Unfortunately politics has made appropriate education a pale, even very pale imitation of inclusive thinking and working.”

[Note nobody reacting]
“My conclusion was meant as a little extra addition to our discussion before the break. Now I’d like to go on with symbols.

Another colleague simply put his hands upside down facing forwards as a symbol for appropriate education, explaining ‘What you see is what you get’. For him this stands for: you as a teacher, or administrator, or as whatever professional, you are in charge, even empty-handed. You can make the difference so you can make education appropriate. Again a nice symbol, but not mine.”

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When I put the laptop in front of me, can all of you see the screen?”

[In response I see Rosemary and Paul moving towards Cees and Joan]

Joan
[Shall I Anne]

Anne
[Note amiable]
“But now I will keep my mouth shut, so enjoy my symbol.”

[I start the clip, and I see everybody watching it intensely. After the song a deep silence falls over the office, the only noise being from Rosemary and Paul returning to their former positions]

[Joan switches on the lights again]

Rosemary

“Thank you Anne. Emotion got the better of me while I watched the video clip and listened to the lyrics. The child first had to obey his teacher to colour flowers red and leaves green. The next teacher encouraged the child to be more creative. The child who disbelieved this next teacher, thus refused by saying: ‘Flowers are red, and leaves are green.’ Of course I recognised the message. The way the message is communicated is a harrowing cry for educational changes. I am deeply touched.”

Anne

“Rosemary, I recognise your emotion. This song clarifies strongly for me how education may affect a child’s development when the child has to adapt to the school. So my conclusion is that appropriate education is an inescapable obligation if you want to meet all children’s needs; an inescapable obligation if you want to create an educational system that is as close as possible to inclusive education.”

[As far as I can see all accept my conclusion. I switch my laptop off and start to put it back in my briefcase when Rosemary takes the floor]

Rosemary

“I take Anne’s point, and I decide to take my turn to present my symbol without waiting for anyone else]

Like Anne the symbol idea challenged and bothered me. I’ll start by revealing some of the ideas I had in mind before I finally show mine.”

[See people smiling]

“The first symbol I thought of was my house. My husband and I just finished building a new house. This gave me the idea that appropriate education should suit each child like a house. They have to feel welcome. They have to feel safe. They have to have a place where they may be whoever they are. All kinds of activities happen in this house. To mention an activity I suggest confidential conversations. My problem was to bring my house to this meeting. That is why I left this idea.”

Paul

“You could have brought a photo of your house.”

Rosemary

“That idea came to mind. But: a school should fit like a house, a house should fit like a glove, but you cannot put that on a photo. So I dropped the idea of a photo.”
[I allow everybody to observe my symbol closely by handing it over. Except for Paul all put the doll on their hand to produce some amusing gestures and jokes. Then I resume my argument]

“Actually I should have taken a photo of the parrot in the reading corner in my class. To explain the symbol as well as possible, and to situate it properly in my reading corner, I wrote my explanation down. I'll read my written explanation aloud.’

[I unfold a paper snip.]

To appropriate education belongs a safe environment that fits the perception of the child. It has to be challenging and stimulating, with a lot of books accessible, a child doesn’t have to ask for it. A hand doll belongs to it as well, a colourful hand doll, with which they plunge into their fantasy world. This is what they really need alongside all the cognitive activities.

---

**Joan**

“I really like your presentation, because for me it represents not only appropriate education but your commitment as well. And let me continue by presenting my symbol. But first I’d like to make a small contribution to my arguments before the break and afterwards show and elaborate on my symbol. Is that all right with you?”

---

**Anne**

“It's what I also did, so go ahead.”

---

**Joan**

“Well it's not that serious. I'd just like to say that I have gained a lot from implementing appropriate education. For me linking, networking, making connections, that's what matters and for me it's great fun to do. So my story about appropriate education is not only a complaint!”

[I notice that all laugh]

“I'll go on. For the sake of my presentation we need to take a walk through the school. So I invite you to join.”

[All indicate they would like to join me]
“These crayons symbolise appropriate education for two reasons that I’d like to list carefully. One: they symbolise the multi-colourings of all children, and from any perspective. Two: one pencil might be shorter than the other, but that’s not obvious. However, you try to bring them to their own levels as far as possible, leaving them their own colour.”

[From the supply room I take a map and we walk to the staff room]

“Are you enjoying this walking?”

Cees

“Yes, I like it. It gives me the opportunity to see another school in my own city.”

Rosemary

“As I said previously, your school differs from mine. So walking around in your school teaches me about the advantages and disadvantages of my own school. Cees, we definitely have to talk about this.”

[All laugh once again]

Cees

[I feel saved by the bell because we arrive at the staff room. I address Cees.]

“Again I have two explanations, which I’d like to list accurately again. One: the statue, without the map, symbolises appropriate education at the school level. It is about being in contact with each other as a school team, to be able to put appropriate education into practice. As a result a child with problems is no longer the responsibility of its teacher alone. It becomes the responsibility of the whole school. Two: at local and regional level appropriate education is education close to the child while networking with the different PO schools of the different SWVs, the RECs 1 and 2 and 3 and 4, and collaborating with colleagues and parents. Our key thought is that we need each other: together we are strong!”

Rosemary

[While we walk back to Joan’s office I feel the urge to launch a new argument]

“I might be an ignorant teacher, but I know a lot of people are worried by the appropriate education policy to be implemented in 2011.”

Joan

“It worries me as well. We have to organise a proper educational care arrangement for all children in 2011. How can we manage this?”
Anne
“To be honest, during our last board meeting I heard rumours the implementation has been postponed to 2012, 2013, isn’t that so Cees?”

Cees
“I heard the same rumours, but I don’t know exactly what’s.”

Paul
“I presume nobody knows right now what’s going on and how it will proceed.”

Rosemary
“This uncertainty doesn’t reassure me.”

[Then we arrive at Joan’s office where we all automatically take the same seats again.]

Act four, scene three. Anne, Cees, Joan, Paul and Rosemary

SEATING AREA OF JOAN’S OFFICE

Rosemary
[After a short silence I decide to take the lead. I smile because I like the first story I am going to tell]
“My intention was to present a special guitar. This particular guitar symbolises appropriate education because it has several possibilities. A guitar is an ensemble instrument in the first instance. But you may also play it alone. When you play it alone you can sing alone at the same time, or you can sing together with other people, in harmony. I believe that both are needed in appropriate education: both individual performances and working in harmony.
However, a guitar to me is appropriate education as well, because I feel challenged to learn to play guitar. I cannot play guitar. For me appropriate education is learning. Last but not least, to me this guitar is appropriate education because I got it from a friend who is no longer able to play it. For me it is a cherished instrument because appropriate education is personal and to some extent, it is very dear to me.”

Anne
“You have really thrown me off balance! I know you are talented when it comes to music, because you played several instruments some decades ago at our school. And now I learn you can’t play guitar. I am flabbergasted. But I do like your guitar metaphor for appropriate education.”

Paul
“Thank you for your compliment. And I apologise for unbalancing you.”

People smile, including Anne who bows her head politely to me

“Here I have finished my first symbol story. My next one is about the idea of presenting a computer connection cable as inspired by my ICT teacher. Apart from the fact that she organises ICT technically at our school, she amazes me by the way she networks with the whole world. From that point of view this symbol is in tune with Joan’s symbol when it comes to the networking aspect of appropriate education.”

[Look at Joan]

Joan
“I take your point. What’s your next story?”

Paul
“My next story is that I have to be faithful to my own ideals and insights so I brought another symbol. As you will have noticed I came in with a big shopping bag that I put in the corner of this office after Cees told me that we would be presenting our symbols after the break.”

[I walk to that corner of the office to collect the bag and feel the eyes on my back, following me. I hold the bag up while return to my place]

“Look at this bag.”

[I retrieve a bottle of wine from the bag and put it next to the bag on the table]
“Does anyone recognise the symbolism?”

_Joan_
“Is it about old wine in new bags?”

_Paul_
“Yes it is. Yet I am aware that some people use the saying ‘Old wine in new bottles.’ But let me explain my symbol. Under the ISOVSO we had many types of special education, amongst them IOBK, LOM, and MLK. Under the WPO these three types merged into SBO. Some people argue that this merger caused a decline in the special education percentage from almost 5% to 2%, but I know these figures only apply internationally.”

_Anne_
“Just as the PISA comparisons affect our national education policy as I mentioned previously?”

_Rosemary_
[What is PISA, what are they talking about? It’s becoming abstract again. Well let them talk, I’m tired]

_Paul_
“Yes. To continue my explanation, under the ISOVSO we had also VSO MLK and VSO LOM. Under the WVO they are called PrO and LWOO. To make what I mean more comprehensible, I should add that the former MAVO and LHNO and LTS are replaced by the VMBO, including its level 1 through to level 4, and its specialisations like VMBO-tl. I would conclude that everything appears to have changed, but in fact only the names have changed and not the system. I’ll illustrate this conclusion by mentioning that the former ZMLK and ZMOK are now REC 3 and REC 4 respectively.”

_Anne_
“These educational types are not quite similar. I take your point that for you, appropriate education is old wine in new bags. But I disagree when I think for instance of Gewoon anders.”

_Rosemary_
[Now I have to jump in]
“This is new. What are you talking about?”

_Anne_
“Gewoon anders is an education project in Almere, an experiment to establish an educational system without special education. There the local educational system consists of a lot of newly developed in-between forms like GaS, GiS and child in the group.”

_Rosemary_
[GiS, GaS, my head is overflowing!]
“Please, once again?”

_Anne_
“Sorry Rosemary. Let me explain these abbreviations for you. GaS means group at school. For instance I know a REC 3 attaching two classes at a PO school.”

_Joan_
“And we are negotiating to attach some RENN 4 classes to our SBO.”

_Anne_
“That’s also a good example, thank you Joan. I didn’t know about these developments.”
[Then I turn back to Rosemary]
“GiS means group in school to teach children for part of the time or for a certain period full time.”

_Paul_
“These explanations and examples make me laugh because they confirm my symbol. To explain my argument: for me GaS is de facto ZMLK attached to PO, GiS is de facto SBO in PO.”

_Joan_
[Then I interrupt, ignoring Paul and addressing Rosemary]
“I’d like to focus your attention on other examples of in-between forms: the TOGs in our SWVs, and the appropriate education ‘Op de rails’ experiments.”

*Act four, scene four. Anne, Cees, Joan, Paul, Rob and Rosemary*

**SEATING AREA OF JOAN’S OFFICE**

[At that particular moment the janitor comes in with fresh coffee and tea]

_Joan_
[I turn to Rob]
“Hello Rob, welcome.”
[Then I address all]
“May I introduce you to Rob, our indispensable janitor, spoiling us with refreshments.”

