

Exploring dialogic approaches in teaching and learning:

A study in a rural Kenyan community

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Abstract

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In Kenya, there is a need to investigate the pedagogies that are currently applied to primary schools. This is important, because educators and researchers question the predominant use of teacher-centred pedagogies in Kenyan schools. Although pedagogical reforms have been slow in Kenya, the current government has stressed the importance of developing an education system that meets the needs of the students, a system that is also globally competitive. The use of dialogic pedagogies in classroom learning has been seen as valuable since students can actively engage (Mercer, 2008) and can question issues that relate to them (Freire, 1993; Ladson-Billings, 1994). These engagements have the potential to prepare students better for their lives outside of school.

This study is a mixture of methods under an ethnographic approach, through which I have aimed to obtain Kenyan teachers' insider interpretations of their setting and practice. As Tabulawa suggests (2013), insiders' voices and engagement are critical to the progress of pedagogical development in Africa. Therefore, I have explored with Kenyan teachers the current pedagogies of teaching and learning. I used four pedagogical spaces as lenses to help to determine how dialogic pedagogies can be applicable. The four pedagogic 'spaces' in the study are: interaction spaces, physical spaces, cultural spaces, and policy spaces. Two rural schools in Central Kenya were involved in data collection, plus a local community church.

The study revealed teachers' everyday practices and provided information on key areas that would help pedagogical development. Additionally, the study indicated the need for pedagogical reforms that value the local context, meet Kenyan students' needs and engage teachers in the process. A comprehensive scrutiny of the findings led to the recommendation of the 'Harambee' approach, which suggests how dialogic pedagogies could be employed in the Kenyan education.

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Abbreviations

ACPF	Africa Child Policy Forum
BAICE	British Association for International and Comparative Education
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
DCSF	Department of Children, Schools and Family
D.P	Dialogic Pedagogies
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
FPE	Free Primary Education
KCPE	Kenya Certificate of Primary Education
KCSE	Kenya Certificate of Secondary Education
KUPPET	Kenya Union of Post Primary Education Teachers
KNUT	Kenyan National Union for Teachers
KNEC	Kenyan National Examination Board
KICD	Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development
ICCE	International Conference on Critical Education
IRF	Initiation, Response, Feedback Method
IT	Information Technology
IMF	International Monetary Fund
NGO's	Non-Governmental Organisations
SERA	Scottish Education Research Association
TSC	Teachers' Service Commission
OAU	Organisation of African Union
UK	United Kingdom
UNCRC	United Nations Children Rights Convention
UNESCO	United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation
WTO	World Trade Organisation
WHO	World Health Organisation
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development

Chapter 1. Introduction and background to this study

1.1 Purpose of the study

This study joins other research to seek social justice for African children and to promote emancipatory classroom practice. At a global level, classroom practices have progressed and new pedagogies, such as dialogic forms, have been reported to promote better teacher and student engagement (Mercer, 2008). These equip students with cognitive, social and practical skills, according to Mercer (2008). These skills benefit students both in their learning and in their daily lives.

In Kenya, researchers (Ackers and Hardman, 2012; Uwezo, 2012; Njoya, 2017) have reported that students' learning is predominantly still teacher-centred, with minimal change in pedagogical practice. This limits students' active engagement in their learning, which can then inhibit building their life skills for social participation in their world. As a result, this study explores dialogic pedagogies in rural Kenyan communities.

1.1.1 Aim of the study

The main aim of this study was to explore dialogic pedagogies with teachers in Kenya.

1.1.2 Study objectives

- a. To explore current methods of teaching in two rural schools in Kenya.
- b. To engage with teachers in discussions to obtain their perspectives on pedagogical practices.
- c. To articulate pedagogic development for schools in Kenya that could work towards less oppressive practice.

1.2 Introduction

As Nelson Mandela (1994) famously stated, 'Education is the most powerful weapon one can use to change the world', and the starting point of this study was an acceptance that education is a key influence on the progress of individuals and societies (Freire, 1970; Said, 1994; Bunyi, 1999; Harber, 2002). Nyerere suggested that education increases individuals' mental and physical freedom to change their lives and their environments (Kassam, 1995;

Ibbott, 2014; Schweisfurth, 2014), and it was against this backdrop of values and beliefs that this study on pedagogical choices was planned and undertaken.

Since Kenyan Independence in 1963, there have been several changes to the education system in Kenya but possibly fewer to its pedagogical practices. At the time of the study, the Government of Kenya was devoted to improving education standards but then, again without exploring classroom pedagogical development, its goals were restricted. Consequently, the objectives of this study were to explore the current situation in a single rural community, drawing upon the experiences, practices and perspectives of teachers in two schools. This would help to frame sustainable practices that would benefit all students.

People in Kenya in pre-colonial times used informal ways of learning, traditionally, and some of these practices are still visible in their daily lives but less so in their formal learning. I argue that perhaps some of these social-cultural experiences could be accommodated in learning through dialogic pedagogies within the education system. This could contextualise the learning for students' through engaging with their immediate life, which would include their school experience and home and community encounters. Initially, formal education was alien to Africans, since missionaries and colonialists introduced it and it predominantly captured Western lifestyles and values (Thiong'o, 1986; Maathai, 2009; Adeyemi and Adenyika, 2002; Njoya, 2017). As Nyerere (Kassam, 1995; Ibbott, 2014) proposes, contextualising learning helps students to solve their immediate needs. Therefore, the incorporation of African values and practices into learning might engage students better.

Opportunities to use dialogic pedagogies are everywhere in daily life. They are present in the Kenyan context despite the tradition of monologic teaching and school curricula not accommodating dialogue. In this study, I used four pedagogical spaces as lenses to assist me in exploring the application of dialogic approaches in Kenya (Figure 1-1). These pedagogical spaces are those opportunities for dialogic pedagogy to emerge, and they sometimes control the pedagogic choice. The first is interaction space, which involves the character of the dialogue used when teachers and students engage in exploratory talk. In interaction space, students and teachers convey knowledge from their life experiences. Second is physical space, which includes the quality of infrastructure and resources that enable or hinder the application of dialogic approaches in learning. Third is cultural space, which shapes the experiences, views and values of teachers, students, parents and society. Fourth is policy

space, which consists of education policies steered by Kenyan law, the government agenda, context needs and global organisations' actions.

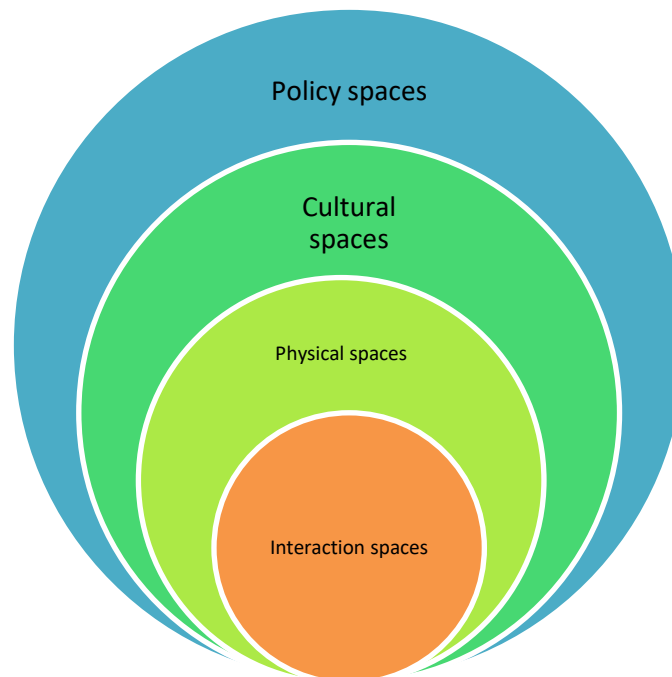


Figure 1-1 Pedagogical spaces

From the study, it became apparent that classroom practice was influenced by all the above features (Figure 1-1) within these diverse spaces; from classroom interaction to the wider policies of the Ministry of Education, the Government of Kenya and global organisations. These spaces acted as platforms for dialogue. Additionally, they could be used to influence and support the incorporation of dialogue into classroom practice. To demonstrate how these spaces interrelate, I use the 'onion' metaphor. Just like an onion, which has many layers in its makeup, these spaces are interconnected and all impact on classroom practices in various ways. These spaces were analysed in themes from the fieldwork. I showed how they could apply exploratory dialogues to inspire reforms in teaching and learning.

Throughout the literature search, I focused on three key areas that were relevant, and these theoretically informed my work. The first is cultural and critical learning, based on the work of Freire and Macedo (1993) and Nyerere (Ibbott, 2014). The second is constructivist theory, whereby I examined the perspectives of Piaget and Vygotsky (Garton, 2004). Thirdly, I critically looked at how dialogic pedagogies have developed over time and their benefits to teaching and learning (Alexander, 2008; Mercer, 2008). Thereafter, I considered how to reconceptualise pedagogic development in Kenya.

The schools selected for my research were typical rural, government-funded schools, similar to the majority of primary schools in Kenya. The perspectives of teachers helped to determine the kind of pedagogies warranted by the context. This was a mixture of methods or an ethnographic framework, and I aimed to obtain the insiders' understanding of their setting and practice. As Tabulawa suggests (2013), insiders' voices and engagement are crucial to the progress of pedagogical development in Africa. Subsequently, instead of taking the commonly applied top-down method employed by local and global agencies, in this study I used a bottom-up approach through listening to the teachers and observing Kenyan children in their context.

Thus, the main knowledge contributions are the illumination of the reality of Kenyan students' learning experiences and the exploration of pedagogic spaces within the Kenyan education system that will help to advance pedagogical practices. Moreover, this study provides teachers' perspectives on their practice, which previous research has overlooked. This study assists in the emancipation of Kenya's silenced groups, who in this study are teachers.

In the study, I use the term formal learning to describe the structured teaching and learning that take place in the classroom, structured by the curriculum. In contrast, I describe the learning that takes place in the community and at home as informal. Traditional education in this study refers to African styles of learning, which have no designated areas for learning such as schools or classrooms. Thus, learning was conducted through modelling and active involvement in activities with peers or adults in the home or in the community.

When I use the term dialogic pedagogies in this study, I mean the use of exploratory talk when investigating knowledge where students and teachers can engage in innovative ways. Dialogic pedagogy is not taken as the end-state for this study. Rather, it is an idea of developing practice towards goals that could be characterised as developing students' agency by specifically fostering a deeper level of interaction in the lessons (Mercer, 2000). I perceive dialogic pedagogy as a practice that is constantly taking shape. I use the term 'old pedagogical method' to mean teacher-centred methods, especially lecture methods (monologic) or initiation–response–feedback (IRF), whereby teachers direct the students, who engage passively in their learning.

My aim was that through this research I would provide a genuine account of existing pedagogical practice while revealing something more about the spaces that shape dialogic

learning in schools. Possibly some of these lessons could also be beneficial to other education systems across the African continent and abroad.

1.3 My journey towards this pedagogical study

It is important for me to explain my journey and personal interest in pedagogical reforms. I grew up in the Central region of Kenya, where I studied in government-sponsored primary and secondary schools. I further attended a national polytechnic in Mombasa, Kenya, where I attained a national diploma in food technology. Thereafter, I moved to the United Kingdom for my higher learning. Over the years since my childhood, I have become acquainted with many Kenyan education practitioners, ranging from primary school level up to tertiary level. For, example, my mother taught in Kenyan primary schools for over thirty years, while my father trained primary schoolteachers for many years. My younger brother taught for several years in a Kenyan secondary school. Additionally, most of my extended family members have worked in Kenyan education, religious and political institutions, where they have contributed to the advancement of these systems. Their input ranges from the local to the national level. All the above circumstances have given me considerable awareness of Kenyan institutions, in addition to a rich social and cultural understanding of the context. The insights have been significantly valuable to this study.

During my studies abroad at the Open University (UK), I participated for the first time in dialogic learning as a student. This was challenging initially, since I was not used to actively engaging in formal learning. I found it hard to think aloud as I engaged in discussions without first being sure of the accuracy of my ideas. Then, over time, I started seeing the benefits of using the pedagogy, such as the improvements in my critical thinking and social confidence, which led to my commitment to the benefits of this pedagogical approach. Consequently, I prepared a research proposal during my Masters studies, and I later proceeded to undertake this PhD research.