Rob
“Nice to meet you. Have you had a good day so far?”
[I put the coffee or tea on table and then I leave Joan’s office.]

Act four, scene five. Anne, Cees, Joan, Paul and Rosemary

SEATING AREA OF JOAN’S OFFICE

Paul
[Rob leaves, yet I liked his question so I take the floor to express my opinion]
“To be honest, I said more here about my appropriate education ideas and experiences than ever during a meeting with professionals because it’s an open meeting today, we are speaking in our personal capacities and without a fixed agenda. And I never revealed so much during all the interviews I’ve had during my professional sports career in earlier days.”

Rosemary
[I am surprised by this reaction; yet leave it for what it is because I like to hear the other reactions as well]

Anne
“Nevertheless I’m tired now, even exhausted!”

Paul
“I’d like to come back on two issues, the cooperation with parents and my last symbol. The first one: for personal reasons I have been convinced cooperation with parents is of vital importance to make education in general, and appropriate education in particular, successful. Nevertheless I advocate the return of our SBO pupils back to regular schools at the end of their PO career for reasons I mentioned previously. The point I want to make here is that my plea to refer back sometimes clashes with what parents want. What happens is that pupils who are admitted by our PCL have a difficult past. They have a history of struggle at school and are sometimes excluded by their classmates and/or have developed a negative fear of failure because of the learning problems they encountered. After they have been at our school for some time things tend to improve, so parents start to like their child’s stay at our SBO. When I begin talking about referring their child back they fear encountering the same problems again. Nevertheless I try to persuade them to let their child go back. Do you understand my point and the parental dilemma?”
[I see all nodding so I continue]
“My second issue is my symbol. I really think appropriate education is old wine in new bags. Of course changes happen, for instance if I think about the local cooperation between PCO and public education to establish SBO in several parts of our province. But RK-onderwijs has so far been refused in our region, so changes are just minor. And that is why 1-pitters still exist. And that is why BRIN issues are raised time and again when discussions on establishing new schools or merging schools emerge. Of course new initiatives are taken, like the recently-published WRR report on early school leavers by our former minister Winsemius, but then the question arises of what happens with these initiatives. For example, what will be the effect of the Dijsselbloem parliamentary inquiry into the educational policy of the past two decades? Do we get more time for education as the title of the Dijsselbloem inquiry suggests? Posing the question is knowing the answer, isn’t that so? Therefore let me summarise what I said so far. First we had the WButO and the ISOVSO, then WSNS and WSNS+, followed by the WPO and the WEC followed by …”

Rosemary
[I decide to interrupt brusquely]
“Oh Paul please stop. My head is full of information and I am dizzy and spinning from all the talking, the thinking and the rethinking!!”

Anne
“Again, let’s take a last drink and then call it a day!”

Joan
[Cees please stop this man and let’s start gossiping.]
[I hear and see all laughing, including Paul]

Cees
“All right, the point has been clearly made, we’ll call it a day. I’d really like to thank you from the bottom of my heart for all your appropriate education stories. And now I officially declare the appropriate education meeting to be closed, that is: for this company, for here, for now.”
Act five: Leaving the meeting

Act five, scene one: Anne, Cees, Joan, Paul and Rosemary

JOAN’S OFFICE, ON THE WAY OUT, CARS

Anne
“I have to leave immediately; I have an appointment with the inspectorate. I always try to make more appointments when travelling to Groningen for my work, to make my travelling time more effective.”

Rosemary
“I have to leave for the same reason, I also have an appointment. So I’ll join Anne.”

Anne
“All right.”

Joan
“Shall I show you out?”

Anne
“Thank you but it’s not necessary because I know the way. Goodbye to all of you.”

Rosemary
[After saying farewell to Anne I get into my car. Driving to my friend I am not reassured by everything that has been said about appropriate education. Maybe I have to check what BON’s ideas are about this new policy and e-mail Cees these ideas. However let me first enjoy my pleasurable shopping afternoon]

Anne
[Driving to the inspector I am aware I didn’t mention one of the most exhausting activities we have suffered in recent years, which is: the establishing of the ISB in the framework of privatisation. We may gain a lot from it in the near future, but now it adds to the current workload. I should have asked Paul’s opinion. I assume his comment might be to look for opportunities to stretch the relevant rules and regulations for the sake of his school, staff and pupils. I will ask him the next time we meet]
Paul
“As a team leader of a RENN 4 school she is involved in some mutual appropriate education projects, in particular ‘Op de rails’.”

Cees
“I feel ashamed and embarrassed to admit I didn’t know that.”
[Paul and Joan laugh at me]
“Anyhow, I will pass on your greetings. And once again, thanks for your contributions.”
[Then Paul leaves]

Paul
“When I walk out of the school I admire Cees’ unorthodox approach yet wonder if he will manage to do justice to all the information he collected. To me, it seems an almost impossible job

Act five, scene three: Cees and Joan

JOAN’S OFFICE, ON THE WAY OUT, BIKE

Cees
“Thank you so much! Not only for your contributions, but also for your hospitality.”

Joan
“Let me detain you for another moment. I have something I’d like to discuss with you before you leave. What’s your opinion on the IB-er’s position.”

Cees
“Well, I agree with you that IB-ers are the pivot of the appropriate education implementation at school level. This agreement stems from my former experiences as special education lecturer and some contact I have with LBIB.”

Joan
“So why do problems exist in the Centre you chair?”

Cees
[I blush again because suddenly I know what she is talking about]
“Indeed, we have some problems. They are private and as an employer I can’t talk about it. Nevertheless my personal and professional stance is that an IB-er should be a formal function rather than a task.”

Joan
[Since his reaction seems to be straightforward I decide not to push this issue further. I’d like to make a second comment]
“I really liked the symbol approach because it revived our conversation. I wonder whether the same approach can be used during a staff meeting, do you know?”

Cees
“Yes it can. I can support you if you want to organise an appropriate education meeting in this way.”

Joan
“When the time is right I know how to get in touch with you.”

Cees
“Once again, a sea full of thanks for everything you organised to make this meeting successful.”

Joan
“You are absolutely welcome.”
[Then Cees leaves]

Cees
[As I cycle home this unexpected merging of roles keeps me occupied. And I feel relieved that State Secretary Dijksma declined my invitation by letter to join. She wrote that due to procedural arrangements with others it seemed inappropriate to talk to us at this stage. She begged me politely to understand her position. What I definitely understand is that her absence has led to infinitely less organisational hassle surrounding today’s meeting on appropriate education]

Act five, scene four: Joan

Joan
[After his departure I check my diary for the rest of the day while reflecting on the several roles Cees plays: researcher, chairman of an education centre, lecturer and his wife as team leader at a RENN 4 school.]
“I hope he can forward my pessimism! But for now: let me clean up my office.”
### Glossary of Dutch abbreviations and educational terms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dutch Abbr.</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1-loket</td>
<td>One Locker, a project to tune regional and/or provincial care and education indications in practice. For parents there is one locker (Keesenberg, 2008) according to the front office back office system; behind the one locker several indication committees are accommodated: see LWOO, PrO, SO, and LGF (Rouvoet, Bijsterveld-Vliegenthart &amp; Dijksma, 2009).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-pitter</td>
<td>One school with one board; about 50% of school boards are a ‘one school with one board’ board (Kervezee, K. &amp; Midden, G. van, 2009).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-zorg route</td>
<td>One Care Pathway, a project of Together To School Again +. The 1-Care Pathway strives for early identification of and appropriate support for children with special educational needs. Decisions and steps have to be transparent for and tuned with all the people concerned, and attention is focused on the potentials and talents of children. In this approach the teacher focuses on performance-focused teaching at group level (Retrieved 4 July 2011 from <a href="http://schoolaanzet.nl/leerlingzorg/1-zorgroute">http://schoolaanzet.nl/leerlingzorg/1-zorgroute</a>, a website organised by the national Primary Education Council).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB-er</td>
<td>Ambulant begeleider</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADHD</td>
<td>Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AOB</td>
<td>Algemene onderwijsbond</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Abbreviations

- **AVI**: Analyse van Individualiseringsvormen
  Analysis of individualisation forms. AVI has been a Catholic Pedagogy Centre project as from 1977. The project focuses on individualisation of technical reading education (Retrieved 28 May 2012 from http://www.slo.nl/primair/leergebieden/med/taalsite/lexicon/00029/).

- **AVS**: Algemeene Vereniging Schoolleiders
  General Association of School Leaders. For deputy heads, for middle management, for principals since the function of managers differs from other educational functions (Retrieved 11 July 2011 from http://www.avs.nl/)

- **BaO**: Basisonderwijs
  Elementary Education. Elementary education was governed by the Elementary Education Act from 1985 to 1998 (Groot & Rijswijk, 1999; Leij & Linde-Kaam, 2002).

- **BON**: Beter Onderwijs Nederland
  Better Education Netherlands. This association was founded in 2006 to aim at encouraging pupils’ and students’ potentials by thorough disciplinary and general education (Retrieved 10 August 2011 from www.beteronderwijsnederland.nl)

- **BOVO-formulier**: Basisonderwijs voortgezet onderwijs formulier
  Form for the transfer from Elementary Education to Secondary Education. Since the 1998 Primary Education Act the name changed to POVO, the transfer from Primary Education to Secondary Education. An educationalist form is especially important for those children who need extra care (Retrieved 12 July 2011 from http://www.overgangpovo.nl/).

- **BRIN**: Basis Registratie Instellingen Nummer
  Basic Registration Institutes Number. It is the Ministry of Education, Culture and Science school identification code comprised of four alphanumeric signs. An additional two-number code may indicate a location or dependence (Retrieved 13 July 2011 from Wikipedia). A BRIN number implies recognition and financing by the government.

- **Bruijbare Rechtsorde**: ‘Useful’ Legislation is a programme introduced by Minister of Law Donner. It was meant “to improve the relations between government and citizens, amongst others by decreasing the regulatory load” (Donner, 2001, 1) (Trans. CG)
Een-minuut-test
One-minute-test. A test to assess the level of ‘technical reading’. The first edition was 1963, the second 1968. The fundamental idea did not change: assessing the reading speed of a child reading unconnected words as a norm for his or her technical reading skills (Brus & Voeten, 1972).

Buitengewoon Onderwijs
Extraordinary Education. The Lower Education Act governed this education from 1920 to 1985. Then the term extraordinary education changed to special education (Groot & Rijswijk, 1999). Since the 1970s the most important ambition of the Dutch government is to halt the growth of extraordinary education, succeeded by special education (Bakker, Noordam & Rietveld-van Wingerden, 2006). See SO.

Centraal Instituut voor Toetsontwikkeling
Central Institute for Test Development, amongst others the CITO test (Retrieved 11 July 2011 from Wikipedia). The CITO test assesses the child’s understanding of the taught curriculum. The results range from 501 to 550 (Daniels, 2004). The government considers making a final assessment obligatory for all primary schools (Retrieved 12 July 2011 from http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/).

A-score, A level: the 25% of good to excellent pupils with the highest results;
B-score, B level: the 25% of pass to good pupils under level A yet above national average;
C-score, C level: the 25% moderate to pass pupils below the national average;
D-score, D level: the 15% weak to moderate pupils seriously below national average;
E-score, E level: the 10% lowest-scoring pupils.

Centrum voor Jeugd en Gezin
Centre for Youth and Family. Every municipality had a Centre for Youth and Family in 2011. It is an easily-approachable neighbourhood support service for parents and youths who can submit their questions concerning health, growing up and education. The Centre offers advice, help and tailor-made support (Retrieved 12 July 2011 from http://cjg.nl/).

Commissie van Indicatiestelling
Committee for Indication. “This committee assesses whether a pupil is permitted or not to attend varied forms of (secondary) special education or a backpack (pupil bound budget), according to national criteria.” (Keessenberg, 2008, 93) (Transl. CG).

Commissie van Begeleiding
Committee of Counselling. The composition of the Committee is school-dependent and comprises experts taking care of children who need care, and their parents.

Didactische Leeftijd Equivalent
Educational Age Equivalent. “The DLE expresses the level at which a pupil masters the curriculum. One DLE is what the average primary school pupil masters after one month’s education at a primary school. One school year consists of around 10 months, so a DLE of 10 corresponds with what the average pupil achieves at the end of the first learning year or group 3.” (Retrieved 13 July 2011 from Wikipedia).

Group at School
Education takes place at a separate location, limiting the opportunities to integrate. Some pupils integrate a part of a day per week by visiting a regular school. This model resembles special education (Retrieved 13 July 2011 from http://www.gewoonanders.nl/).

Simply Different
‘The Simply Different Association is an urban, cluster-transcending expert centre of special education support and education.’ It started in 1997 in Almere supporting ‘backpack’ pupils. The main pillars are parental freedom of choice and integration in regular education (Retrieved 13 July 2011 from http://www.gewoonanders.nl/).

Almere is the youngest city in the Netherlands: the first house was completed in 1976 and Almere became a municipality in 1984. It is the largest municipality in Flevoland with 191,495 citizens (9 May 2011), and the 7th largest in the Netherlands. In October 2007, the city council of Almere made agreements with the government to expand the city to 350,000 inhabitants by 2030. Flevoland is a province of the Netherlands. Located in the centre of the country, on the site of the former Zuiderzee, the province was established on 1 January, 1986; the twelfth province of the country, with Lelystad as its capital.” (Retrieved 19 July 2011 from Wikipedia).

Civil Health Service. The Dutch municipalities bear the legal responsibility for promoting health and protecting citizens against diseases and calamities. This task lies with the civil health services (Retrieved 5 July 2011 from www.ggd.nl).
Voices exploring appropriate education

In hun Ontwikkeling Bedreigde Kleuters
Pre-school age Children with Developmental Difficulties. The English translation stems from Meijer, Pijl & Hegarty (1994). These children received their education from departments governed by the ISOVSO. Now these schools are merged into SBO.

Intelligentie Quotient
IQ or Intelligence Quotient. “Score comparing mental and chronological age” (Woolfolk, Hughes & Walkup, 2008, 717). “Mental age. In intelligence testing, a score based on average abilities for that age group” (Woolfolk, Hughes & Walkup, 2008, 141).

Integraal Schoolbestuur
Integral School Governing Body. That is: the municipality takes care of the maintenance of local education. Many municipalities transfer their administrative public education tasks to independent holdings, setting themselves at a distance from the idea of an integral school governing body. (Retrieved 10 January 2009 from http://www.pvdagroningen.nl/artikel/2267.htm+integraal+school+bestuur&hl=ml&ct=cink&cd=5&gl=nl). In educational jargon this shift is called the privatisation of public education.

Interimwet Speciaal Onderwijs Voortgezet Speciaal Onderwijs
The 1985 Special Education Secondary Special Education Interim Act (Eurydice, nn; Leij & Linde-Kaan, 2002; Schuman, 2008). The act was an interim one because there was no consensus about the direction of the special education policy, and it was extended by another two years until it was succeeded by the Primary Education Act (Groot & Rijswijk, 1999) and the Expertise Centres Act (Euryduce, nn). See PO, SO and WEC.

Kinderdagcentrum
Child Day Care Centre. The centre is meant for children from 0 to 18 years with severe mental or multiple disabilities. The care is free; a referral is needed (Retrieved 13 July 2011 from http://www.socialezekerheid.nl/). See MR.

Landelijke Beroepsgroep voor Intern Begeleiders
National Professional Association for IB-ers. The association actively stimulates the discussion concerning the position and developmental perspectives of the IB-er (Retrieved 10 August 2011 from www.lbib.nl).
Chapter 4

Voices exploring appropriate education

Middelbaar Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs
Junior General Secondary Education (translation by Broekhof, 1993). This education came into existence under the Mammoetwet (Bakker, Noordam & Rieveld-van Winderdam, 2006). See Havo

Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs
Senior Secondary Vocational Training (translation by Broekhof, 1993), is a Dutch education type, mostly organised by ROCs. Senior Secondary Vocational Training is taught at four levels:

- Level 1: assistant professional (no initial qualification)
- Level 2: co-operator, basic professional
- Level 3: independent co-operator, independent professional, vocational training
- Level 4: middle cadre official, specialised professional (admission to HBO) (Retrieved 13 July 2011 from Wikipedia).

Maatschappelijke Juridische Dienstverlening
Civil Legal Service. This Service is a welfare organisation in Groningen encouraging everybody to participate in society. Nowadays it offers more services than only civil legal (Retrieved 5 July 2011 from www.mjd.nl).

School voor Moeilijk Lerende Kinderen
School for Children with Learning Difficulties. The English translation stems from Eurydice (nn). These schools were governed by the ISOVSO; now these schools have been merged into SBO.

School voor Leer- en Opvoedingsmoeilijkheden
School for Learning and Behavioural Difficulties. The English translation stems from Eurydice (nn). These schools were governed by the ISOVSO; now these schools have been merged into SBO.

School voor Leerwegondersteunend Onderwijs
Learning support within Pre-vocational Secondary Education, providing an extra budget for pupils who need extra care (Keessenberg, 2008). See VMBO

MAVO

Locale Educatieve Agenda
Local Educational Agenda. The Agenda is introduced as an instrument to implement the local education policy after amendment of the law on alleviating educational disadvantages in 2006 (Retrieved 12 July 2011 from http://www.delokaleeducatieveagenda.nl/).

MBO

Leerling Gebonden Financiering / Rugzak
Pupil-bound finance, also called ‘Backpack’ The LGF or ‘Rugzak’ is the sponsoring of a child to stay aboard regular education (Keessenberg, 2008).

LGF/Rugzak

Lage Huishoud- en Nijverheidsonderwijs
Junior Secondary Home Economics Education. The schools were initially meant to improve the food condition and health of the nation (Bakker, Noordam & Rietveld-van Wingerden, 2006). The Junior Secondary Vocational Training has been replaced by the VMBO (Eurydice, nn).

LHNO

Lager Ondernemij
In chronological order the Dutch primary education acts are: 1920 Wet op het Lager Onderwijs, 1985 Wet op het Basisonderwijs, 1998 Wet op het Primair Onderwijs. Although ‘basisonderwijs’ has been replaced by ‘primair onderwijs’ the word ‘basisonderwijs’ is used in the Netherlands. For example, the ‘College of Primary Education’ is still called ‘PABO’ which stands for ‘Pedagogische Academie Basisonderwijs’.

LO

Lagebundig onderwijs
School for Children with Learning Difficulties. The English translation stems from Eurydice (nn). These schools were governed by the ISOVSO; now these schools have been merged into SBO.

LOM-school

Licht Pedagogische Hulpverlening
Light Pedagogical Service. Offering educational support to parents when problems occur or are likely to occur. Examples: pedagogical consultation hours at CIG, or school social work (Programmaministerie voor Jeugd en Gezin, 2008).

LPH

Lager Technische School
Junior Secondary Technical School. Junior secondary vocational training has been replaced by VMBO (Eurydice, nn).

LTS

Normale kinderen
Normal children. From my pre-understanding (Boje, 2001) of the educational discourse it is often used in conjunction with ‘air quotes’, indicating that ‘normal children’ is a questionable concept.

LWOO

Lager Technische School
Junior Secondary Technical School. Junior secondary vocational training has been replaced by VMBO (Eurydice, nn).

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Lager Onderwijs

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LOM-school

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LPH

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LPH

aktiebundig onderwijs
School for Children with Learning Difficulties. The English translation stems from Eurydice (nn). These schools were governed by the ISOVSO; now these schools have been merged into SBO.

LPH

Motorische Remedial Teaching
Motor Remedial Teaching. MRT is about offering extra physical education support, focusing on the motor education. Not all schools in the Netherlands offer this type of remedial teaching (Retrieved 13 July 2011 from http://www.in-beweging.net/mrt/motorische_remedial_teaching_(mrt).html).

MRT

Medezeggenschap

MR

Middelbaar Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs
Junior General Secondary Education (translation by Broekhof, 1993). This education came into existence under the Mammoetwet (Bakker, Noordam & Rieveld-van Winderdam, 2006). See Havo

MAVO

Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs
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- Level 2: co-operator, basic professional
- Level 3: independent co-operator, independent professional, vocational training
- Level 4: middle cadre official, specialised professional (admission to HBO) (Retrieved 13 July 2011 from Wikipedia).

MBO

Maatschappelijke Juridische Dienstverlening
Civil Legal Service. This Service is a welfare organisation in Groningen encouraging everybody to participate in society. Nowadays it offers more services than only civil legal (Retrieved 5 July 2011 from www.mjd.nl).

MJD

School voor Moeilijk Lerende Kinderen
School for Children with Learning Difficulties. The English translation stems from Eurydice (nn). These schools were governed by the ISOVSO; now these schools have been merged into SBO.

MLK-school

School voor Leerwegondersteunend Onderwijs
Learning support within Pre-vocational Secondary Education, providing an extra budget for pupils who need extra care (Keessenberg, 2008). See VMBO

LWO

Normale kinderen
Normal children. From my pre-understanding (Boje, 2001) of the educational discourse it is often used in conjunction with ‘air quotes’, indicating that ‘normal children’ is a questionable concept.