My experiences in the United Kingdom have given me an outsider's outlook, which has enhanced my perspective. As a result, I considered how the application of dialogic pedagogies in Kenyan institutions could both advance students' academic learning and meet other needs in their lives. My point of view is that the dialogic approach can become holistically valuable for Kenyan students, their teachers and society. If their classroom practice can move away from teacher-centred pedagogies to learner-centred, then the students and teachers can actively engage. Nevertheless, bearing in mind that the last time I

was in a Kenyan classroom was more than twenty years prior to this study's data collection, I was curious to first establish if there were any progressive changes apparent in the pedagogic practice.

As a lecturer in London, I have aimed to apply dialogic pedagogies in my teaching work. Consequently, I have witnessed its benefits when my students contribute actively during the learning process. They seem to comprehend concepts better when they can relate classroom knowledge to their outside lives. They also seem to enjoy interactive engagement. Nonetheless, I have at times struggled to maintain dialogue in some lessons. For example, sometimes the discussion topics get out of hand and become political, which can create tensions. At other times, some students can become unruly and start discussing unrelated issues, because they perceive dialogue to be informal. However, with experience, I have improved my technique, and I continue to apply the pedagogy in my teaching. Overall, I have seen the benefits and challenges of dialogic application, both as a teacher and as a student, which is insightful for this research.

Looking back at my own childhood, it was active and happy. My family, like many other middle-class families, met all my needs and I was surrounded by friends and family. With my friends, I engaged regularly in many happy activities with children of the same age. Especially during weekends and holiday times we would help our parents at home by picking coffee and feeding the animals. On Sundays, we would go to Sunday school, where we took part in singing, reciting memory verses and acting in concerts, among other activities. We engaged in other community events and activities, such as weddings and engagement parties, where we would eat, play and sing alongside adults and our peers.

Today in Africa, there are many young children having the kind of vibrant childhood that I remember. Unfortunately, a written account of such experiences is absent from discussions of African children (Cohen, 1994; Harber, 2002). Most seem to focus on children with AIDS, child soldiers among others, despite there being many happy African children. For this study, I started by demonstrating the reality and complexity of these childhoods by projecting students' phenomena in Kenya. I also discussed how dialogue can enable engagement for these students, both at local and at global levels, and how their cultural practices and values could be included in learning for education to meet the needs of students.

My overall argument was that all students (including Kenyans) deserve an education that goes beyond repeating knowledge to help them intelligently to push past exam success. This

kind of education equips students with skills that are useful in their classroom learning, in their personal lives and in social participation. In their personal lives, they attain confidence and skills that will enhance their creativity and ability to problem-solve. Their social participation competence will be applicable to diverse areas such as economics, politics or other social structures in their local and global institutions. Applying dialogic pedagogies will allow students to use their imagination, creativity and collaborative skills, which would eventually prepare them for the above participation. As students advance their personal and social skills, they will be empowered to problem-solve issues in their lives and society. This study could start a progressive trajectory for students in Kenya and possibly for their society. At the same time, I am confident that there are lessons that other settings in Africa and even here in the United Kingdom could learn from the study, since they have some similarities with the Kenyan context.

1.4 The rationale behind Kenyan pedagogical development

In Kenya, the pedagogical progress has been slow to change and there is an urgent need to explore the pedagogies currently applied in primary schools (Ackers and Hardman, 2012; Uwezo, 2012; Njoya, 2017). This is important, because educators and researchers have questioned the predominant use of teacher-centred pedagogies in Kenyan schools. They have advocated a review of the education system to aid progress (Ackers and Hardman, 2012; Benoit, 2013). However, the government at the time of the study stressed the importance of developing an education system to meet the needs of the students through a system that was also globally competitive (Republic of Kenya, 2008; Matiang'i, 2017). My study was timely, since it helped to illuminate pedagogical practice in classrooms in Kenya and identify the areas that needed reform. The study's objectives were aligned to the government's education goals for providing quality education to all students.

Taking a quick glimpse at developed countries, there are modern pedagogies such as dialogic teaching that have been advocated to improve classroom engagement and students' learning (Alexander, 2008; Mercer and Littleton, 2007; Mercer and Dawes, 2014). According to researchers such as Alexander (2008) and Mercer (2008), the use of dialogic pedagogies through active interaction between pupils and their teachers promotes peer cooperation in the classroom and improves students' learning and social skills. If these modern pedagogies (like dialogic teaching and child-initiated learning) have been shown to improve classroom learning in the developed world, perhaps some of their features could be adopted in Kenya, with contextual consideration.

Truly, if all children matter and have right to an education, as agreed by the signatories of the United Nations Convention on Rights of Children (UNCRC, 1989) and of the African Charter (1990), then all students should have opportunities to learn in innovative ways. They should engage dynamically in their classrooms in ways that meet their needs, as well as explore their potential fully (Robinson, 2001). However, without the application of learner-centred pedagogies to enable more classroom interaction and student participation, subsequent learning may be deemed to be ineffective. This is especially notable in authoritarian settings that apply monologic pedagogies, where teachers dictate the knowledge while students passively memorise it. In these settings, in exploring their imagination, creativity and collaborative skills, students are limited. Unfortunately, most education systems in many countries in Africa still use these old practices, and the changes remain restricted (Bunyi et al., 2011; Ackers and Hardman, 2012; Abd-Kadir and Hardman, 2013).

Some of the restraints on pedagogical change are a result of social-cultural tensions, therefore during pedagogical reform there is a need for contextualisation. Previously, pedagogical research in Africa has been conducted predominantly by ‘outsiders’, for example donor agencies and foreign researchers (like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank), who later make recommendations to the governments. Some of these ‘outsiders’ have also tried to implement progressive pedagogies in specific African schools (Guthrie, 2011; Tabulawa, 2013; Harber, 2014). These implementations, as Tabulawa (2013) notes, have not been successful and at times have been received with suspicion due to historical and cultural tensions. Identifying these barriers, among others, is vital, as they impede the adoption of new pedagogies. Consequently, working with people in this context to identify the kind of pedagogies that they want to promote can help to overcome these barriers.

As a result, this thesis has explored the current pedagogies of teaching and learning in Kenyan classrooms, scrutinising the spaces for dialogic practice. In addition, it has evaluated how these dialogic practices may be effectively applied.

1.5 Kenyan education from pre-colonial time to present

In this section, I explore the trajectory of education in Kenya, from traditional times to the present day. This lays out the background of Kenya education. In pre-colonial times, African communities traditionally learned through informal methods. Some are still applicable to

today's social contexts, such as the home and the community. Unfortunately, their adoption in schools is still missing, even though they would be valuable in formal learning. Formal education was introduced by the missionaries and the colonial government. Since Kenyan Independence in 1963, the government has taken responsibility for formal education. Still, despite several changes in practice, there are gaps in the pedagogical practice that need investigating. Spaces for interaction can benefit education through the use of dialogic approach on existing platforms to advance teaching and learning.

Before colonisation, Africans traditionally used informal education practices. The situation was similar across most parts of the world, where only some children, generally boys of wealthy families, were educated in schools. Most children were not educated and became mothers, fishers or farmers, and learned through guided participation (Rogoff, 2003) within their families and communities. The elders passed on their knowledge and skills from generation to generation. Subsequently, their traditions, wisdom and culture were informally taught through modelling, observation and apprenticeship (Kenyatta, 1965; Adeyemi and Adeyinka, 2003).

Africa is a huge continent with very many tribal cultures. Across these cultures, each community has its own language, economic and social values and beliefs. However, despite the diversity there are several similarities, including how most communities passed on their knowledge down the generations. There were no specific people with designated roles of teaching assigned to them, since all adults assumed the role of educating the young ones (Kenyatta, 1965). Boys were trained by the men in the community to take on the role of fathers as providers and protectors, while girls were prepared by the women for the roles of mothers and wives. There were no designated institutes referred to as 'schools', as education took place anytime and anywhere (Adeyemi and Adeyinka, 2003). Kenyatta (1965) claims that in Kenya the homesteads served as schools. Adeyemi and Adenyika (2003), too, recognise that homesteads, marketplaces and community areas were learning environments in African countries similar to Kenya.

In the traditional (pre-colonial) African model of education, individuals were trained in survival skills, such as how to stay safe, take care of the family through hunting and look after cattle, and how to fish and grow food. This informal education also passed on the cultural values of the society, which gave a collective identity to the community; for example the value of good morals, sex education, taboos within the community and gender roles

(Nwomonoh, 1998). These types of knowledge were passed on through narrative, whereby stories, proverbs and philosophies were handed down through the generations. A good example is the story about the origin of the Gikuyu community in Kenya, which is the largest community (Kenyatta, 1965). The story recounts how Mogai (God) gave Gikuyu (the only man in the land) a beautiful wife called Mumbi. They had nine daughters, but no sons. Then, one day, Gikuyu offered animal sacrifices to Mogai (God) while facing the Kirinyaga Mountain (Mount Kenya). As a result, God presented him with nine young men to marry his daughters. The new families produced many children and, since then, they have continued to increase. The nine daughters' names have been used over the centuries to signify the nine clans in the Gikuyu community. Those who follow the traditional practices always face Mount Kenya while praying to Mogai (God). Indeed, the Gikuyu people today identify themselves as 'Nyumba ya Mumbi' (the Mumbi community). This story has been told over the years to educate this community about their identity, their values and their religious beliefs (Kenyatta, 1965; Were and Wilson, 1968).

Additionally, Africans traditionally practised enhanced group work via peer-group team learning through imitation and practice. These methods of learning were collaborative, involved dialogue and promoted creativity and inquiry. When the tasks were completed, the parents helped youngsters to reflect on their experience and gave support and guidance, where needed. The individual child's skilfulness was defined by their ability to reason and work with those of the same age and gender. Hence, the African traditional culture of learning could be described as having elements of dialogic learning through the active use of collaborative group work and language in their narratives and discussions. Subsequently, Kenyan communities traditionally applied most of these informal teaching skills to educate their young people through engaging and modelling (Kenyatta, 1965; Were and Wilson, 1968; Mazrui, 1986; Njoya, 2017). In these informal learning 'spaces', dialogue was used. In this study, then, I am interested in rediscovering some of these characteristics and finding out to what extent, and in what way or form, they may be present in today's practices in both formal and informal contexts.

In the early twentieth century, formal education in Kenya, as in many African countries, was introduced by missionaries with the aim of empowering the natives to read the Bible independently as a means of spreading Christianity. In time, the colonial government became interested in the provision of education but with a different aim: to provide the natives with basic skills to provide cheap labour. This formal education disregarded the existence of

informal African education and the values of the native societies, as described by Njoya (2017). The new form of education was foreign to Africans and disillusioned them, as they were made to feel that their traditional systems were not good enough, hence they needed to adopt Western education (Kenyatta, 1965; Adeyemi and Adenyika, 2003). In Kenya, the British Government drew on this formalised education system in 1909 when the Frazer commission recommended a three-tier system with racially segregated schools, separating Europeans, Asians and Africans. Each group had its own schools and studied different subjects. The perception that Africans were intellectually inferior led them to access just the basic '3Rs' - reading, writing and arithmetic (Republic of Kenya, 1964).

Soon after Independence, the Ominde Commission was formed in 1964 to harmonise the education system, but there was little focus on pedagogical review. The formation of the 7-4-2-3 system saw individuals undertaking seven years of primary education, four years of secondary education (O-levels), two years of high school education (A-levels) and three years of university. Over time, the system was criticised for lacking the capacity and flexibility to respond to the changing aspirations of individual Kenyans and failing to meet labour market needs in terms of new skills, new technologies and attitude to work. This led to the formation of another commission, the Mackay Commission, in 1981 (cited in Wanjohi, 2011). This recommended the 8-4-4 system of education: eight years in primary, four years in secondary and four more of university education. The policy emanated from the assumption that it would equip pupils with employability skills, thereby enabling school dropouts at all levels to be either self-employed or find secure employment in the informal sector. Due to the increase in the number of subjects to accommodate vocational subjects, the system of education was later criticised for overloading the curriculum, which burdened the pupils, leaving them with no time to play or undertake co-curricular activities (Amutabi, 2003). The increase in examinable subjects under the 8-4-4 system of education was compounded by the introduction of free primary education in 2001, which resulted in high teacher: student ratios. In addition, there was pressure from school inspectors on teachers to raise education standards. This resulted in teachers exerting considerable pressure on pupils in an attempt to raise their school's performance, which was measured by the number of candidates qualifying to join secondary schools, determined by a set mean score. This resulted in the subjection of pupils to an exam-oriented curriculum.

Since Kenya's Independence, there have been more than 10 commissions to examine the education system: for example the Ominde Commission (1964), the Mackay Commission

(1981) and Uwezo Assessments (2012) (all cited by Wanjohi, 2011). None of these reviews have focused on improving pedagogies or teacher training. The system of education in Kenya was reported to use predominantly monologic pedagogy, an old method of teaching where the teacher gives information to students (Ackers and Hardman, 2012; Benoitte, 2013). Teachers adopt the role of an authoritative figure and students assimilate what is taught to them for learning to take place (Lyle, 2008). The teacher appears to dictate and direct the teaching outcomes. At times, the teacher asks questions. Once answered correctly, a positive learning outcome is alleged to have been achieved (Lyle, 2008). Teachers also use IRF to check the pedagogic effectiveness and students' understanding (Lyle, 2008). The talk during the learning is minimal and mostly initiated by the teacher (Benoitte, 2013; Ackers and Hardman, 2012).

While developed countries, including the United States of America, Britain and Australia, have made efforts to advance the quality of teaching and learning associated with the use of progressive pedagogies (Manolli and Staarman, 2011), perhaps there have been fewer achievements in developing countries such as Kenya.

Since 2001, the Kenyan government has offered free primary education for all and aims to make secondary education accessible to all (Republic of Kenya, 2015). Most primary schools are either state schools, private academies or international schools. State schools seem to attract lower- and middle-class families, while private and international schools are for upper-class citizens, since they are costly. The students in most primary schools are day scholars, while a majority of secondary schools board. In the last decade, there has been an increase in the number of universities in the country, with 20 public and 20 private universities. These main universities have various campuses across the country, making higher education more accessible. In addition, there are colleges for diverse technical studies across the nation. Most young people, after their education, move to the urban areas to look for white-collar jobs in cities. Hence, there has been an increase in the urban population (Davis, 2007).

Consequently, there are differences in the status of schools, for instance between private and public schools, or between urban and rural schools, and there are significant discrepancies (Akyeampong, 2009). These impact on practice, thus affect students' learning, which is dependent on the school that they attend and perhaps shapes their academic path. As a result, it was important to evaluate how some of these discrepancies could be eradicated by

promoting good practice across all Kenyan schools. Additionally, despite more students accessing higher education in Kenya, there are still a few who discontinue learning after their primary-school education. Hence, it is vital for these students to leave with some practical skills that they can engage in for their outside life, such as entrepreneurship, agricultural skill, craft skill and home economics, among others. Without these subjects, perhaps primary education in Kenya caters only for its academic students.

The Government of Kenya seems committed to providing education through its 2030 Vision goals (Wanjohi et al., 2011). It has targeted schools by equipping them with resources, attempting to change the curriculum and providing all teachers with training. Additionally, a review of the pedagogies in teaching and learning, which is essential, is likely.

1.6 Kenyan education policy and training context

1.6.1 Organisation of education in Kenya

Since 2003, the education policy framework by the Government of Kenya has aimed to provide free primary education (FPE) for all students (Republic of Kenya, 2008; Wanjohi, 2011). The government has provided learning resources, upgraded the infrastructure and trained its teachers prior to posting them to public schools. The provision of free education is not without challenge and, I argue, it is not entirely free, as discussed below, for there is a need for parents to supplement the cost of learning.

Table 1-1 Number of schools, pupils and teacher training colleges in Kenya

		Number	Total
Number of pupils in primary schools	Boys	5,050,000	9,900,000
	Girls	4,890,000	
Number of schools	Private	7,742	28,362
	Public	21,718	
Teacher training colleges	Public TTC	24	127
	Private TTC	101	
	Diploma colleges	2	

(Sources: UNICEF, 2014; Ministry of Education, Science and Technology Kenya, 2014)

According to Mutegi, Muriithi and Wanjala (2017), the cost of educating girls is higher than that of educating boys. This is because parents have to spend more on additional costs that are not covered by government funding, which includes the uniform, school meals and additional resources such as books and pens. The uniform for girls seems to be more expensive than that of boys, thus the additional cost for schooling girls. Mutegi et al. (2017) note that the FPE initiative by the Government of Kenya has faced challenges in its quest to meet all education needs, therefore parents have to supplement funding to cover the necessities. At times, government-funded resources (such as desks) have not been sufficient for all individuals, therefore students have had to share. At times, the government has taken a long time to replace worn-out resources and materials, which disadvantages teachers' and students' classroom engagement. As a result, teachers and parents have had to supplement or else do without materials such as science kits. This has made education experiences for students unequal, since those students whose parents and teachers can cover the extra costs have better learning experiences than those who do not.

According to the Ministry of Education gender policy (2015), the government is committed to ensuring that students of both genders access education. Recent efforts by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (2014) on gender equality seem to be somewhat successful in the area of access to education, since the number of girls in schools appears almost equal to that of boys (see Table 1.1 above). There are specific concerns for girls, such

as female genital mutilation and exploitation issues (Munyao, 2013), but there are efforts to deal with gender issues, including new policies to protect these children. These matters, both for boys and girls, fall under the gender policy of the Ministry of Education (2015). The new policies enable changes in practice and effectively support campaigns in relation to children's rights and safeguarding. This has made teachers and communities more aware of how to safeguard their children. However, I argue that most of these policies have been handled in a top-down approach, with little involvement of parents and teachers in rural and remote regions.

In Kenya, as in other parts of the world, private schools are more expensive since they are not government funded but acquire their funding from the fees paid by parents. The Government of Kenya (2005) reported that the introduction of FPE in 2003 prompted significant growth in the enrolment of pupils in public schools, which increased the teacher: pupil ratio. Nishimura and Yamano (2012) note that this high enrolment in public schools affected the quality of the teaching. As a result, most wealthy parents in both rural and urban areas chose to take their children out and enrol them in private schools. This move led to an increase in private schools in Kenya from 2005. However, Tooley and Dixon (2005) argue that the performance of both private schools and public schools in mathematics, English and Kiswahili is similar, despite parents paying the high cost of private education. They also note that teachers who work in public schools are paid three times as much as their colleagues in private schools (Tooley and Dixon, 2005). Even so, parents who can afford private schools seem to prefer them, since they are well equipped with resources and their teaching is more advanced. This is similar to other parts of the world, where privately owned schools are more costly and it is expected that their students will perform better in exams and have better career prospects. Akyeampong (2009) notes similar situations in Ghana in relation to a rise in private schools.

1.6.2 Teacher training in Kenya

The Ministry of Education in Kenya sets policies that guide teaching professionals on how to carry out their duties. Most primary schoolteachers undertake a teaching qualification (Primary teacher 1, known as P1), where they complete a two-year full-time course, while other primary teachers undertake a diploma. The diploma is at a more advanced level, and teachers with higher O-level grades are trained both in teaching skills and management. All trainees in teaching must have previously undertaken the KCSE (Kenya Certificate of

Secondary Exam), equivalent to O-levels, in which they are graded A, B, C, D or E, with each grade being either + (plus), plain or – (minus).

A 2018 report in the *Daily Nation* stated that the grade entry for teachers training has now been changed by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology. As a result, to enrol for a diploma course applicants should have a minimum of Grade C- in the KCSE, for which the minimum was previously Grade C plain. For P1, the entry qualification is now a minimum of D+ in the KCSE, instead of C-. The lowering of grades is a way to attract more people into the teaching profession, which, according to the Minister of Education, has lost its marketability (*Daily Nation*, 2018). The inference of perceiving the teaching profession as a market commodity is problematic because, as this study argued, quality education is a human right for all children (UNCRC, 1989), therefore teacher training and the profession should be valued and protected by the government so that the needs of students are met. The media reports that focus on Kenyans' lack of interest in a teaching career could also be seen as a result of recurring countrywide strikes by teachers due to disputes over their remuneration. Teachers have blamed the government for being slow to encourage the recruitment of newly trained teachers, who then end up working in private schools for lower wages, while some go into other professions or remain unemployed for many years, which demotivates many who may otherwise have been interested in the profession. These issues, among others, could have marred the reputation of the profession and need to be addressed by engaging teachers in conversations, but instead, the Kenyan Ministry of Education has lowered the entry grade to solve the problem. I argue that this is an example of an authoritarian, top-down approach by government that is in contrast to the need for dialogue between teachers, the Ministry of Education and the government.

Once teachers are trained and posted into schools, they are expected to follow ethical guidelines and possess professional norms and attitudes that enable them to facilitate teaching efficiently. Prior to working in the classroom, teachers are expected to have been trained on the policies of education, the curriculum and methods of teaching. They are acculturated on how to uphold a good character and professional ways of interacting with others. Even so, once trained and working in the profession, there is a need for these teachers to keep upgrading their skills and to have space for reflection (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 2009; Wermke and Höstfält, 2014). This would be important for Kenya's teachers, especially those who after their teacher training wait a long time to be recruited by the government, or those who have been in the profession for a long time and may need to upgrade their skills

and reflect on their practice. This study was an opportunity for teachers to give their accounts on their training, practice and experiences.

Bunyi et al.'s (2011) research on Kenyan teacher training identifies that poor training in pedagogical skills had led to poor practice and lower learning outcomes in primary schools (UWEZO, 2012). Most teacher training was aimed at understanding theoretical knowledge so that trainees could pass the KNEC (Kenya National Examination Council) exams (Bunyi et al., 2011). As a result, there was less focus on practical skills, such as teaching methods. The lack of focus on teaching methods could be at the root of the high use of teacher-centred methods in primary teaching in Kenyan schools, as reported by several education research studies (Ackers and Hardman, 2012; UWEZO, 2012). Therefore, in this study it will be important to obtain teachers' perspectives on their professional training and career development and on how to develop suitable pedagogical approaches.

1.6.3 Rural and remote schools

The majority of schools in Kenya are in rural areas and similar to the schools in this study. However, research projects and studies tend to prioritise urban schools, with little focus on rural schools (Mugisha, 2006). There is almost no research on remote schools, which could be due to both political and access issues, as discussed later in this section. Children attending urban schools have more advantages than their counterparts in rural areas. For example, urban areas have better infrastructure, such as roads, electricity and hospitals. They also have access to facilities such as libraries, hence they are perceived as more favourable due to their status. Most young Kenyans after completion of their secondary and tertiary education prefer to live in the city, where they aim to find white-collar jobs. The rural-urban migration leads to more development in urban areas and a shortage of staff in rural areas.

Mugisha (2006) reports that the enrolment of children in primary schools in urban areas was 91.1%, while in rural areas it was 89.9%. However, enrolment in secondary schools was higher in rural areas than in urban areas. This was because although urban areas were perceived as better, there were differences among those who live in the city, dependent on socioeconomic status (Mugisha, 2006). In Kenyan cities, as in other cities in countries across Africa, there are areas with good infrastructure and facilities, including schools, while there are also those in the urban slums who live in worse conditions than in rural parts. Those living in urban-slum areas have a higher risk of discontinuing education at secondary level due to their social background, such as exposure to drugs, prostitution and crime, as opposed

to those in rural areas where the settings are quite conventional, with less exposure to such dangers (Mugisha, 2006).

Nishimura and Yamano (2012) noted that there was less focus on rural schools in research, and more on urban schools, both wealthy and urban slums. Most research conducted by foreign agencies has chosen to focus on urban-slum areas, while some studies prefer urban areas due to the easier access and adequate resources (Harber, 2002). This study thus aimed to provide a unique insight into the daily experiences of teachers and students in rural schools. The study built on the views of Nyerere (Kassam, 1995) in that education should be equal and relevant to students of all backgrounds, including those in rural areas. The study illuminated the perspectives of rural schoolteachers by using a bottom-up approach. It was noticeable that most schools in rural areas have been built through community fundraising via Harambee initiatives (Were and Wilson, 1968). Most have basic resources, such as classes, desks, teachers and books. Since the introduction of FPE, most of the infrastructure and resources has been upgraded, but there is still much to be done.

Remote schools are rarely looked into since they are in semi-arid regions, mostly in the northern part of Kenya. This area has faced uncertainty as it borders unstable communities such as Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia. Communities living in these regions, such as the Samburu, Somali, Turkana and Maasai, lead nomadic lifestyles. This makes their children experience inconsistencies in their formal learning. Over the years, I have argued that the poor attainment in education by these communities has made them marginalised, since they lack representation in fair government, hence their education needs, such as for resources and infrastructure, have been left unattended for many years.

However, after the incorporation of a new constitution in Kenya in 2010, the devolution initiative exercise allocated funding to the development of all regions. This led to these remote regions building schools and colleges. Looking at the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology report (2014), the number of schools in remote regions is as high as in any other parts of the country. The development increased the access to education for the populations of these remote regions. Nevertheless, they remain volatile due to terrorist attacks, such as the Garissa University attack, which left 147 students dead (BBC, 2015). These attacks have made most professionals, including teachers, flee from these regions. As a result, despite the increased government funding for schools, the region still has problems in recruiting qualified teachers.