LWOO

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LWOO
Chapter 4

Voices exploring appropriate education

OBD  Onderwijsbegeleidingsdienst
Education Counselling Service. Also called SABD, School Advies-en Begeleidingsdienst (school advice and counselling service), or SAD, School Adviesdienst (school advice service), or SBD, School Begeleidingsdienst. All schools can get support from such a service. Counselling covers pre-education, primary education, secondary education, vocational education, adult education (Retrieved 13 July 2011 from http://www.edventure.nu/).

PA  Pedagogische Academie
Primary Teacher Training College (translation by Broekhof, 1993). From 1968 to 1985 the predecessor of the PABO (Retrieved 13 July 2011 from Wikipedia).

OESO  Organisatie voor Economische Samenwerking en Ontwikkeling or OECD, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.
The organisation dates “back to 1960, when 18 European countries plus the United States and Canada joined forces to create an organisation dedicated to global development. Today, our 34 member countries span the globe, from North and South America to Europe and the Asia-Pacific region. They include many of the world’s most advanced countries but also emerging countries like Mexico, Chile and Turkey. We also work closely with emerging giants like China, India and Brazil and developing economies in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. Together, our goal continues to be to build a stronger, cleaner, fairer world.” (Retrieved 13 July 2011 from http://europa-nu.nl and from http://www.oecd.org/).

PABO  Pedagogische Academie voor het Basisonderwijs
College of Primary Education. Students attend a four-year full-time course after which they attain a bachelor’s degree in education (Retrieved 13 July 2011 from Wikipedia).

PCL  Permanente Commissie Leerlingenzorg
Permanent Committee Pupil Care. “A Committee, steered by a Cooperation Association Together To School Again, decides whether a child is permitted for the special school for primary education.” (Keesenberg, 2008, p.93) (Transl. CG).

PCO  Protestant Christelijk Onderwijs
Protestant Christian Education. There are 2,492 institutions for PCO in the Netherlands (Retrieved 13 July 2011 from http://www.christelijkonderwijs.nl/).

PDD-NOS  Pervasive Developmental Disorder – Not Otherwise Specified
A Pervasive Developmental Disorder is sometimes also called ‘Spectrum Disorder’ (Verhulst & Verheij, 2000). In English literature the continuum of this spectrum is described by the term ‘Pervasive Disorder’ (PDD), or ‘Autism Spectrum Disorder’ (ASD) (Verhulst, 2006). Looked at from a PDD-NOS perspective, autism lies at the other, severe end of the spectrum. (Verhulst & Verheij, 2000). Children with pervasive disorders have deficits in social functioning, verbal and non-verbal communication, interests, behavioural patterns and activities (Verhulst, 2006). Autism spectrum disorders are generally evident before age 3 and range from mild to major (Woolfolk, Hughes & Walkup, 2008). Approach: start each day the same way, communicate changes in advance and visualise; be clear (unambiguous); stop undesirable behaviour early; take a neutral position since emotions are difficult to understand; see that you create predictability and regularity; approach behavioural problems as inability, not as unwillingness; offer alternatives for the next time; focus reflection especially on how to solve the problem the next time, providing strategy; try to achieve the acceptance of the individual handicap. (Haxe, Nijboer & Velderman, 2002).

Op de rails  Op de rails
On track. Sometimes children have severe behavioural problems to an extent that they cannot be catered for in their school. Op de rails may offer support of a maximum of 52 weeks to get these children back on track again to return to their school (Retrieved 10 August 2011 from http://www.portaal-hs-odr.nl/op-de-rails/).

Opheffingsnorm  Opheffingsnorm
The ‘statutory requirements regarding minimum pupil numbers’ is under Primary Education and differs per municipality (Retrieved 6 March 2012 from http://mijnwetten.nl/wet-op-het-primair-onderwijs/hofdstuk1/titel4/afdeling9).

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Oplisser  Opleider in school/stage begeleider
Trainer in school / field practice coach. The trainer is in service with a school board with a number of schools. The trainer organises field practice places in schools in consultation with the PABO, and is a mentor and a walking encyclopaedia for students during their field practice (Retrieved 13 July from http://www.opleidenschool.nl/).

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OPD  Persoonsgebonden Budget
Person-Bound Budget. People with a person-bound budget can organise their own care needed due to their illness, disability or old age. They receive an amount with which to buy their own care, help or support (Retrieved 13 July 2011 from http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/).

OESO  Organisatie voor Economische Samenwerking en Ontwikkeling or OECD, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.
The organisation dates “back to 1960, when 18 European countries plus the United States and Canada joined forces to create an organisation dedicated to global development. Today, our 34 member countries span the globe, from North and South America to Europe and the Asia-Pacific region. They include many of the world’s most advanced countries but also emerging countries like Mexico, Chile and Turkey. We also work closely with emerging giants like China, India and Brazil and developing economies in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. Together, our goal continues to be to build a stronger, cleaner, fairer world.” (Retrieved 13 July 2011 from http://europa-nu.nl and from http://www.oecd.org/).

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Chapter 4

PISA
Programma voor Internationale Student Meting
The Programme for International Student Assessment is an internationally standardised assessment developed jointly by participating countries and administered to 15-year-olds in schools. The survey was implemented in 43 countries in the 1st assessment in 2000, in 41 countries in the 2nd assessment in 2003, in 57 countries in the 3rd assessment in 2006 and 62 countries signed up to participate in the 4th assessment in 2009. Tests are typically administered to between 4,500 and 10,000 students in each country. (Retrieved 22 February 2009 from http://www.pisa.oecd.org/pages/0,3417,en_32252351_32235907_1_1_1_1_1,00.html).

PO
Primair Onderwijs
Primary Education. It covers mainstream primary schools and the special schools for primary education (Keesenberg, 2008). See WPO.

POP
Persoonlijk Ontwikkelingsplan
Personal Development Plan. In this Plan the employee indicates steps to improve her professional skills; the employer adds the plan to the personal dossier. The POP can be used for further career development (Retrieved 13 July 2011 from Wikipedia).

PrO
Praktijkonderwijs
Practical Training. “For pupils who are not expected to obtain a pre-vocational secondary education diploma even with constant extra support, there is an option of practical training. This is a special form of secondary education preparing pupils for direct entry to low-skilled jobs.” (Eurydice, nn, p.225). PrO does not lead to a diploma or certificate; it trains pupils to work in a sheltered environment (Keesenberg, 2008).

REC
Regionale Expertise Centre
Regional Expertise Centre. Regional Expertise Centres join knowledge and expertise of (secondary) special schools (Keesenberg, 2008) in four clusters as governed by the 1998 Expertise Centres Act.

REC 1
Cluster 1, category 1, is for children with visual disabilities;

REC 2
Cluster 2, category 2, is for children with hearing and communication disabilities;

REC 3
Cluster 3, category 3, is for children with physical or learning disabilities;

REC 4
Cluster 4, category 4, is for children with emotional and behavioural problems;

RENN 4
REC 4 in the Northern Netherlands is called ‘RENN 4’.

RK onderwijs
Rooms Katholiek onderwijs
Roman Catholic Education. There are 2,915 institutions for RK onderwijs in the Netherlands (Retrieved 13 July 2011 from http://www.christelijkonderwijs.nl/).

ROC
Regionale Opleidingcentrum
Regional institution providing adult and vocational education. The English translation stems from Eurydice (nn). The Vocational Courses Act rules the institutions (Keesenberg, 2008).

RT-er
Remedial Teacher.
No Dutch translation. An RT-er is a teacher who offers means to improve the support to children with learning or behavioural problems (Dulk & Jansen, 2005).

Rugzak
Backpack see LGF/Rugzak

SBO
Speciaal Basisonderwijs
Special Primary Education. “Special Primary Education is a form of primary education for children with specific educational needs, aged from 3 to around 12 years. Special Primary Education is provided at separate schools, for children with developmental difficulties.” (Eurydice, nn, p.225). See IOBK, LOM-school, MLK.

SEV
Sociaal Emotionele Vorming
Social Emotional Development. It represents a school consultation team to support its own teachers.

Sixma toets
Sixma toets
The assessment is rooted inSixma’s thesis on basic reading skills (Sixma, 1973). In this thesis he considers basic learning skills (1) to be situational facts co-determining the educational situation, (2) to be decisions to promote an optimal learning process, (3) to be a presumed child development in the framework of an intended didactic process, that is: to be special presumed knowledge and skills, and (4) to mean a desired teachers’ knowledge and skills in the framework of a limited degree of teachers’ freedom of performing. The last one implies didactic to be the work of specialists who develop prescribed, time-saving teaching models, methods and plans. According to Leij & Linde (2002, 149) the educational idea behind this test can be perceived as:

“Do not start teaching reading before certain, specific conditions are met.”
(Translation CG).
Chapter 4

Voices exploring appropriate education

Voorbereidend Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs
Pre-Vocational Secondary Education. The English translation stems from Eurydice (nn).

Voorbereidend Middelbaar Beroepsonderwijs – technische leerweg
Pre-Vocational Secondary Education – technical education

Voortgezet Onderwijs
Secondary Education. Schools for Secondary Education are mostly organised in broad school communities for VMBO to HAVO and VWO (Keesenberg, 2008). The schools are governed by the Secondary Education Act and include UWOO and Pro (Eurydice, nn).

Vogelaarwijk
Vogelaarwijk is a programme named after the previous labour minister for Living, Suburbs and Integration Ella Vogelaar. The programme focused on the forty most deprived areas of the Netherlands by investing millions of euros (Retrieved 25 May 2012 from http://www.binnenlandsbestuur.nl/ruimte-en-milieu/opinie/commentaren/de-vogelaarwijk.2651982.lynx).

VOS-ABB
No explanation. It is the Association of Public and General Accessible Schools. The Association looks after the interests of boards and administrations (Retrieved 12 July 2011 from http://www.vosabb.nl/).

Voortgezet Speciaal Onderwijs
Secondary Special Education. It is governed by the WEC (Eurydice, nn).

Voorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs
Pre-University Education (translated by Broekhof, 1993). This education came into existence under the Mammoetwet and limited the number of courses to seven (Bakker, Noordam & Rietveld-van Winderdam, 2006).

Wet op Expertise Centra
Expertise Centres Act. The Act came into existence in 1998 (Eurydice, nn; Schuman, 2010) and was adapted to the formation of the RECs and LGF in 2003 (Keesenberg, 2008).

Wiskunde Onderwijs Basisonderwijs
Mathematics Education Elementary Education. A project to renew mathematics education overall, from 1965 to 1985. The focus was on contextual, realistic arrhythmic and mathematic education, and materials
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ZAT</td>
<td>Zorg Advies Team. These are multidisciplinary teams of institutions who offer care and support to youths and their parents, joining the care as offered by the school (Retrieved 9 September 2008 from <a href="http://www.zat.nl">www.zat.nl</a>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ZMLK</td>
<td>Zeer Moeilijk Lerende Kinderen. The English translation stems from Meijer, Pijl &amp; Hegarty (1994). These pupils may receive their education from special schools, but also from regular schools with the help of a “backpack” (Keesenberg, 2008).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WMO</td>
<td>Wet Maatschappelijke Ondersteuning. Community Support Act. The WMO organises the help and support needed by people with a disability. These people may be of old age, be disabled or have mental problems. The WMO strives towards everybody participating in the community and living independently. Municipalities carry out the WMO, though each municipality has its own emphasis (Retrieved 14 July 2011 from <a href="http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/">http://www.rijksoverheid.nl/</a>).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPO</td>
<td>Wet Primair Onderwijs. The Primary Education Act. The wet came into existence in 1998, governs mainstream primary schools and the special schools for PO (Eurydice, nn).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSNS</td>
<td>Weer Samen Naar School. Together To School Again. The 1990 green paper Weer Samen Naar School assumes a position that too many pupils rely on a separate educational system i.e. special education or secondary special education. Yet all children, including children with special needs, should attend regular education as far as possible (Leij &amp; Linde-Kaan, 2002). With this green paper the government responds to an increasing number of parents and experts who consider the existing segregated system to be outdated (Schuman, 2010). In practice Together To School Again is a chain structure of the cooperation associations to stimulate cooperation between primary schools and special primary schools in order to implement a continuum of care (Keesenberg, 2008), or adaptive education leading to fewer referrals to special education and cost control (Meijer, 2004).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WSNS +</td>
<td>Weer Samen Naar School +. Created to improve adaptive education in schools as advocated by WSNS. It focused on further training of teachers, school development, administrative reinforcement and alignment in the region (Meijer, 2004).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter Five: Post Voices is about reflecting as a way of winding up my exploratory process into voices exploring appropriate education.

The first paragraph describes my argument reflecting from Vygotsky’s voice as an external point (Procee, 2006; Procee & Visscher-Voerman, 2004). This paragraph ends by explaining the various Vygotsky’s voices I use to reflect.

In the second paragraph I reflect on my explorer’s process from Vygostky’s Dutch educational voice. I conclude that my prelude education voice resounded in my explorer’s voice.

In the next paragraph I reflect on voices exploring appropriate education from Vygotsky’s socio-historical voice (Vygotsky 1978, 1986; Wertsch, 1991). I conclude that the small appropriate education discourse story (Lyotard, 1988) adds intrinsic and ongoing incoherence to the metanarrative of the Dutch appropriate education Discourse (Gee, 2005).

In the fourth and final paragraph I reflect from Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development perspective on the lack presentness (Morson, 1994) of the actual appropriate education discourse, and the consequences of this omission.

Vygotsky’s voices as external points of reflection

Chapter Two on My exploring voices includes my interlude sculptor’s voice. In retrospect, I perceived my sculpturing activity as an external point to create reflective space (Procee, 2006; Procee & Visscher-Voerman, 2004) to look at my exploratory process. I could have made a second sculpture as an external point once more to create reflective space to wind up my exploratory process and to reflect on my polylogue. I actually produced a second sculpture one year after my first one. The result is a beautiful sculpture, to show off in our Termunten garden, but no reflective space concerning my exploratory process. I was too focused on the superficial aesthetics without leaving room to create reflective space. Making a sculpture lost its power to create reflective space.

Yet sculpting was not the only way to create reflective space. Reflective space might also be created for instance by a concept, a story or a question (Procee, 2006; Procee & Visscher-Voerman, 2004). This external perspective on reflecting made me wonder what creative space could be opened when I should reflect on my exploratory process from Vygotsky’s point of view.

My reason for choosing Vygotsky was that as an educationalist I knew his work. My explicit acquaintance with his work took place at the beginning of this millennium. I had and took the opportunity to become involved in the development of the ‘Development Monitor Model’ (Seminarium voor Orthopedagogiek, 2003). I became a developer, trainer and project manager. The background ideas of this monitoring system were rooted in the work of Vygotsky and his concept of the zone of proximal development, which is:

“... the distance between the [child’s] actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers.” (Vygotsky, 1978, 86)

My developmental teaching and learning attitude was violated when the model manager linked the zones of proximal development one by one to curriculum-focused learning lines. From my perspective the transformative approach was mixed up and overruled by the mimetic approach (Oers & Janssen-Vos, 1992). It was no longer the child who determined the zone of proximal development in dialogue with the elder and more experienced. The zone of proximal development became prescribed by fixed learning line keys. Vygotsky’s ideas were violated, and I resigned abruptly.

Looking back at my initial educational career my involvement in the ‘Development Monitor Model’ was a recurrence of my development and implementation of a play-learning class in 1980. I challenged pupils to take a next step in their development by creating play and learning corners providing activities and exercises to play and learn. I challenged my pupils to take a step in their proximal zone of development. Intuitively I perceived playing as a meaningful way of learning. In Vygotsky’s (1978) theory play is always guided by meaning. Normally a preschooler may behave spontaneously because he thinks he could behave otherwise. Play then creates a zone of proximal development because it offers the opportunity to behave beyond his average age, above his daily behaviour. In retrospect I observe how Vygotsky’s train of thoughts

113 Making a sculpture as a means to reflect on my exploratory process led to an unexpected insight. The coincidental making of two different sculptures together with my son; the unplannen process of making a digital story on this creative process backed by the ‘Significant other’ song (Wilson, 2009a): these two activities reflectively reinforced my intention in a rhizomatic way to stress the differences of the information I collected. This reinforcement emerged from a perspective outside the exploratory process perspective. It created an external reflection point. Yet I consider this reinforcement as one of the most significant moments in my exploratory process. Sculpting as an external reflection point has deeply enriched my exploratory process.
Chapter 5

Post voices

has consciously and unconsciously influenced my educational view on how to teach and coach from the onset of my educational career. It made me wonder what creative reflexive space might be opened choosing this influential man as an external point to consider my exploring process.

Since the 1962 translation of Thought and Language Vygotsky’s work has gleaned a lot of attention. However a problem was that Vygotsky wrote copiously, but he did not edit much of it properly; and due to illness he dictated a lot of work resulting in ‘repetitions and dense or elliptical prose’. (John-Steiner, Souberman, Cole & Scribner, 1978, x). As a result much of his work consists of edited texts, like the 1986 published version of Thought and Language, and his in 1978-published Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes. These edited texts form my external point to open creative space to deepen and enrich (Procee, 2006; Procee & Visscher-Voerman, 2004) my exploratory process in retrospect, analysing the process and not the product (Vygotsky, 1978), although:

“The evaluation of our findings and of the interpretations we have given them is hardly the author’s province and must be left to our readers and critics.” (Kozulin, 1986, lix)

Oers & Wardekker (1997) are interpreters of Vygotsky’s work. They distinguish three Vygotskian approaches: the Dutch approach, the American approach and the approach towards learning by sense making, a problem-focused approach revolving around communication,

“…a process in which the already present know-how (knowledge and skills) are emphasised and used to solve a given problem (the development of new meanings).” (Oers & Wardekker, 1997, 184) (Trans.: CG)

Reflecting on my explorer’s role I used the traditional Dutch educational approach. This approach focuses on Vygotsky’s broad concept of zone of proximate development, which is: a child needs little support to deliver the desired performances (Oers & Wardekker, 1997).

My reflection on voices exploring appropriate education leant on the third approach on sense making, a so far unknown approach for me. My interpretation of this approach revolved around Wertsch’s (1991) interpretation of Vygotsky’s socio-historical voice.

The concept of Vygotsky’s zone of development challenged me to reflect on appropriate education discourse developments after I explored the discourse between 23 September 2008 and 15 May 2009. I observed a lack of ‘presentness’ and reflected on the consequences of this omission.

Yet first I trod the paved traditional Dutch Vygotskian path.

Reflecting from Vygotsky’s Dutch educational voice on my explorer’s process

Exploring my exploratory process from a Vygotskian perspective, two different albeit interrelated conceptual levels opened a new space to reflect upon: my level of spontaneous concepts and my level of scientific concepts in the genetic roots of thinking (Vygotsky, 1986) and their interrelation.

My level of spontaneous concepts emerged from own reflections and everyday experience. Scientific concepts, conscious and deliberate, grow downwards; spontaneous concepts grow upwards.

“These two conceptual systems, developing ‘from above’ and ‘from below’, reveal their real nature in the interrelations between actual development and the zone of proximal development.” (Vygotsky, 1986, 194).

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114 Bakker, Noordam & Rietveld-van Wingerden (2006) explain that the work of Vygotsky played an important role in the implementation of the ‘Dalton-school’ system in the Netherlands during the so called ‘Century of education innovation’, the last century of the previous millennium. From that point of view Vygotsky has achieved his monument in the Dutch educational system over some time. Another monument is that actual realistic rhythmic methods like ‘Wizwij’ refer to Vygotsky to emphasise the significance of taking the child’s interests into consideration (Polland, 2009). Vygotsky still plays a role in the Dutch educational system.
Reading through my Journal on Research\textsuperscript{115}, my Supervision Intervision Journal\textsuperscript{116}, and my Reports on Workshops\textsuperscript{117} I noticed that spontaneous concepts emerged while biking, walking, bathing, talking, reading; while collecting and analysing information; while constructing and writing my polylogue; and while writing my thesis. I discussed these spontaneous concepts during year 1 workshops, and during advanced workshops. I discussed them with: critical friends, fellow students, core tutors and visiting tutors of the part-time DBA/PhD programme, and with my supervisors Peter Pelzer and Hugo Letiche. To paraphrase Vygotsky (1986): as a result these spontaneous concepts gradually decreased in number and grew to a more abstract level, while abstract concepts came down to earth. That is how Vygotsky’s train of thought made me perceive my exploratory process in retrospect; that is how Vygotsky’s voice is to be heard in My Exploring Process; and that is how I came to be aware that My prelude educational voice was and is to be heard in My exploring voice.

\textsuperscript{115}My file Journal of Research contains eight Journals of Research documents. Each document starts with a short break period in which I did not work intensively on my exploratory process. My Journals of Research are: 1. 200607-030809 (19 pages); 2. 040809-140710 (29 pages); 1. 150710-191010 (16 pages); 4. 201010-210211 (27 pages); 5. 220211-200811 (34 pages); 6. 210811-141011 (7 pages); 151011-120112 (12 pages); 8. 130112-300312 (12 pages); 9. 310312-200512 (12 pages); 10. Jol 200512-270812 (26 pages); 11. Jol 270812-281112 (11 pages so far). This makes 225 pages of notes, ideas, trains of thoughts, reflections.