1.7 Research questions

I formulated my research questions after considering the ways in which teachers could inform pedagogical development in the Kenyan context through exploring spaces for dialogic practice. This position was guided by literature from African scholars (Tabulawa, 2013; Njoya, 2017), who argue that, for any pedagogic progress to be successful on the continent, it is imperative to engage the right people:

1. How do schoolteachers talk about teaching and learning in their classrooms?
2. What kind of pedagogies would teachers in Kenya want to develop in their practice, and why?
3. How does teacher training in Kenya support dialogic pedagogic approaches?

1.8 Structure of thesis

The overall structure for this thesis is as follows:

Chapter 2 comprises the theoretical foundations for this study, in which I critically explore the main conceptual frameworks. Then, in the methodology in Chapter 3, I lay out in detail the planning of the study, the data collection through a mixture of methods on an ethnographic framework and, later, investigation of the data through thematic analysis.

In the discussion chapters, first in Chapter 4, I represent the positions of Kenyan students and their families. Then, in Chapter 5, I discuss Kenyan teachers' professional identity, demonstrating how this affects classroom practice. In Chapter 6, the discussion is on the Kenyan classroom environment in relation to pedagogical choices. The final discussion is in Chapter 7, which provides an in-depth argument on how the social and cultural structures influence classroom practices, as well as local and global hegemonies. Within these discussion chapters, I intensively synthesise the main themes identified by the analysis, aligning them to the relevant pedagogic spaces.

Next come the recommendations in Chapter 8, taking a conceptualised approach entitled 'Harambee'. This frames the kind of changes that the Kenyan teachers acknowledged is necessary to advance their teaching and learning practice. Then, at the end of this thesis, comes my conclusion in Chapter 9, summarising my overall research contributions to knowledge.

Chapter 2. Theoretical foundations

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the theoretical foundations for my thesis (Figure 2.1). I began by examining the interconnection between culture and learning, focusing on the necessity for the inclusion of critical and cultural learning in classroom practice. In so doing, I demonstrate the importance of students in Kenya learning in ways that relate to them both socially and culturally, using theory from Nyerere (Ibbott, 2014) and Freire and Macedo (2012).

Secondly, in this chapter I consider how cognitive and social constructivist theories are best negotiated within pedagogic spaces in the Kenyan context. I use Piaget's and Vygotsky's perspectives to inform my research concepts (Garton, 2004). Thirdly, I explore dialogic pedagogies and their impact on school teaching and learning. Finally, I look into the tensions that are apparent in incorporating new pedagogies, both globally and locally, considering how some of the issues could be addressed in the study.

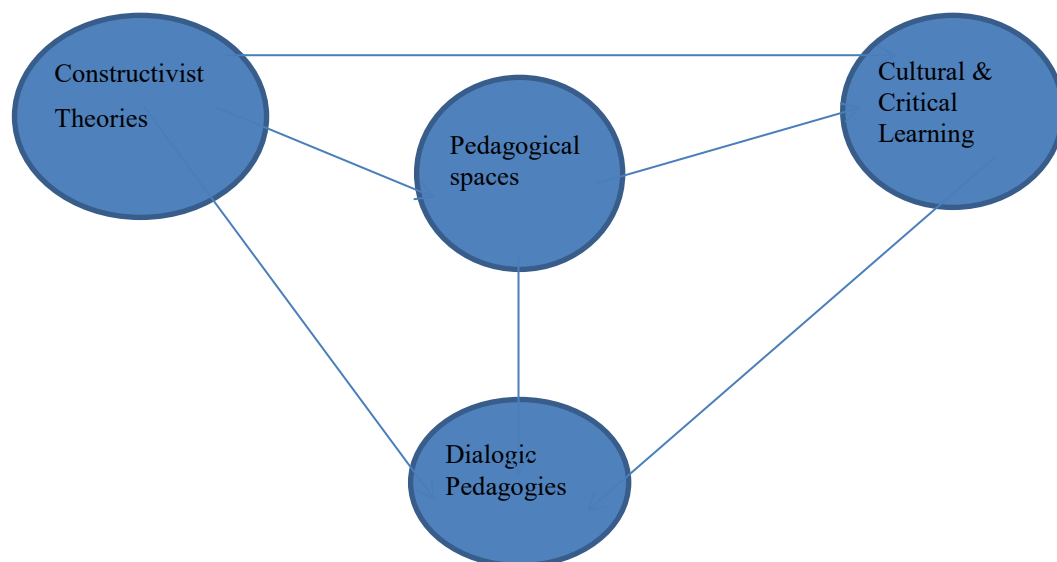


Figure 2-1 Main theoretical foundations

2.2 Cultural and critical learning

For Kenya to contextualise its education, it needs to include cultural tools and practices that relate to their students' backgrounds. Since colonial times, the alienation of African norms

and values in education (Adeyemi and Adenyika, 2003) has been detrimental to the learning process. This is because human learning is greatly shaped by culture, which comprises present phenomena, past experiences and the historical context. Culture is the way of life by which groups of people, or societies live. Thus, cultural learning occurs while engaging in daily activities, cultural values and beliefs, and through use of cultural tools like language. According to Freire (1970), Nyerere (1968) and Said (1995), the introduction of formal education in colonised countries excluded these societies' traditional cultural aspects from the curriculum. This same kind of education was apparent in Kenya from the time when the British colonial government introduced colonial education.

Regrettably, in today's Kenyan education most students are prevented from exploring their full potential (Njoya, 2017). They are prohibited from using their cultural tools (Thiong'o, 1986) and their learning lacks critical thinking and creativity. As Njoya argues, Kenyan students' potential is limited by the exam-based system, where their grades determine their worth in the job market. The education system becomes a process for workers/labourers yet not thinkers, since there are no spaces for students to be imaginative, critical or creative. The system has remained authoritarian and there is perhaps no use of dialogic pedagogies in teaching and learning. Moreover, cultural knowledge and experiences have been locked out since the introduction of formal education. Consequently, there is a need to re-examine how critical and cultural pedagogies can be included in Kenyan classroom practice.

This study develops a deeper cultural understanding by bringing clarity to the background of students in Kenya, which should be part of pedagogical reforms to uphold a cultural understanding and give a chance for these children to voice their reality and perspectives on the areas that matter. This should start from classroom engagement and consider personal lives and social participation.

2.2.1 Having a pedagogy that incorporates African culture

There is a need to review Kenyan classroom practice and pedagogies, and to explore cultural practices and values that relate to students' lives. A good example is the local languages used daily by the students at home or in their communities. Speaking these languages in school could enhance students' engagement and understanding. A report by the United Nations (UNESCO, 2015) emphasises the importance of learning in mother-tongue languages that are frequently used at home, since this improves understanding. Additionally, when learning includes dialogue, students and teachers can share their outside experiences in the classroom

and, further, use their classroom knowledge to solve outside issues. They would intertwine their formal and informal worlds for learning. As Nyerere (1968) contends, education should value learners by allowing the application of their culture and life knowledge in the classroom. He claims that the liberation of human beings from dependency and ignorance can only come from the people themselves. This liberation must, therefore, relate to individuals' own circumstances and experiences for them to appreciate and engage in it (Kassam, 1995; Ibbott, 2014).

Njoya (2017) agrees with this notion, stating that African liberation was not only about independence from the colonial government but should be through sovereign thinking. This can only be cultivated through an education that acknowledges Africans' social and cultural standpoints. For instance, Nyerere noted that most people in his home country of Tanzania live in rural areas, as in Kenya. He argues that these Tanzanians needed the kind of education that related to their lifestyles and their day-to-day lives. But the formal education was then Western-based, hence it did not relate to the reality of rural Tanzania's lifestyle, which was poor and dependent on farming and animal husbandry. Therefore, Nyerere advocated for an education that would help these individuals to be self-reliant, for example to improve skills in agriculture, trade or carving, as outlined below by Sifuna (2007):

Education for Self-Reliance emphasized the need for the curriculum to focus on the needs of the majority who did not have access to secondary education. Thus, in addition to subjects like Mathematics, Science, English, Geography, History, Agriculture was made part of the primary school curriculum, especially in rural schools. Cultural activities which included poetry, drama, music, art, and crafts, sports and games, among others, became important activities in primary classrooms and in adult literacy, with Kiswahili as the medium of instruction. (Sifuna, 2007: 693)

Nyerere's notion challenged the emphasis on exams, where primary education is more about passing exams to pursue higher learning and eventually have a 'white-collar' job. He argued that primary education should be a holistic approach that is more student-centred, addressing both formal and informal skills, enhancing individuals' confidence and cooperation while developing critical and inquiring mindsets. This should inspire, challenge and equip individuals to take responsible actions for their life development. Their cultural values and lifestyles will be preserved and also engaged in education (Kassam, 1995; Sifuna, 2007; Ibbott, 2014).

This cultural pedagogy, inspired by Nyerere's vision, is intuitive and resonates with most African contexts (Ibbott, 2014). Even though his goals were never fully implemented due to the challenge of capitalism and lack of resources, his ideas are dynamic and can be applied in the Kenyan context. When formal education was introduced by the missionaries and colonial masters, it dismissed African culture. Some of these African countries (including Kenya) even today have significant numbers of pupils who access primary education yet do not progress to secondary school (Uwezo, 2012). Consequently, primary school education should aim to equip these students with practical skills that they can use in their daily lives. Nyerere's ideology remains relevant in Africa and is crucial to this study. I aimed to explore how learning of students in Kenya can be diversified to equip learners with knowledge and skills for their educational progress and life outside of school. Therefore, as Nyerere contended, it is important to contextualise learning.

Moreover, culture is highly influential to most aspects of human life. It shapes people's mindsets and beliefs, influencing the structuring of society. As Giddens (1984) argues, social lifestyles are not accidental but are imposed by social forces. These significantly shape social structures through social policies and governing systems. A good example is how Kenyan education policies are structured by an authoritarian mindset, where students are perceived as non-players. Africans' perception of formal schooling is that is 'Western', without any relation to their culture, perhaps making it difficult for them to challenge it. Historically, Africans have been conditioned to be passive in formal education, since their traditional education was considered to be barbaric. They have been 'silenced' in the formal education system, since their culture was excluded. However, they now need to make it relevant to them. They need to reflect on how formal education has been perceived over the years and how historical events have limited progress, for example the slow change in classroom pedagogies. More so, the alienation of African languages from formal education threatens these students' classroom learning, their future careers and their identity. A language is a cultural tool; when familiar and relevant to students, it enhances learning. As Said (1995) argued, culture is both ideological and political, therefore an incorporation of cultural tools will draw in a deeper philosophical understanding of students' social-cultural roots and identity.

Regrettably, in the Kenyan context local languages are used only in the early years and are made irrelevant to the main system. But these languages are used daily in social settings, including in rural areas and in workplaces, such as in the broadcasting industry. However,

students are not prepared for formal and official engagement in their local language. Moreover, their cultural understanding and background are excluded from such platforms. As Thiong'o (1986) argued, students should first learn their local language and then add foreign languages, to demonstrate liberation and sovereignty. He argued that learners who learn other languages first and then add their own local language have a colonial mentality. This sums up the case for most Kenyan students. Thus, it is critical to review the inclusion of cultural tools in learning, such as the use of local languages. This will help learners to engage actively, be equipped with additional skills and attain a liberated mindset and practice.

I offer the use of 'Harambee' aspects of education. 'Harambee' is a Kenyan term derived from the liberation discourse after Kenyan Independence by the founding president, Jomo Kenyatta. The term means togetherness, where society collectively approaches issues and works together to meet community goals and objectives. It is applied in community-based self-help projects, for example when a community wants to build a school or when needy individuals raise funds for a specific purpose, such as paying school fees, a hospital bill or the cost of a wedding. The community works together towards these goals, which is very successful, according to Were and Wilson (1968). Thus, while advocating for cultural pedagogy with dialogic aspects, possibly the application of collectivism through the Harambee lens can relate to students. In collective learning, both teachers and students would engage in collaborative classroom activities, similar to how they do at home and in their community.

Other ways in which students in Kenya could utilise cultural aspects are through the use of dialogue to engage, possibly applying their local languages (which are familiar to them) to discuss their experiences outside of their learning. This could make learning more interesting and real to them (UNESCO, 2015). At the same time, they could adopt other tools available to them, such as using local materials for experiments or visiting local places. Incorporating these dynamic ways of learning, which are inclusive of social and cultural aspects, could enhance students' learning and, more so, equip them for life. Thus, there is a need for a pedagogical review of the Kenyan education system, with cultural aspects. This study aims to examine how this can be done effectively via the pedagogic space available.

2.2.2 Embracing a critical pedagogy in Kenyan learning

The current curriculum in Kenya (Matiang'i, 2017) has been framed with the aim of engaging students' imagination, critical thinking, problem-solving and creativity, among

others. Despite the beautiful outline of this curriculum, its goals cannot be achieved without a review of the pedagogy employed. Indeed, if teacher-centred methods continue to dominate Kenyan classroom practice, with limited room for critical engagement, then the framework's success is possibly unfeasible. Nonetheless, the new curriculum goals are warranted to advance the quality of education in Kenya. Consequently, in this section, I demonstrate the reasons behind my advocacy of critical engagement in Kenyan classroom learning, which would combine the aspects framed in the new curriculum.

Drawing from Freire's (1970) views, silenced humans can use dialogue to liberate themselves from any kind of oppression only if they develop critical consciousness. His views were drawn from the experiences of oppression by a colonial regime, and he argues that people can use talk to challenge their oppressor and to liberate themselves. In his argument, humanisation of the oppressed can only be through overcoming fear and individuals relentlessly pursuing transformation through action (Freire, 1970). Freire's analysis acknowledged that class, race and gender influence how individuals view themselves and how they are perceived by others. Hence, negotiating the process of liberation requires resilience and cooperation. The negotiation needs dialogue among the oppressed to enhance their unity and then, together, they can challenge the oppressor (Freire and Macedo, 2012). This kind of liberation is needed, both within Kenyan classrooms and beyond. Consequently, the use of pedagogic 'spaces' can be a valuable platform for liberation that Kenyan teachers and students can use.

Equivalent to the view on political and social struggles and changes, education can apply a similar approach. If the 'pedagogic spaces' available in the Kenyan education systems are utilised, starting with 'interaction space', it would perhaps discontinue the old, domineering practice. Then, it would possibly permit active engagement with teachers by students through discussion, collaboration and creativity. Freire contested the dominant teacher-centred pedagogies in education, which replicate a similar dogma (Freire and Macedo, 2012): the teacher has all the information and deposits it on the students, who passively memorise it. As a result, the students are submissive and not encouraged to think critically beyond what is taught to them. The education received cannot transform their world, as it is applicable only to the classroom, remaining 'school knowledge'. Freire advocated for change in the education system to incorporate more dialogue, reflection and critical analysis, and creativity. This kind of education would transform the learners' world beyond their classroom (Freire

and Macedo, 2012). Freire identifies the power of dialogue and specifies that anti-dialogue methods limit human freedom to think, choose and negotiate.

Anti-dialogic methods in social and political worlds include divide and rule, culture invasion, cooperation and conquest, where one group of people remains submissive to the other. These methods are evident in education, especially in teacher-centred pedagogies, since students seem to assimilate and accommodate the information given to them by the teachers without active engagement or inquiry (Lyle, 2008). Freire asserted that the incorporation of active talk in education would enhance learning, because students and teachers would actively engage equally, both having something to learn and understand about each other's world, enhancing thinking patterns and removing authoritarian barriers. This could only happen when the talk is more evident in the classroom, improving the process of learning (Mercer, 2000; Alexander, 2010). Freire and Macedo (2012) warned that pedagogy creation is a struggle that could have challenges, as in childbirth. He noted that it would present a dilemma to many, who might not want the change due to a lack of commitment to the process.

In Kenya, 'silenced' groups can use dialogue to state their position and break free from the social, cultural, economic and historic shackles that may be holding them. The Kenyan students are relatively silenced in their learning when practice remains teacher-centred. Their liberation can be achieved by reviewing the pedagogies and allowing more dialogue in the classroom. They could enhance critical thinking and maybe aid the emancipation from their local and global hegemonic oppression. Other silenced groups in the Kenyan education are the teachers, who seem to have less autonomy over their practice in an exam-based system; they could be liberated, too. As a result, this study has tried to explore the kind of pedagogies that these teachers want in their practice and to ascertain if there would be room for critical practice. At the same time, I have examined the key influences on pedagogic choices and the best way to overcome the barriers to developing superior pedagogies, while exploring the spaces available for dialogic practice.

Kenya, like other colonised countries, can relate to most of the issues illuminated by Freire. Consequently, there is a need for Kenyans and Africans to liberate themselves from colonial mindsets and practices (Thiong'o, 1986; Njoya, 2017). The Kenyan education system, which was framed by the colonial government, has undergone various changes since Independence. However, some areas in the system (including pedagogical practices) need review for their education to develop and meet the government's goals for Vision 2030. This is a

development programme launched in 2008 with the aim of improving Kenyan citizens' quality of life. The manifesto included detailed ways to advance Kenyan education by 2030. However, according to Njoya (2017), the current system disregards African culture and imprisons students' creativity and dynamism, which need to be liberated. As Freire argued, for oppressed people to be emancipated, they need to collaborate and have a dialogue. This can only start by incorporating pedagogies that utilise a dialogic approach within the four 'spaces' identified earlier: interaction space; physical space; policy space; and cultural space (Figure 1.1 in Chapter 1). The structure of these spaces should permit learners to be critical and use their cultural knowledge and skills in their classroom learning.

Also, as earlier discussed, some social injustices could be challenged within pedagogic space: for example, the negative global identity of African children. As noted above, liberation can be achieved through dialogue within available 'space'. Additionally, as students become effective in critical thinking, creativity and problem-solving, they will apply these skills in their daily lives. Their primary education would equip them with skills to face the outside world.

2.3 Constructivists' theories

In this section, cognitive and social constructivists' theories are discussed. They are critical theoretical foundations, since they give us an understanding of how learning takes place in humans. This helps us to recognise the reasons behind children learning, which then assist us to structure our settings for effective learning. The theorists discussed are Piaget (1936), a cognitive development theorist, and Vygotsky (1978), a social constructivist. I examined how their perspectives could be applicable to the Kenyan classroom and within the four pedagogic spaces.

2.3.1 Using constructivist perspectives

The principle goal of education in the schools should be creating men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply repeating what other generations have done; men and women who are creative, inventive and discoverers, who can be critical and verify, and not accept, everything they are offered. (Jean Piaget)

From Piaget's (1957) quote above, learning experiences should promote individuals' learning by allowing them to discover and create. This kind of learning can only happen if schools have a variety of resources to enable teaching and learning. Teachers can use a variety of teaching methods so their students have opportunities to be creative and inventive.

Therefore, in this study, it is essential to consider how pedagogic spaces support learning, drawing on constructivist perspectives. For example, pedagogical practice is impacted on by physical space through the provision of school infrastructure and resources, also the training of teachers. Learning is a process of cognitive development where a child grows biologically and develops mental functions to understand information (Piaget, 1945). Therefore, the provision of physical space should support intellectual development. A variety of provisions and use of appropriate pedagogical methods could advance children's development and learning. In Piaget's theory, individuals assimilate information and construct their own knowledge as they integrate into their environment. But, as these individuals interact with other people, they start accommodating new knowledge, replacing their own mental representations or existing schemes (Garton, 2004). To promote the construction of more schemes, classroom learning needs to provide exposure through the use of diverse pedagogies and activities.

Although Piaget's theory has been criticised by other psychologists in that it does not take into account the social influence on learning (Garton, 2004), it cannot be ignored. It can be considered while designing the physical structures of learning environments and purchasing classroom resources. A learning environment can include various sections where students can try several learning activities, both individually and with others. The diverse materials can create beneficial learning experiences that the students can learn from. Understanding how learning environments in Kenya are designed to meet students' learning needs in their physical and interaction spaces was a useful outcome of this study.

Piaget's constructivist model addresses learning as a process of an individual's mental representation of information. James and James (2001) criticised Piaget's theory, asserting that he was confused between growth and development. They argued that growth was physical but that development required more than just age factors, as there are also social influences. Nonetheless, without attaining physical growth milestones, perhaps learning could be limited. Therefore, there is a need to provide settings that are appropriate for various developmental stages. Attention should be paid to the set-up of the classroom and the activities available. At the same time, the practices applied in these classrooms should have scope for more interaction. Teachers cannot use one method to fit every subject and lesson, but should consider the age of their children and their developmental and cognitive needs. In my participant observations during data collection, I observed how diverse milestones were

catered for within the learning environment and if there were various activities provided to improve students' learning experiences in their interaction and physical spaces.

Donaldson (2006) criticises the work of Piaget, stating that it is an interpretation from an adult's perspective. She argues that when experiments derive answers from children, they are indications that the children are drawing from their own constructions, which make sense to them but not to the adult. Nonetheless, the adult interprets the information as wrong, although to the child it makes sense. This could be because the child is an active learner from their own experience and environment. According to Donaldson (2006), when participants are given materials in experiments, they first make sense of it from their own experience and understanding. Thus, it was vital for the study to count social experiences, which Piaget had largely discounted (Vygotsky, 1978; Donaldson, 2006). Piaget's work has also been criticised by other researchers in that it used only White children, and could be seen as culturally biased (Donaldson, 2006). Therefore, looking at how it could be applied in the African setting was significant, since this is often overlooked in research such as Piaget's, and this research study explored through the Kenyan schools.

To explore how children can learn well through engagement with others, I used Vygotskian perspectives on social constructivist concepts (Garton, 2004). Vygotsky stated that it is during social interaction that individuals learn to collaborate with others, for example in discussion. Their knowledge and skills are improved due to the shared talk, meanings and understandings. Subsequently, it is through this social interaction and involvement that children acquire knowledge (Garton, 2004). Intersubjective interaction helps children to develop ways of problem-solving better than they can alone (Doise, Mugny and Perret-Clemon, 1975). According to Vygotsky, during collaboration a zone of proximal development (ZPD) is attained, in which a child's knowledge is maximised while actively interacting with a more experienced individual (Vygotsky, 1978; Garton, 2004). The child's extension of knowledge is raised to a higher level through the collaboration, which helps the individual to achieve more. When the relationship is asymmetrical, for example between a teacher and students, or between a parent and children, the older and more knowledgeable person will guide and oversee the task through explicit scaffolding (Garton, 2004).

As in other parts of the world, the above is applicable to the African social-cultural context where children engage in collaboration with peers and adults. As they undertake various tasks at home and in their community, they learn from more knowledgeable others, and this

helps these children to advance in their knowledge and skills. Drawing on the Vygotskian notion, these practices support these children to reach the ZPD during collaborative engagement. Moreover, as I asserted earlier, Africans have historically passed on knowledge and skills to the younger generation through practical engagement and through dialogue and talks. These learning practices are present in informal learning for younger people at home and during community involvement. Such exposure could incorporate social learning through the use of the social-cultural tools available in that context. It would, therefore, be beneficial if these kinds of learning were to be adopted in formal settings, in school.

Although Vygotsky did not look at classroom teaching and learning methods, the concepts have been used to explore students' learning. According to Mercer (2010), during exploratory talk while students are engaging actively they are able to construct knowledge. Therefore, by including each other's knowledge and experiences in the dialogue, superior learning will be manifest. Some individuals are more proactive than others during interactive engagement at school, thus acknowledging an individual's needs and social-cultural background could be considered, in a personalised approach (Goncu et al., 2000; Sternberg, 2007; EPPSE. 2010). Unfortunately, most pedagogical advocates in Africa have not taken into account learners' social and cultural background (Tabulawa, 2013). This study aimed to do so by working with their teachers to determine their social, cultural and economic position and determining the pedagogical advancement that is warranted.

For the purpose of this study, collaborative talk and activity are regarded as essential to human learning. As asserted by Vygotsky (1978), they can support learners to reach the ZPD. However, since Kenya predominantly uses monologic pedagogies, it limits the benefits of active classroom dialogue and collaborative practice. Thus, a pedagogy review is essential to consider the application to learning of social and cultural tools that are familiar to students, such as the use of local languages in pedagogic space to promote engagement and advance understanding.

2.4 Dialogic pedagogies

In recent decades, pedagogical approaches have evolved in many countries. The predominant use of teacher-centred methods has continued to hinder students' autonomy, limiting their exploratory engagement, critical thinking and creativity in their learning. The evidence from this study indicates that pedagogic reforms in Kenya are necessary and require

sustainable planning to enable their effectiveness. Understanding how global reforms in pedagogic practice have progressed can boost efficiency in development planning in Kenya.

This section has summarised what could be deemed universal pedagogical methods, which have progressed from the old classroom-lecture methods to the use of dialogic pedagogies. I also outline the benefits of dialogic pedagogies and state my position on dialogic pedagogies.