\textsuperscript{116}My file Supervision Intervision contains five Journal documents. Each document covers a year. My Journals are: 1. 2008 (2 pages); 2. 2009 (16 pages); 3. 2010 (25 pages); 4. 2011 (18 pages); 5. 2012 (6 pages). This makes 67 pages of mail exchanges, notes of meetings, and written or oral feedback.


This makes 294 pages of visual and written impressions, theoretical background information, reflections, and notes of lectures and peer interviews.

I attached two ‘time’ connotations to the particular moment I drew this lesson by looking from Vygotsky’s perspective at my exploratory process.

The first time connotation concerned the moment itself, the moment that I heard My prelude education voice emerge in My exploring voices. That moment was a rhizome i.e.: the awareness of My prelude education voice resounding in My explorer voice emerged suddenly and unexpectedly. This emerging awareness was the first lesson I drew from looking at my exploratory process from a Vygotskian perspective. This new insight took my by surprise me in a naive way: I should have been aware of it previously.

The second time connotation concerned my overall professional educational career development. I realised I uncovered the spiral move in my professional development, which is: leaving from daily life experiences to develop ideas, conceptualise them if and when needed, and then back to earth, to the world of the concrete phenomena moving towards the next loop.

As an example I took the establishment of a play-learn class in 1980. I conceptualised this as a transformative approach after ten years when I read Oers & Janssen-Vos (1992). I used both my practice and its conceptualisation in my career as a special education lecturer as illustrations of the ‘Development Monitor Model’. Developing this ‘Development Monitor Model’, I realised its developmental focused approach is threatened conceptually by a curriculum-focused approach. This conceptual shift made me drop my development tasks.

This Vygotskian dance between spontaneous concepts and scientific concepts affected my daily teaching practice, and is exemplary for my professional development.

When it comes to my exploratory process I observed a similar Vygotskian dance, although exceptionally I began from scientific concepts in January 2008. I dropped the conceptualised start in September 2008, replaced it by collecting information in daily practice. Then I started to conceptualise my exploring voice towards the story approach, and analysed information step-by-step, spiralling downwards to a concrete polylogue. That is how I also perceive my exploratory process as ‘Vygotskian’.

Looking from Vygotsky’s perspective explained in retrospect why I deferred my initial literature approach and why I restarted my exploratory process by focusing on daily practice. The Vygotskian perspective made me realise that overall in my educational career, it is the daily practice that has driven me as it happens during my exploratory process into voices exploring appropriate education.

It provoked a subsequent question: why my preoccupation with daily practice? And then I felt and feared the Indian story:
“There is an Indian story – at least I heard it as an Indian story – about an Englishman who, having been told that the world rested on a platform which rested on the back of an elephant which rested in turn on the back of a turtle, asked ... what did the turtle rest on? Another turtle. And that turtle? “Ah, sahib, after that it is turtles all the way down.” (Geertz, 1973, 28,29)

I undertook further reflection on my drive or preoccupation with daily practice as being beyond the scope of the reflection on my exploratory process. Yet the second lesson I drew from looking at my exploratory process from a Vygotskian perspective is my preoccupation with daily practice, both when I speak with My prelude educational voice and when I speak with My exploring voices.

So much for the Dutch-paved Vygotskian path to reflect on my explorer’s role. In the next section I will tread a path unknown to me: Vygotsky’s socio-historical thoughts and ideas.

Reflecting from Vygotsky’s sociohistorical voice on voices exploring appropriate education

To widen my view on the context of Vygotsky’s work I turned to Wertsch (1991, 20) who noted:

“Partly because of the practical tasks confronting him (Wertsch and Youniss, 1987), Vygotsky focused most of his empirical research on the development of the individual (that is, on ontogenesis), in particular, on the individual during childhood. But his analysis applies to several other ‘genetic domains’ as well, specifically, ‘phylogensis’, sociocultural history, and ‘microgenesis’ (Wertsch, 1985c). He believed that each of these domains is governed by a unique set of explanatory principles and that what would ultimately be required is an account specifying how the genetic forces in these domains are interrelated.”

In general Vygotsky’s ideas revolved around assumptions about the nature of higher mental functions, especially the interfuntional relationships between thinking, voluntary action and logical memory. It is about the efficacy and naturalness of verbal mediation (Wertsch, 1991).

Vygotsky (1986, 213) wrote about the interfuntional relatedness:

“Linguistics118 did not realise that in the historical evolution of language the very structure of meaning and its psychological nature also change. From primitive generalisations, verbal thought rises to the most abstract concepts. It is not merely the content of a word that changes, but the way in which reality is generalised and reflected in a word.”

This interfuntional relatedness is an intrapersonal process that starts as interpersonal, as Vygotsky (1978) narrated when he wrote about the development of the meaning of the gesture of a child pointing to another. To Wertsch (1991) the social claim of higher mental functioning119 is most clearly in Vygotsky’s concept of ‘zone of proximal development’. Vygotsky (1978, 68,131) defined his zone of proximal development as:

“... the distance between a child’s ‘actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving’ and the higher level of ‘potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers’.”

John-Steiner & Souberman (1978, 131) pushed me further into Vygotsky’s historical-cultural approach:

“Perhaps the most distinguishing theme of Vygotsky’s writing is his emphasis on the unique qualities of our species, how as human beings we actively realise and change ourselves in the varies contexts of culture and history.”

In this context Wertsch (1991) remarked that Vygotsky and his friends used the word ‘sociohistorical’. For Vygotsky verbal forms mediated between speech and thinking, thinking and speech.

“Vygotsky’s assumptions about the efficacy and naturalness of verbal meditational means are shared by a great deal of research in the West into the development of mental functioning.” (Wertsch, 1991, 30)

Wertsch recognised an ethnographic bias in this assumption. Yet he stated:

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118 Vygotsky is interested in language and speech because they play a double role:

“On the one hand, they are a psychological tool that helps to form other mental functions: on the other hand, they are one of these functions, which means that they also undergo a cultural development.” (Kozulin, 1986, xxx).

119 Many researchers tried to think through Vygotsky’s interiorisation, the transformation from external mental functioning to internal mental functioning. One of these leading researchers was Galperin who altered Vygotsky’s external functioning significantly from social to material functioning along concrete or schematised materialised objects. Some Dutch critics of his material approach are making children rely on materials (Miedema, 1997).
I took this pattern of privileging as the first departure point for reflecting on the text of voices exploring appropriate education from Vygostsky’s perspective. I assume appropriate education practitioners speak and think in their own privileged way. In this respect Miedema (1997) indicated that the cultural community determines meaning. I linked this community-making to Vygostsky’s (1986) thoughts about concept development, summarised by Wertsch (1991) as ‘the transition from social to eccentric to inner speech’. The first step is a young child’s step.

“At that stage, word meaning denotes nothing more to a child than a vague syncetic conglomeration of individual objects that have somehow or other coalesced into an image in his mind. Because of its syncretic origin, that image is highly unstable.” (Vygotsky, 1986, 110)

In the second phase thinking in complexes starts. Complex thinking

“… consists of combining objects or concrete impressions they make on the child into groups that most resemble collections.” (Vygotsky, 1986, 114)

The pseudoconcept is the last stage in this phase of complex thinking. The meaning of the concept is still relying on the predetermined meaning given by the adult. The first and second stages are stages of primitive thinking. The third stage consists of forming concepts beyond the unification of complex thinking.

“To form such a concept it is also necessary to abstract, to single out elements, and to view the abstracted elements apart from the totality of the concrete experience in which they are embedded.” (Vygotsky, 1986, 135)

Wertsch (1991, 39) added:

“One of Vygotsky’s main concerns was the ‘scientific’ or ‘academic’ concepts that are grounded in particular sorts of semiotic activity (for example, making definitions) as opposed to the ‘everyday’ concepts grounded in children’s concrete experience.”

Vygotsky opposed the decontextualised account of scientific concepts to ‘the semiotic potential of human language for increased contextualisation’ (Wertsch, 1991, 39). Wertsch speaks of ‘recontextualisation’ on the basis of experiences.

I took the ‘decontextualisation’ and ‘recontextualisation’ as a second point to reflect on the text of voices exploring appropriate education alongside my first point assuming appropriate education practitioners having their own privileged way of thinking and speaking.

In her introduction to her implementation plan Dijksma (2007b, 3) contextualised the appropriate education concept as follows:

“The core of appropriate education is that the best development opportunities are central for all students, ‘regular’ pupils but also for students who need special educational support.” [Transl. CG]

In the polylogue Joan wondered before the meeting on exploring appropriate education started: “How could somebody object to appropriate education anyway?” I interpreted the ‘appropriate education’ concept in this question as an overall concept of ‘education for all children’, regardless of the context. In terms of Vygotsky I interpret the appropriate education concept as a decontextualised concept.

None of the voices exploring appropriate education objected to the decontextualised appropriate education concept, yet each of them recontextualised the appropriate education as being for all children. Some examples of recontextualisations are:

Anne recontextualised Dijksma’s (2007a) appropriate education concept: “However, appropriate education is especially about the degree to which a school is able to educate a child; to educate specifically that child who does not fit into the school’s concept.”

Cees recontextualised appropriate education in a meeting he organised himself. “A meeting that revolves around your appropriate education stories. … I am seriously interested in your stories about appropriate education, your views and experiences”

Joan recontextualised this appropriate education core as ‘...not to lose children’, adding ‘as the result of society’s dichotomy’. She linked appropriate education for all specifically to people in deprived circumstances. Paul stated: “...appropriate education is for the sake of the child of course. Yet I qualify that it is not feasible to get all children into the same school in the neighborhood.” And: “Appropriate education is the neighborhood school for all children, except when a child profits more from a segregated setting.”

Rosemary told about organising endlessly to serve each child, “That is what appropriate education is all about.” Yet Rosemary’s text firmly recontextualises the appropriate education: “...appropriate education is for the child but has to suit me as well.”

I am aware that Joan is a construct representing my empirical analysis of the appropriate education discourse. Joan is not an existing person – none of the characters is. Nevertheless I refer to Anne, Cees, Joan, Paul and Rosemary in the perspective of my audit trail (Riesmann, 2008) or ‘transparency and traceability’ (Jansen, 2009, 83).
Anne’s recontextualised appropriate education in the adaptive skill of the school concept; Cees recontextualised appropriate education in an area of research; Joan recontextualised appropriate education in the deprived living circumstances of children; Paul recontextualised appropriate education in the extent to which a child may profit from a segregated setting; and Rosemary recontextualised appropriate education in the extent to which appropriate education suits the teacher as well.

More recontextualisations can be identified in the text of voices exploring appropriate education, for instance:

Anne recontextualised appropriate education in: ultimate responsibility of administration, time pressure, challenges, educational intentions versus budgeting interventions, from child-focused to teacher-focused, steps towards inclusive education, re-engineering the educational system, the 1917 pacification, an inescapable obligation, gratitude that administrations take the responsibility, focus of consultation on the teacher rather than on the child.