2.4.1 The development of dialogic pedagogies

Understanding the development of dialogic pedagogies and their benefits and challenges is important. They are fundamental to my research into recognising the key structures behind the pedagogies' success and illuminating the pitfalls when considering the Kenyan context.

In the 1970s, Douglas Barnes claimed that talk is essential in classroom learning, because it is a means of communication (Barnes, 1974). He specified that there were two methods of teaching: the presentation and the exploratory methods. From his research observations, the presentation method was common in classrooms and involved a teacher presenting information to the students, which they passively memorised for their learning. This is much used in exam-based education systems, where the application of Piaget's theory argues that, through assimilation and accommodation of new knowledge, learning becomes apparent. Nevertheless, Barnes noted that there was a danger of learners forgetting information easily, since they do not engage actively with it (Barnes, 1992). Barnes used conversation extracts from learners and video-recorded class analysis to demonstrate how talk took place during learning. He acknowledged that usually the teacher dominates the talk while learners passively engage in the class. The pupils do not engage in dialogue in the course of their learning (Barnes, 2008). According to Barnes (2008), teachers merely ask questions without meaningful dialogue, so they cannot assess the true understanding of the learners.

Barnes (2008) noted that in the second technique, the exploratory method, there is an active dialogue between teacher and students. The students are able to engage with newly acquired knowledge and make sense of it through extensive talk with their teachers. They can bring in past knowledge and experiences, then gradually incorporate them into classroom learning as they formulate new knowledge. Barnes advocated for exploratory talk in the classroom. Using Barnes' model, Baird and Mitchell (1997) used the PEEL (Project for Enhancing Effective Learning) project in Australia to enhance education. They brought a group of

teachers together and gave them a platform on which to reflect on their practice as they used more talk in the classroom. The teachers video-recorded their lessons and later had a chance to evaluate and reflect on them. In time, students become more active in their learning when the teachers applied the exploratory method. Some students needed encouragement from the teachers. Mercer and Hodgkinson (2008) noted that most learners embark on exploratory methods only when they feel free and confident to talk. Hence, the teacher has to enhance confidence through validation and continuous encouragement for the students to keep talking in classroom engagement (Montessori, 1997; Barnes, 2008).

During comparative studies in the United Kingdom and Australia, Barnes (1992) noted that the curricula did not plan for talk in the classroom. Hence, it was difficult for teachers to enact it effectively. However, in order to attain Vygotsky's (1978) ZPD, the learners have to think and work together through classroom interactions during a group session or during class dialogue with their teacher (Barnes, 2008). Unfortunately, the lack of planning for dialogue seems universal. It is overlooked not only in Western countries but in places including Kenya. It is therefore vital for policies and curricula to make space for it. This was a key consideration in my study.

When looking at the practical application of dialogic teaching, knowing the principles behind the method is significant. Alexander (2008) promotes the use of three principles of pedagogic repertoires in dialogic teaching: organising interaction in the classroom; teaching talk; and learning talk. Organising the interactive repertoire involves focusing on classroom activities, for example whole-class teaching, one-to-one between teacher and students and between students; and collaborative and collective groupwork. Teaching talk repertoire is been by rote, recitation, instruction, discussion and dialogue, while learning talk repertoire involves students' activities in the classroom, such as narratives, explaining, listening and being receptive, among others. Alexander further identified five principles of dialogic teaching, which he named as collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative and purposeful. These principles outline the various types of dialogue in the class and how they should build onto classroom engagement to enhance learning (Alexander, 2008).

To determine the success of dialogic teaching, Alexander (2008) carried out an international comparative study that Kenya can learn from. He undertook classroom analysis, focusing on five countries: France; India; the United States; England; and Russia. In his observations, Russia and France had conversation in their classrooms whereby students talked clearly and

loudly, expressing themselves using language, but had fewer rules. In the American observations, children made individual meanings as they talked, and the teacher had less control of their dialogue. He noted that, in England, classroom talk in oral pedagogy was not as evident, and was more visible in writing pedagogy (Mercer et al., 2008). Students were able to do writing that is more creative yet rarely engaged in exploratory talk between peers or even between themselves and teachers. Teachers used monologue discussions. According to Alexander (2008), the school systems did not encourage teacher-student engagement since there was not enough time. The lessons were only 40 minutes and the classrooms had more than thirty students, hence meaningful engagement with students was impossible due to time limitations and the lack of supporting staff. These issues could be prevalent in Kenya, where most lessons are also 40 minutes and some schools have even larger class sizes. Hence, it is vital to consider using the method in double lessons or to review lesson times and provide additional support.

Despite the outcomes of the dialogic teaching studies by Alexander (2008), there are a few challenges that were evident, for example less use of two of Alexander's named principles: cumulative and purposefulness. Cumulative is where teacher and student engage in discussion to build on each other's knowledge. Purposefulness is where the teacher negotiates to learn a specific goal (Alexander, 2008). Moreover, most teachers did not feel that they could learn from the students, so they did not allow students to steer the learning (Mercer, 2008). Alexander also noted that the government's education policies supported competition in learning. Therefore, the benefits of trying to make a classroom community were short-lived. Thus, this study aims to explore how dialogic pedagogies can be effectively applied in the classrooms. Teachers' perspectives are vital, since they are insiders' viewpoints, which need to be recognised and addressed to avoid any drawbacks.

2.4.2 Application of exploratory talk in dialogic classrooms

Exploratory talk is highly recommended for the effective application of dialogic pedagogy (Mercer, 2000). This is the kind of talk that may be applicable to the Kenyan classroom, but demands training and immense practice. The use of the collaborative 'thinking together' approach would help students to problem-solve, be critical and creative in their learning. As a result, the 2017 Kenyan curriculum goals can be met in dialogic classrooms.

Promoting talk is critical to experiencing the dialogic benefits. Mercer (2000) distinguishes three types of talks in a dialogical approach: disputation talk; cumulative talk; and

exploratory talk. Cumulative talk is where people build on each other, while disputation talk is where the talkers conflict and disagree with each other. Mercer (2008) asserts that exploratory talk is mainly used in the ‘thinking together’ approach when students constructively discuss and reason the issues with respect, agree to disagree and then eventually come up with a collective settlement. Exploratory talk promotes joint responsibility in dialogue and ensuring that all members of the group are heard and valued, overcoming the disadvantage of ‘speaking and no one listening’ pinpointed by Alexander (2010). The exploratory talk should be aimed at all learning engagement, as Mercer (2000) suggests.

During dialogic groupwork, the promotion of thinking together among students is evident (Manolli and Staarman, 2011). Collaborative groupwork allows participants to draw information from personal experiences and understanding and also uphold good social skills among peers. The inter-subjective process of problem-solving promotes the construction of knowledge among students. The teacher, in thinking together pedagogy, appears to scaffold the discussions yet, overall, allows the students to explore their imagination and creative thinking (Sheehy and Howe, 2001). For this study, thinking together is imperative if the Kenyan system is to be able to meet its curriculum goals (Matiang’i, 2017), as mentioned earlier. Additionally, collaborative groupwork is similar to Kenyan students’ social-cultural experiences outside of school, and this is an added advantage.

When the thinking together dialogical approach was researched and incorporated into some schools in the United Kingdom, learning improved (Manolli and Staarman, 2011; Rezniskaya, 2012). There no full use of the dialogic pedagogies, despite British schools experiencing its benefits, due to the slow change in attitudes and a lack of resources (Alexander, 2008). Bearing these points in mind, as a researcher I aimed to explore ways to overcome some of these barriers during my discussions with Kenyan teachers. Perhaps they might be persuaded to identify practices that are both relevant to their culture and progressive.

2.4.3 Developing my position on dialogic pedagogies

From my position, dialogic practice is firmly rooted in the African social-cultural lifestyle, and school learning could adapt it to increase classroom engagement. I argue that when learning is engaged in a way that the students can relate to and they feel valued, they will be more interested in the process and possibly engage more. Moreover, they would be able to use their outside experiences in class, and vice versa (Freire and Macedo, 1993; Ibbott, 2014).

The progress in pedagogical practice would help to advance students' learning in Kenyan classrooms and further equip them with life skills.

Most global methods of teaching and learning have been much debated in recent years: learner-centred methods; dialogic pedagogies; and child-initiated pedagogies, among others (Alexander, 2008; Mercer, 2008; Thompson, 2013; Kessler-Singh and Robertson, 2015). The incorporation of progressive methods into various education systems has benefits, yet also tensions. A good example is that most changes are at policy level, but fewer changes have occurred in the classroom (Alexander, 2008; Tabulawa, 2013; Guthrie, 2014). This is due to the slow change in mindset and lack of time to undertake meaningful dialogue, since lessons are only 40 minutes long, as noted by Alexander (2008). For meaningful dialogue to occur in the class, whether in pairs or in groups, there is a need for more teaching assistants. This remains problematic in terms of resourcing, according to Mercer (2008). The application of dialogic pedagogies remains restricted. The lack of appropriate training and guidance books for teachers limits its success. In-service training for teachers would help to develop these skills and support their application in the classroom to help to maintain consistency. According to Mercer and Alexander, there are immense benefits to using dialogic pedagogies, however there is also considerable room for improvement in their use in schools (Alexander, 2008; Mercer, 2008).

Despite the profound benefits aligned to the use of dialogic pedagogies, the main studies have predominantly researched Western countries, such as the United Kingdom, United States and some European countries. There has been no exploration of how dialogic pedagogies can be applied to the African context. Moreover, previous research has not looked at how the application of multiple languages can be useful in dialogic engagement within education spaces. According to UNESCO (2015), most students would benefit by using their home languages in learning. However, more than 40% of the global population does not have access to education in their own language, which is a disadvantage. Hence this study will aim to provide original knowledge in these gap areas.

To summarise my theoretical perspectives, I explored the classroom engagement between students and teachers with the view that using dialogic pedagogy can help students to acquire knowledge by being more inquisitive, creative and problem-solving with others, which will help them to develop cognitively, learn better and likewise become socially confident. My study's conceptual framework draws on the work of Barnes (1976), Alexander (2008) and

Mercer (2000), where dialogic pedagogies are perceived as the use of exploratory talk in the classroom to derive shared knowledge between teachers and students. I also consider Freire and Macedo's (2012) assertion that dialogue can help to liberate communities through talk that enhances skills, such as problem-solving, discussion and creativity. Looking at African education from past colonial regimes, the students have been relatively passive, their imagination and creativity oppressed. Perhaps using dialogue could inspire their inquiry and creativity in the classroom and further let them use these skills outside the classroom. The users of dialogic pedagogies could also apply the acquired skills to their school learning and further, throughout their lifetime. Moreover, as Nyerere (Ibbott, 2014) argues, engaging in cultural and social experiences would be valuable for students' learning. Therefore, I have examined the use of multiple languages and inclusion of cultural experiences in education, which can empower Kenyans to negotiate their learning spaces as they move away from their colonial past.

In this study, I suggest that the use of four spaces is helpful in studying everyday pedagogies and in beginning to unmask dialogic spaces in Kenya. The four spaces are: physical; interactional; policy; and cultural. For ease of analysis, I present the spaces as separate entities, and they acted as my lenses on this investigation. In a study like this, there needs to be a distinctive and explicit discussion of each. However, there is no intention to express that at any moment of time they remain separate in practice, but are always interacting with each other, which creates tensions. When conflict arises between the spaces, there is an impact on dialogic pedagogies that at times has been overlooked by Mercer (2008) and Alexander (2008). In this study, these spaces for interaction and their impact are acknowledged, displaying the areas of tensions in the Kenyan context.

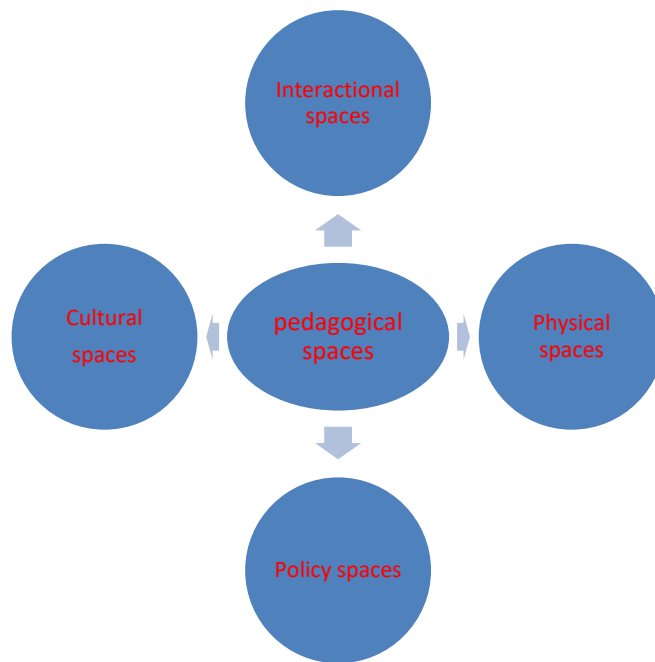


Figure 2-2 Pedagogical spaces

Physical space: this is the instrument that enables a dialogic environment. It includes the infrastructure and resources needed by students and teachers to support learning. Infrastructure can encompass building structures, electricity accessibility and the space available for flexible practice, such as fields, farms, workshops, and so on, likewise the means of transport, the security of the school environment and its support for learning. Resources include classrooms and the materials used in teaching and learning, such as texts and writing books, pens, tables, desks, computers, writing boards, cupboards and science experiment kits. In the schools in the study, most of these requirements of the physical space would be met, as in schools across the country.