Cees recontextualised appropriate education in: the euro argument, the recontextualisation of his researcher’s role into the role of co-administrator, chairman, and husband.

Joan recontextualised appropriate education in: daily practice versus administration of his researcher’s role into the role of co-administrator, chairman, and husband.

Paul recontextualised appropriate education in: the relation between administration and teachers, willingness to stretch limits, the relation between primary school and special primary school, Dutch context, mainstream tendencies, teacher attitude, IB-ers’ attitudes, teacher positions, parents, shrinkage, ministerial Minute Waltz.

Rosemary recontextualised appropriate education in: teacher as key person and higher echelons pulling the strings, teacher demands, types of children, inspectorate and ministerial statements, appropriate as a political theme leading to bureaucracy, the implementation of appropriate education as from 2011, an infected concept due to recent top-down innovations in education, suspicion whenever something new is proposed by management and administration, the need for continue backing of IB-ers by management and administration, perseverance to implement in daily practice, an extensive list of activities in daily practice, spitting bile.

To explore the temporal intersection my final Vygotskian reflection focused on the appropriate education discourse developments as a zone of proximal development after I explored the discourse from 23 September 2008 to 15 May 2009.

Reflecting from Vygotsky’s zone of proximal development on appropriate education developments

Vygotsky (1978) posed that a child has two developmental levels. A child has the actual development level consisting of already-mastered mental functions as a result of completed developmental cycles. And a child has the zone of proximal development. That which a child can master with the aid of more experienced peers is seen as the zone of proximal development. And what the child can do with assistance might be even more indicative for his development potentials.

Fruit is the metaphor for retrospective mental development, the ‘buds’ or ‘flowers’ the metaphor for prospective mental development. Both are needed for the mental state of cognitive development. How may these metaphors enrich and deepen my exploratory process in retrospect?

Looking from Vygotsky’s perspective to the polylogue provokes the following question: what are the polylogue’s ‘buds’ or ‘flowers’?

Answering this question I might overrule the independence of the characters as advocated by Bakhtin (1984b), so I left the answers to these questions open to the participants and the readers: it is beyond the scope of my exploratory process. As argued in chapter two: My exploring voices I perceive my polylogue as an antinarrative (Boje, 2001, 2008, 2010, 2011).

Yet I might explore my polylogue further from Vygotskian’s (1978, 1986) ‘zone of proximal development’ perspective.
How did the characters assess the appropriate education development? What foreshadows (Morson, 1994) coloured their expectations? Explicitly I saw some hints in the polylogue. Take for instance: Act four, scene two. Anne, Cees, Joan, Paul and Rosemary, WALKING THROUGH THE SCHOOL.

Walking from the staff room back to Joan’s office Rosemary said that people were becoming a bit nervous as 2011 came into view; they felt threatened by the idea that the policy had to be implemented in 2011. Joann added that all schools then had to care for all children, providing each child with an educational care arrangement. Anne responded that she had heard rumours during the last board meeting that appropriate education had been postponed until 2012/2013. Cees confirmed he heard the same rumours but he did not know what might happen. Rosemary did not find this insecurity reassuring.

Another example: Act five, scene two: Cees, Joan and Paul, Joan’S OFFICE, ON THE WAY OUT. On the point of leaving Paul posited another foreshadow: the shrinkage whereby public and religious education together created appropriate education SWVs together.

Undoubtedly the polylogue contains more foreshadowy thoughts.

What happened after this appropriate education discourse with small ‘d’ according to the appropriate education Discourse with capital ‘D’ (Gee, 2005)? How did the appropriate education Discourse develop according to policy documents published after the end of the appropriate education discourse, May 2009. Which appropriate education Discourse shadows affected the appropriate education discourse development?

On 5 June 2009 the State Secretary of Education, Welfare and Science sent out a third progress report on appropriate education (Dijkenma, 2009b) with a covering letter (Dijkenma, 2009a) to the chairman of the Lower House of the Dutch Parliament.

She began the covering letter by describing the agreement with the field to phase the implementation of the appropriate education policy. The report was about quality of education, about forming regional networks, about appropriate education and Senior Secondary Vocational Training, about reinforcement of the position of staff and parents, and about tuning education and care.

On 2 November 2009 the same State Secretary of Education, Welfare and Science sent out a Reconsideration of Appropriate Education letter (Dijkenma, 2009c) to the chairman of the Lower House of the Dutch Parliament.

Youth got stuck and acquired a label both in education and in care. Waiting lists grew. Referring a child with a problem to special education was not an answer according to the State Secretary. A change of direction and attitude was needed. The child had to be the focus of attention and not the structure; the use of means had to be transparent for all stakeholders; the support had to be tailor-made; teachers had to be supported; the care obligation of boards had to be given more attention again; parents had to be supported; the focus was on existing cooperation structures within primary education and secondary education; special education had to be improved; cooperation with (youth) care had to be stimulated; the peripatetic or itinerant teaching budgets had to be redistributed; and the special education budget was frozen at the 2008 budget level, including the pupil-bound finances.

On 25 March 2010 the new Minister of Education, Welfare and Science Rouvoet (2010a) sent a letter to the chairman of the Lower House of the Dutch Parliament to confirm the controversial121 character of appropriate education. The House reacted by indicating developments in appropriate education progress could continue.

On 2 July 2010 the minister wrote in a letter that he continued the ambitious policy of his predecessor, including the financial cutbacks (Rouvoet, 2010b).

On 1 September 2010 the minister explained in a letter that he was not able to keep some of his predecessor’s promises. He wrote that this was due to delays in the implementation (Rouvoet, 2010c).


The minister confirmed the earlier problems with the 2003 Pupil-Bound Budgets namely: the system invited labelling children as needing help even if help was not needed. Increasing bureaucracy and ineffective care structure prompted emphasising further decentralisation to schools and deregulation. The Cabinet cut the appropriate education costs back to the 2005 level.

In her letter of 31 March 2011 the minister confirmed the plans to cut back the costs from 1 August 2012 (Bijsterveldt-Vliegenthart, 2011b).

The 13 April 2011 ministerial letter described the effects of the deliberations of the minister with the Lower House (Bijsterveldt-Vliegenthart, 2011c).

The Appropriate Education policy remained unchanged; however the financial consequences should be effectuated as from 2 August 2013.

121 On 21 February 2010 the Dutch Balkenende IV Cabinet fell. The Labour Party ministers left; the remaining Christian Democratic and Christian Union formed a caretaker government. The Lower House determined what policies were controversial; controversial policies could not be changed during the caretaker period. The Lower House Committee for Education, Welfare and Science decided the appropriate education policy to be controversial. Rouvoet (2010a) confirmed the controversialist status of appropriate education policy in his letter to the chairman.
On 2 November 2011 the minister sent an amendment to several educational acts to the Lower House, “In connection with revision of the organisation and budgeting of the support of children in primary education, special and secondary special education, secondary education and vocational education.” (Bijsterveld-Vliegenthart, 2011d, 1).

On 6 March 2012 the amendment was discussed while tens of thousands of primary education, special primary education, special education and secondary education teachers protested against the appropriate education cuts in the Ajax Arena in Amsterdam. The minister announced that the protest did not and would not affect her plans. She argued that good education could still be offered in spite of the financial cuts. The majority of the Lower House agreed with the Minister, the bill was introduced in the Upper House. Yet the planned cuts would not be effectuated, as a result of an agreement between five Dutch political parties122 after the fall of the Rutte Cabinet, on 29 April 2012.

Here my appropriate education Discourse oversight ended. I concluded that the taste of the appropriate education Discourse ‘fruit’ (Vygotsky, 1978) happened to be seriously affected by financial cuts of three hundred million euros from 1 August 2013. Taking Vygotsky’s ‘zone of proximal development’ as an external reflection point (Procee, 2006; Procee & Visscher-Voerman, 2004): to cut back the budget became the dominant ‘zone of proximal development’ of the appropriate education Discourse. Did this 2011 Discourse fruit match the 2009 discourse ‘buds’ or ‘flower’?

Reflecting on this question I realised that the policy papers have emerged as new plateaux (Lefebvre & Letiche, 1999) above the complexity of the implementation of appropriate education in daily practice, above the practitioners’ discourse on appropriate education in daily practice. So matching ‘the next zone of appropriate education Discourse development’ with ‘the proximal zone of appropriate education discourse development’ from the perspective of the former perspective, neglected the power of storytelling (Luhman & Boje, 2001) of people involved in the implementation of the appropriate education policy.

My ethics revolved in my head. What I should do is ask participants to collaborate again because my interpretation of ‘the proximal zone of appropriate education Discourse development’ threatened to overrule ‘the proximal zone of appropriate education discourse development’. I realised I had put my interpretation of the zone of proximal interpretation in front instead of positioning and confronting the different practitioners’ voices. I should restore the presentness (Morson, 1994123) of the appropriate education discourse by re-exploring voices exploring appropriate education, recontextualise the discourse in the present. As a result I could recreate the same characters again to emplot (Boje, 2001) all information to do justice to the variety within and between voices I heard, recorded and transcribed. Symbolically I hear my characters knocking on my office door, begging to construct new acts to perform again. I defer to this moving request. I am aware that my exploration of the appropriate education discourse was

“a tiny part of the Ocean of the Streams of Story, a handful of the thousand thousand thousand and one tales.” (Tufte, 1997, 121).

It was an exploration of a tiny part of an appropriate education discourse in the complex context of daily practice. The complexity was the reason why I redesigned my Tufte-based image of my exploration.


My 2011 image positioning my exploring process.

Inspired by “A tiny part of the Ocean of the Streams of Story” (Tufte, 1997, 121).

I made an unavoidable choice (Boje & Rosile, 2001) to limit my exploration of the appropriate education discourse to the period between 23 September 2008 and 15 May 2009. That is what my thesis is about, and where my explored appropriate education discourse ended.

123 Morson, 1994, 6.7: “By restoring the presentness of the past and cultivating a sense that something else might have happened, sideshowing restores some of the presentness that has been lost. It alters the way we think about earlier events and the narrative models to describe them.”

I interpret ‘presentness’ here as to collect information about the practitioners’ appropriate education again, analyse them again and put identities and positions in conflict and conversation again (Holman Jones, 2005).
Chapter 5

Reflecting on Pirandello’s (1998) play, I concluded that if my symbolic characters wanted to play other acts, they would have to look for another author.