In the Kenyan context, as in other countries, there are a few variations in resourcing that are dependent on the socioeconomic environment of the teachers and parents. Using Bourdieu’s perspectives (Alenan et al., 2015) the social capital of parents and community determines the quality of the physical space at a particular school. Most urban and private schools are more modern than rural schools in poor economic areas. Nonetheless, most have physical buildings, electricity, desks, textbooks and exercise books. Most teachers use blackboards and government-funded laptops for primary schools, provided by the end of 2017. Most teachers have access to the internet via their mobile phones. It is necessary to determine how these spaces can be effectively utilised for dialogic learning.

Interactional space represents the chance for dialogic pedagogies to take place, for example during classroom learning between teachers and students' engagement, or among students. In this space, the dimensions of dialogic pedagogies uphold the use of exploratory talk in classroom practice (Mercer, 2008), making learning more fruitful and progressive. All participants feel valued, as their contributions are accepted (Freire, 1970).

Any discussion of interactional space will recognise its temporality. By this, I mean that any classroom situation is at the same time impacted by what is going on in the moment, for example the political climate, the seasons and patterns of weather and the physical environment, among others. Therefore, the present issues can influence the phenomena of interaction. Similarly, memories of past events or subconscious forms of the past can shape interaction spaces. At the same time, the concept of 'possible selves' would define dialogic interactions and project the 'imagined futures' (Markus and Nurius, 1986). This means, 'what they can become, what they want to become, and what they want to avoid becoming' (Markus and Nurius, 1986).

Without acknowledging how the past, present and future impact on interaction space, the tensions can be invisible, hence the need for both asymmetrical and symmetrical dialogue. Yet, tension can be created by the person/s who want/s to dominate the situation with their ideas. The dynamics of the context, which can determine the interactions, need addressing for the effective use of interactional space. Alexander (2008) and Mercer et al. (2008) have not looked at how these tensions influence dialogic engagement, but in this study I will demonstrate how they occur and how they can be addressed in the Kenyan context.

Similar to the onion metaphor, where different layers affect the whole onion, the various parts of the education system affect the choice of practice in the classroom. Therefore, for dialogic practice to be successful, there needs to be a dialogue across the groups using diverse spaces. For example, the Ministry of Education, teachers and parents may need dialogue interaction to consistently and satisfactorily meet their students' learning needs.

Cultural space determines what is valuable within a community and indirectly impact on how students' learning needs are met. By focusing on cultural space, it is not intended that it is seen as neutral or easily definable; rather, it is contested since there is no single, distinct version that can be promoted as the specific Kenyan cultural space. But individual teachers and pupils engage in internal debate with others in spaces like classrooms. It is therefore vital to engage cultural space, as it can either support dialogue or impede it. Cultures are

seen to have fuzzy boundaries and yet people have specific perceptions about their confines (Said, 1995). However, how individuals or societies socially construct and engage in cultural space can vary from time to time.

Culture has invisible power (Bernstein, 2003) that reinforces specific practices. I argued earlier that the cultural aspects have an influence on Kenyan education; however, their inclusion in classroom learning is limited. As a result, it would be necessary to engage Kenyan culture positively through dialogue within the space available, to explore its potential. As noted previously, the initial system of formal education alienated African culture and its languages in classroom learning. Despite limited inclusion attempts, the full embrace of African culture in education can even be more beneficial. Cultures have invisible influence (Bernstein, 2003) in many areas, such as the development of policies, social cohesion, resource allocation and overall pedagogical practice. Therefore, encompassing cultural knowledge in learning is vital. Cultural space can also be utilised to question unfair inequalities, while supporting emancipation. A good example is where cultural roots can help to negotiate misrepresented identities. Additionally, the inclusion of local languages in learning can help to promote dialogic engagement in the classroom. Thus, cultural engagement in pedagogical spaces is essential.

Policy space involves how the Ministry of Education outlines the pedagogies applied to its schooling systems. Whether the kinds of practices promoted are inclusive of all the key elements was discussed earlier. There is a need to structure policies that support pedagogical development, otherwise reform will not take place at classroom level. The curriculum needs to have space for dialogue so that teachers can apply it in their practice. As Bernstein (2003) argues, there are invisible and visible pedagogies that drive practices. Some of the visible forces are through the policies made by the Ministry of Education and the government. They determine what is to be learned and how it is taught. The invisible pedagogies are the top-down authoritarian ways of incorporating changes in education policies without consultation from ground level, for instance without listening to teachers' perspectives. Overall, they should be inclusive of the subjects in the curriculum, the language of instruction, the materials needed for practice and the training needs for the teachers. Therefore, policy space needs to be engaged with pedagogical development.

However, teaching practices are highly influenced by politics, argues Cunningham (2012). He observed that in the United Kingdom, when a new government comes to power, it drafts

diverse policies to drive its agenda. The policies essentially affect teaching practice. This is not peculiar to the United Kingdom, and is noticeable in other countries such as Kenya. Therefore, for any pedagogical reviews to be agreed upon, there needs to be dialogue with all key groups, to develop sustainable pedagogies that are specific to the students in that context. At that point, the policies should support pedagogical practice, giving teachers and students' some autonomy over their classroom practice.

2.5 Challenges to the incorporation of new pedagogies.

Understanding the challenges that face pedagogical reforms will help me to identify the hazards to avoid in this study. Evidently, from various research at both global and local levels, the incorporation of new pedagogies has encountered challenges and tensions (Alexander, 2010; Guthrie, 2011; Tabulawa, 2013). Scrutinising some of these tensions helps to shape the most effective ways forward.

In this section, I first look at global challenges. Then, I look at the specific issues that have seen limited pedagogical review in Africa. Thereafter, I demonstrate ways in which this study proposed to minimise some of these challenges to accomplish effective change in pedagogical development.

2.5.1 Global challenges to adoption of new pedagogies

The Kenyan education system cannot develop in isolation, and needs to learn from others. It should engage with positive developments and beware of the challenges and tensions that could arise. Yet, it should not just copy policies and practices; moreover, it needs to be realistic and contextualise its advancement. Recently, global educators have increasingly researched and developed new pedagogies to help to improve teaching and learning. Most of the new methods have been applied to various settings and had positive outcomes, for example the use of dialogic pedagogies in schools (Mercer, 2000). Nonetheless, the users of these pedagogies have met substantial challenges, which at times have hindered their usage.

The social and economic rules and perspectives of society shape some pedagogies' developments and choices. According to Bernstein (2003), there are invisible and visible pedagogies that control classroom practice in various settings. A good example is the continued use of old methods of teaching, despite advocacy for advanced methods. According to Bernstein (2003), visible pedagogies promote the need for observable outcomes, such as exam results. Therefore, so teachers and students can quantify their

outcomes, they need exams to measure their success or failure. This exam-based practice is apparent in the majority of global contexts, including Kenya. As a result, conservative methods of teaching have remained globally popular in many academic settings. Unfortunately, most students, teachers, employers and even society want to see exam results so that they can recognise great teaching and learning. By contrast, in innovative methods such as dialogic learning and child-centred learning, most of the outcomes are invisible, such as critical thinking, collaboration, confidence and autonomy. Consequently, students are not captivated (Bernstein, 2003). Robinson (2001) contends that in the traditional classroom, where learning is measured through exams, there is no room for non-academic students. There are no chances for them to exercise their non-academic talents and intelligence, thus some are disadvantaged when their abilities are overlooked.

Teachers favour old methods since they are familiar with them, and they feel that they have control of their classrooms. The practices demonstrate the invisible and visible hierarchical power in the classroom. Ultimately, teachers have learned to play the role of leaders while the pupils play the passive role of followers. But when these roles are changed through the introduction of dialogic methods, tensions rise, hindering practice. A good example is the use of dialogue in classrooms, which poses challenges to the classroom order. During the talk, students can start asking questions, which at times can be political, and this can be worrying for teachers (Kessler-Singh and Robertson, 2015), producing a fear and power struggle. Consequently, some teachers would rather have a traditional classroom where they talk more while their students remain passive. Because of these invisible and visible power tensions, the use of progressive methods of teaching and learning is mired, despite their benefits (Bernstein, 2003; Kessler-Singh and Robertson, 2015).

Foucault argued that power can be used positively, for instance in education to enhance discipline and in the social organisation of space and institutions (Taylor, 2011). Still, the need to control can obstruct the use of progressive methods when teachers fear platforms on which students can exercise dialogue freely. When students are allowed to talk when learning, they develop confidence in expressing themselves and in critical thinking. Indeed, through the use of dialogic pedagogies, students are encouraged to engage in critical thinking and start to challenge the status quo (hooks, 1994), which is beneficial to their progress. Indeed, it is only through active engagement that one can claim to fully learn, so as to creatively implement acquired knowledge in one's learning (Robinson, 2001).

On the other hand, both students' school location and socioeconomic background can impact on the resources available. Then, resources accessibility can determine the methods of teaching and learning in schools. Interpreting the Bourdieu perspective (Alenan et.al. 2015), the social capital of students is influenced by their family background and can determine the pedagogical practice at their school. These aspects, among others, when categorised as social, cultural and economic factors, impact on the quality of education provided and ultimately students' outcomes. These invisible pedagogies (Bernstein, 2003) distinguish students of lower socioeconomic backgrounds from those of middle- and upper-class backgrounds. These differences are evident in the United Kingdom, according to the Department of Education (Effective Pre-school Primary Education, 2003). Social-class distinctions are not operational just here but in other societies across the world, such as the United States and Ghana, (Berk, 2002; McLeod, 2008; Akyeampong, 2009) and, according to Marxists, these are all capitalist societies, which are in essence divided and structured by class. They influence the knowledge and experiences that students have as they join school, and probably their outcomes after completing their education. Indeed, most students from lower socioeconomic classes do not do as well as their counterparts from higher socioeconomic groups. Drawing from Bourdieu's perspective (Alanen et al., 2015), their lack of valourised social capital hinders their progress in education.

Inequalities in education attainments are evident also regarding gender and ethnicity. In the United Kingdom, girls performed better in GCSEs than boys in 2013 to 2014 (UK Department of Education, 2015), while Asian communities like the Chinese and Indians are reported to do better than other ethnic groups. Black Caribbean students and Gypsies are reported to have the lowest outcomes in their GCSEs (UK Department of Education, 2015). These groups are predominantly in the lower social class. According to Gillborn (2008), such inequalities can be solved by government and schools, so should not be blamed on students' background. In his work on critical race theory, he claims that it is teachers' negative attitudes and poor government funding that often directly disadvantage these students' learning. This can impact on teachers' choice of pedagogies. Perhaps some teachers in disadvantaged schools are demotivated by using innovative methods of teaching, since they have lower expectations of their students. In the end, it is detrimental to students' education (Gillborn, 2008). This may be similar to Kenyan schools, especially for those in poor areas with fewer resources. Their application of pedagogy could be strongly impacted upon by socioeconomic background.

Additionally, Said (1994) claims that for some communities, especially those that were colonised (in Asia, Africa, and Central and South America), education is perceived as neo-colonialism. In Said's discussion on orientalism, he argues that global education poses tensions and inequalities. It promotes the cultural values and ways of life of the dominant group, mostly Western culture, yet it is hard to divorce this culture from imperialism, colonialism and neo-colonialism, under which ideals are hardwired into education (Said, 1995). Therefore, Said reasons that it is hard to separate the past and present, since they are usually intertwined. As a result, the ex-colonies mistrust advocacy for changes to their methods of teaching, for these are perceived as cultural domination. These issues are similarly eminent in Africa and are discussed in the next section. They can hinder the implementation of new pedagogies still, which is considered in planning this study.