I smile. I hope another author stands up to explore voices exploring appropriate education in daily practice. And I smile wistfully when I realise that when the characters I created don’t find another author and I die, they still stay alive as the symbolic characters they are now, although the readers will recontextualize them time and again. Internal stratification and heteroglossia, the infinity of story and the antinarrative, all pop up in my mind. I smile once more because linking these concepts my train of thoughts start to run again. Then I realize I have to stop: full stop.

Bibliography


Wikipedia. See: http://nl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hoofdpagina

Discography


In deze Nederlandse uiteenzetting volg ik mijn Engelse INTRODUCTION.

**Introductie**

Passend onderwijs is politiek beleid in Nederland dat erop is gericht om alle kinderen een passend onderwijsprogramma te bieden in hun eigen locale of regionale omgeving (Keesenberg, 2008). De onderzoeker die deze thesis schreef was vrijwillig bestuurder als een klein onderdeel van al zijn pedagogische activiteiten. Het vermakkelijkte de toegang tot het veld dat hij verkende.

De onderzoeker dacht oorspronkelijk het Passend Onderwijs fenomeen te bestuderen. Hij bleek echter de passend onderwijs discours in de dagelijkse praktijk te verkennen. De onderzoeker woonde vergaderingen bij over passend onderwijs en interviewde praktijkmensen die betrokken waren bij de invoering van het passend onderwijs beleid. Hij raakte gebiologeerd hoe recht te doen aan de verscheidenheid binnen en tussen de stemmen die hij hoorde, opnam en transcribeerde. Tijdens zijn verkenningsproces verschenen twee sporen die hij volgde.


Het andere spoor was het deconstrueren van de woordelijke transcripten van de interviews en andere documenten die hij had verzameld. De onderzoeker ontwikkelde een deconstructieve methode als een middel om te zoeken naar ‘Boje-aanse’ verhalen in de woordelijke transcripten; verhalen verteeld zonder een geëigend plot of toegevoegde coherentie die in retrospectief al dan niet zinvol kunnen zijn (Boje, 2001). Geïnspireerd door Bakhtin (1981, 1984b) besloot de onderzoeker een dialoog te schrijven. De onderzoeker werd vooral uitgedaagd om macht te geven aan de stemmen van de karakters die hij op het punt stond te creëren.

Terwijl hij het verkenningsproces vervolgde, besloot de onderzoeker om de twee sporen samen te laten vloeien door uit de Boje-aanse verhalen die hij had gevonden een polyloog van mensen uit de praktijk te construeren124. De onderzoeker voorzag de verhalen van tijdelijke plots (Boje, 2001) als een manier om die polyloog te construeren. Vervolgens creëerde de onderzoeker vijf karakters om de polyloog in de vorm van een passend onderwijs bijeenkomst uit te voeren.

De onderzoeker schreef een scenario voorbij de narratieve gevangenis van strategie en eenheid van samenhang (Boje, 2008). Deze anti-narratieve benadering voorkwam een plot door de auteur waardoor de polyloog het vehikel van zijn monoloog zou worden (Bakhtin, 1984b).


Aan het eind van zijn verkenningsproces reflecteerde de onderzoeker, hierbij nam hij Vygotsky als een extern reflectiepunt (Procee, 2006). De onderzoeker reflecteerde op zijn onderzoeker’s rol, op de stemmen die passend onderwijs verkenden en op de zone van naaste ontwikkeling van het passend onderwijs.

De onderzoeker ben ik. Deze introductie vertelt over mijn verkenningsproces naar stemmen die passend onderwijs verkennen. Mijn thesis streeft ernaar lezers in staat te stellen gedachten en ideeën van de vijf karakters te volgen die betrokken zijn bij de implementatie van passend onderwijs in Nederland, daarmee op antinarratieve wijze de passend onderwijs discours van de praktijkmensen representerend. De antinarratieve constructie van mijn polyloog is het plot van mijn thesis, de constructie van een antinarratieve passend onderwijs polyloog is mijn representatie van de diversiteit die ik verkende in het passend onderwijs discours.

In de terminologie van Watzlawick, Beavin & Jacksos (2011/1967) communicere ik mijn thesis op twee niveaus. Het eerste niveau is op inhoud, wat de plotloze polyloog 124 Een dialoog kan door meerdere mensen gevoerd worden (Kessels, Boers & Mostert, 2002). Om de deelname van meerdere personen te benadrukken noemde de onderzoeker zijn dialoog polyloog.
is zoals omvat in hoofdstuk vier: *Stemmen verkennen passend onderwijs*. Het tweede niveau is het betrekkingsevenwel dat bestaat uit verschillende relationele lagen. De eerste relationele laag is het argument plotloos te schrijven om recht te doen aan de vekiel van mijn monoloog zou worden. Dit argument is onderbouwd in hoofdstuk twee: *Mijn verkennde stemmen*. De tweede relationele laag is deelringing afgelopen aan de academische gemeenschap en de lezer door mijn verkenningsproces te beschrijven in termen van gebeurtenissen, overwegingen en besluiten. Ik doe dit in de hoofdstukken twee, drie en vijf, respectievelijk: *Mijn verkennde stemmen, Verkennen van stemmen die passend onderwijs verkennen, en Nastemmen*. *Mijn* of meer schreef ik hoofdstuk één: *Passend onderwijs* ook op betrekkingsevel, dat wil zeggen: als een middel om passend onderwijs en haar discours te introduceren voor lezers die geen kennis op dit gebied hebben.

**Introductie van de hoofdstukken**

De thesis *‘Verkennen van stemmen die passend onderwijs verkennen’* beschrijft een verkenningsproces naar de passend onderwijs discours van mensen uit de praktijk.

Hoofdstuk één: *Passend onderwijs* gaat over het Nederlandse onderwijsbeleid dat ‘Passend onderwijs’ wordt genoemd. Het hoofdstuk positioneert het passend onderwijs binnen nationale en internationale onderwijskundige en ethische Discoursen met een hoofdletter ‘D’ en discoursen met een kleine letter ‘d’ (Gee, 2005). De plot van mijn thesis is mijn wezenlijke rechtvaardiging om een plotloze polyloog te schrijven als een middel om recht te doen aan de diversiteit binnen en tussen stemmen die ik hoorde praten over passend onderwijs in de dagelijkse praktijk.

Hoofdstuk drie: *Verkennen van stemmen die passend onderwijs verkennen* beschrijft mijn methodologische stappen richting het construeren van de polyloog en het schrijven van haar tekst. Het gaat over het proces van het verzamelen van informatie: over het reconstructieve proces van de verzamelde informatie in verhalen om de polyloog te voeden; over het tijdelijk formuleren van plots (Boje, 1981) om het aantal verhalen en daarmee fragmentatie van plots en hun onderbouwende verhalen te kunnen bevatten; over het creëren van vijf karakters: over het construeren, uitvoeren en opnemen of een scenario; en over het proces van schrijven en bijschaven van een polyloog tekst en het weven van een toneelstuk.

Hoofdstuk vier: *Stemmen verkennen passend onderwijs* bevat de polyloog beschreven als een toneelstuk. De karakters zijn: Anne, bestuurder van een regionaal onderwijsbureau; Cees, voorzitter van een onderwijsvereniging, secretaris van samenwerkingsverbanden en onderzoeker; Joan, ambulant begeleider van een school voor speciaal basisonderwijs en een stedelijke achterstandwijk; Paul, directeur van een school voor speciaal basisonderwijs op het platteland; Rob, een conciërge; en een toegevoegd karakter Rozemarijn, leekkracht aan een school voor basisonderwijs op het platteland. Een legera is toegevoegd voor de Nederlandse vaktal en afkortingen die praktkijkmensen gebruiken en die ik besloot onvertaald te laten in de Engelse polyloog om het Nederlandse karakter van het passend onderwijsbeleid en haar discours te benadrukken.

Appendices

Appendix I: Analysis scheme per person

Appendix II: Internal connections amongst the interviewees

Appendix III: Paths of interviews

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### Appendix I: Analysis scheme per person

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125 Tufte (2006b) argued that a scheme may suggest a complex yet unexplained vision. From this perspective my scheme or form with columns, rows, rules and content might suggest a complex yet unexplained vision. This suggestion does not match my intention. I used this scheme to tackle my inability to deconstruct texts without a tool. My deconstructive process aimed at finding stories, neither the stories nor an exhaustive list of stories. Pretending that I could to be able to find the stories did and still does not match my perception of the complexity and therefore unpredictability and incomprehensibility of daily life (Cilliers, 1998). Pretending that Fairclough offers the way to deconstruct texts is not what I intended. It was my way.
Appendix II: Internal contacts amongst the interviewees

Restricting the names to the individual interviews the internal network looks like this:

Some of the networks are professional, some personal, some both. When it comes to the interviews there was no consultation between interviewees other than sometimes paving my path to a subsequent interviewee.

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Appendix III: Paths of interviews

The arrows depict the casual path of the first contacts with the people I interviewed. The colours add specific information about the context contacts of the people I contacted directly. The dotted lines indicate by whom Marola or her school was referred. I did not arrow my contact with Marola since she is my wife; if arrowed it should be headed at both sides. Marola is the name of my wife. All other names are names of my family and family-in-law: my mother, brothers, sisters, nephews and nieces. Except for Marola they do not contribute to this path of conversation other than borrowing their names as my way to depict an overview of all the information I collected.
Full colour photos and images


c2 - p54  My son Tom’s sculpture with the theme ‘Party’.
The significant differing sculptures of Tom (r) and me (l).

My sculpture with the theme 'My research'.
Cees Grol (1952) lives with his wife Marola in both the inner city of Groningen and in their cottage in Termunten, alternating complexity and some necessary slowness.

Cees is a tried and tested education man. He taught at primary, special primary and tertiary level. He worked in the Netherlands and Botswana, both paid and voluntarily. He studied and finished his studies successfully at: the Governmental Elementary Teacher Training College in Appingedam (1978); the Special Education Teacher Training College in Utrecht / Groningen (1984); the Higher Cadre Education Course at the Northern Polytechnics Leeuwarden (1992); and the MA Education Course at the University of Greenwich (2003).

Last but not least Cees has been involved in some European Union educational projects.

His actual working environment is the Institution for Ecological Pedagogy of the Utrecht University of Applied Sciences. The Institution offers three courses: part-time master pedagogy, part-time bachelor pedagogy and fulltime bachelor pedagogy. The innovative character of the courses consists of two layers: the ecological perspective on pedagogy and the real-life approach towards teaching and learning. Both layers appeal to and are in line with his educational ideals. Cees is involved mainly in the part-time master's course, coaching students and co-developing the pedagogical landscape and real-life didactics.

Cees' research heart lies in the complexity of daily practice; his research interest is inspired and challenged by the story approach beyond the narrative turn.

Cees and Marola have five sons, three daughters-in-law and two grandchildren; their extended family comprises four generations.
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