2.5.2 The pedagogical review tensions in Africa

Most countries in Africa are reasonably similar, hence learning from one another about pedagogical reforms is helpful. The social-historical and economic backgrounds and tensions are identical in most settings, thus Kenya could learn much from these countries. Mazrui (1986) argues that the African continent is a product of a triple heritage. The continent's historical events in the pre-colonial and post-colonial eras influence it greatly. The triple heritage comes from the mixture of African indigenous culture, the Asian involvement and the effect of Europeans' presence from the fifteenth to the twentieth century. Formal education was a product of this heritage in Africa, and it haunts the history of cultural fusion (Ilfie, 1995; Mazrui, 1986; Deegan, 2009).

In post-colonial Africa, most governments have tried to make education free for all by building more primary schools, secondary schools and tertiary institutions, such as universities, colleges and polytechnics. They have tried to Africanise the education system by the incorporation of African values into subjects such as history and social studies. The Islamic countries have funded education and included Islamic studies, as they, too, built more schools (Deegan, 2009). Similarly, Christian mission schools have worked together with African governments in the post-colonial era to deliver a congruent education syllabus for all. They see it as a way for Africans to improve their socioeconomic and political status. Nonetheless, despite the improvements in the provision of better education over the years, African education faces many challenges.

Maathai (2009) seconds Mazrui's (1986) view of Africa's triple heritage, but she further claims that Africans have lost their sense of identity in the post-colonial era. She argues that the challenges that face Africa are to overcome its past and present unfortunate events, which include slavery, colonialism, mismanagement by their own post-colonial rulers, civil wars, drought issues, poverty and imperialism (neo-colonialism), among others. She specifies that these political and economic challenges, especially in the post-colonial era, have made Africa a dependant. During crises, Africans have been reliant on foreign aid from organisations such as the World Bank, IMF and Western countries like the United States, France and the United Kingdom. The funding has led to domination by those providing loans. At times, the aid donors have dictated the terms for using the funds and have directed how both to implement the projects and repay the funds. As Maathai notes, these terms have put Africa on its knees, since the repayment has been too much. Some countries, despite paying the original loans back, have been left paying huge sums as interest on the loans, continuing for many years with very little progress. As a result, these countries have remained economically and politically incapacitated from even considering upgrading their education system (Maathai, 2009).

Occasionally, the donors have dictated how education funds will be used and supervised how the teaching is facilitated. As noted earlier, this could contribute to political tension and cultural conflict. At the same time, as Africa is using much of its income to pay off the debt, it finds itself unable to promote the implementation of new methods of teaching, since it would require research, training and resources. Additionally, in those African countries that have suffered political and economic unrest, such as civil war, drought and epidemics, the education systems remain underfunded. Some countries have mismanaged their funds through corruption and political interference, which have challenged their educational progress. Hence, political, social and economic challenges have a direct impact on the implementation of new pedagogies. I would argue that the use of authoritarian styles of teaching and governing have conditioned citizens not to question the status quo even when injustice is prevalent. This can be addressed by incorporating dialogue into schools, as learners would develop confidence in expressing themselves and hold dialogic discussions for emancipation. Maathai (2009) reasons that Africans have survived much misfortune over the years but have shown resilience, so she argues that in the end they will prevail. Moreover, at present most African economies are doing well (AEU. 2014; ACPF, 2014). Therefore,

there is hope for better education and, moreover, a chance for the pedagogical reforms that this study explores.

In Africa, like other developing regions, there have been campaigns to incorporate new pedagogies (Guthrie, 2011; Tabulawa, 2013). These changes have not been fully successful for various reasons. For instance, despite the major benefits of new pedagogies, the changes seem to have been prescribed to the African nations by ‘outside’ agencies, for example the IMF and World Bank, which have little cultural understanding of these countries (Guthrie, 2011; Tabulawa, 2013). The lack of insiders’ knowledge and support has led to failure (Guthrie, 2011; Tabulawa, 2013). Certainly, because most African countries are ex-colonies, there is underlying mistrust between the continent and foreigners. Therefore, most African people are resistant to being told what to do by ‘Westerners’, whom they perceive as exploiters due to their past experience with colonial governments and missionaries (Deegan, 2009; Tabulawa, 2013). This view is confirmed by the lack of cultural sensitivity when new pedagogy advocates appear to be dictating the changes needed without democratic negotiations with the people. Schweisfurth (2011) argues that there is a power-agency dictatorship by donor agencies on what is needed for African countries in receipt of their money. Due to these cultural and historical barriers, the call for the incorporation of new pedagogies fails.

New pedagogies also become problematic as the structures and value systems are unfavourable. According to Murphy and Wolfenden (2013), in order for teaching and learning to be effective, teacher training needs updating and supportive resources provided. Unfortunately, most countries have not been able to meet these needs due to a lack of resources and the poor planning. To overcome these challenges, there is a need for dialogue with African teachers to explore their positions, attitudes and needs. Ethnographic studies are therefore imperative if any progressive changes are to be successful in these countries’ education (Guthrie, 2011; Tabulawa, 2013), although Guthrie (2011) argues that calling changes in education pedagogies changes in Africa is a fallacy since formalism is deeply embedded, leading to the failed attempts to grow. These changes are imperative and warranted, especially since African education exhibits poor standards. Therefore, education researchers should not give up but, instead, aim to find solutions. Maybe, as Tabulawa (2013) stipulates, when insiders’ voices are included then the reforms will be successful. Hence, in my study I engaged with teachers in the Kenyan context.

2.5.3 Reconceptualising theory for Kenyan pedagogical development

In the preceding theoretical discussions, it is clear that in the African context pedagogical studies have been underexplored. The majority of studies seem to concentrate on Western settings, including studies on dialogic pedagogies. Therefore, in this study, it was important to reconceptualise theory to articulate how the latter can be effectively utilised in the Kenyan setting. In exploring pedagogical spaces and developing recommended pedagogies for Kenya, my understanding of the setting helped me to recognise and validate the needs of students and teachers. Moreover, I aimed to value their culture, philosophies and views on pedagogies as I worked with them. My approach was enlightened by Nyerere's advocacy for an education that values culture and that aims to meet the needs of the students, as conceptualised by students themselves, which was critical (Ibbott, 2014). On the other hand, Guthrie (2014) claims that the failure of progressive education in developing countries is due to a lack of appropriate study in that context. Thus, eliciting society's perceptions, attitudes and knowledge is vital for new pedagogies to be successfully incorporated. Therefore, when I planned my study, I did so from an informed viewpoint.

I used exploratory discussions with the teachers to establish the best ways to utilise pedagogic spaces to help to overcome apparent tensions. The use of dialogue was intended to achieve an understanding of the current position of the schools, the teachers and the intended aims of the new pedagogy. In addition, I hoped that dialogue would help Kenyan teachers to feel respected and included in the process. Post-colonial mistrust, which could create tensions between the local context and global pedagogical advocates, will be addressed. In this study, it was intended that through active engagement with the Kenyan teachers, using a mixture of methods on an ethnographic framework, the development of culturally acceptable pedagogies will both improve learning and overcome alienation (Sternberg, 2007). As Tabulawa (2013) asserts, the advocates of travelling wisdom in terms of new pedagogies need to take account of the social, cultural and political factors, so I took these into consideration. Understanding why teachers choose to use monologic methods would help to develop effective solutions. Researchers have to be culturally sensitive, which my Kenyan background and use of superior ethical procedures enabled me to be (Ackers and Hardman, 2012; Tabulawa, 2013; Guthrie, 2014).

The institutions responsible for the changes in policy in Kenya are the government and the Ministry of Education, and they should be involved in the development of new pedagogies.

They should be ready to fund training and provide guidance and suitable space for the incorporation of new pedagogies. Education researchers should assist in training teachers to adopt new pedagogies through either in-service or formal training or workshops. In this study, the findings and recommendations are to be shared with Kenyan teachers and all interested parties, such as the Ministry of Education, with the aim of continuous engagement in this process of pedagogical advancement. Since the economic status of Kenya has improved in the last decade, the government has targeted robust education, as outlined in its 2030 Vision. Therefore, it should be willing to fund pedagogical development and assist in the training of teachers and provision of facilities to enable the adoption of progressive pedagogies to attain its 2030 Vision (Republic of Kenya, 2008). I remain optimistic that the training colleges will support teachers in applying new pedagogies and further support the practical implementations (Murphy and Wolfenden, 2013). Progress can be achieved through active collaboration and dialogue among the key players in the education system.

2.6 Chapter summary

My understanding of the Kenyan context was critical to this study. It enabled me, as a researcher, to look at the experiences of students in Kenya with a less biased perspective. I approached my explorations with an eye of curiosity, aiming to comprehend the strengths of the Kenyan education system while identifying the gaps that need revising. Previous studies have indicated that the education system in Kenya had progressed since Independence; however, the pedagogies have remained teacher-centred. There have been several calls for the review of pedagogies (Ackers and Hardman, 2012; Benoite, 2013), but perhaps little has been done. Without pedagogical advancement, students' learning is restricted, thus this study aimed to determine the best way forward. I planned to do this by engaging teachers in the schools for their insiders' perspectives.

According to Alexander's (2008) and Mercer and Dawes (2014) assertions, the use of dialogic pedagogies in classroom learning has been seen as valuable, since students can engage actively. By using dialogic platforms, students start to contribute to their learning and also question the issues that relate to them (Freire, 1970; Ladson-Billings, 1995). These kinds of engagement prepare students beyond their classroom education. Even so, the incorporation of dialogic pedagogies has been limited. For this study, I worked with teachers to identify the feasibility of these pedagogies' application to the Kenyan setting.

According to African scholars (Tabulawa, 2013; Ibbott, 2014; Njoya, 2017), having pedagogical approaches that are culturally relevant is vital as it helps students to engage innovatively. There is a need for students to obtain knowledge and skills that are not only helpful in classroom learning but that also relate to their outside world. Overall, it is important for classroom practices to engage students culturally, critically, dialogically and creatively. From my stance, this study aimed to examine the kind of pedagogies that are warranted in Kenyan classrooms. More so, it aimed to determine the key influences of pedagogic space that can support or impede the incorporation of recommended approaches, as this would be helpful when planning development.

In these theoretical foundations, there are challenges apparent in the incorporation of new pedagogies, both at local and at global level, which at times caused tensions. Some of these tensions can generate confusion, but they can also create an atmosphere that enables deeper thinking on the progression of knowledge. They allow researchers to identify research gaps and determine their next course of action for knowledge contribution. Subsequently, for this study I illuminated the Kenyan students' position as I determined how their autonomy can be supported in education. I strategically planned to work with teachers to understand their current pedagogical practices and tried to identify the practices that they would like to endorse at their setting. This was in conjunction with identifying how pedagogical spaces can be utilised to maximise students' potential through engaging them creatively, dialogically and collaboratively. These practices would equip students with problem-solving skills for use in the classroom and also outside school.

The other purpose is to emancipate 'silenced groups', such as teachers in Kenya. The study presented a platform for these groups to voice their authentic positions and their current educational needs. It is worth assisting these 'silenced groups' to challenge the predominant top-down dictatorship by hegemonic groups, such as the government, the Ministry of Education and global organisations.

Overall, this study has addressed some of the gaps identified in the literature. Firstly, it examined how Kenyan students can be active learners. Secondly, it was clear from the literature that there was a need for cultural and critical integration in pedagogical practices to enable students in Kenya to learn effectively and acquire skills that relate to their lives. Thirdly, there is a lack of teachers' perspectives in Kenya concerning their own practice and the place for dialogic pedagogies, which the participation of teachers brought to light. The

study has revealed the influential key 'players' who need to be engaged in pedagogical spaces for successful pedagogic development.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I start by discussing and reflecting on the epistemology that forms the basis of this study. How teachers engage with spaces available for them in developing dialogic pedagogies is always a dynamic and unique process. How they move towards any change, including the move towards more learner-centred pedagogies (Schweisfurth, 2014), is a similarly fluid process. As noted earlier, the position towards dialogic pedagogy in this study is that is continually taking shape, and that teachers and students have agency in their classroom engagement.

Research in education (as in all research) has been strongly influenced by positivists' paradigms, whose aims have focused on discovering an objective truth from a predetermined position, rather than exploring how research participants construct their worlds of practice and their versions of the truth. However, interpretivism, in conducting qualitative studies, aims to explore participants' explanations of their experiences and understandings. This study aims to explore the perceptions of teachers, which are unique constructions from their Kenyan context, history and culture. Positivist paradigms do not offer a solution for the aim of this study, hence choosing the interpretivist position gave the participants the agency to voice their work experiences and understandings of the context. The interpretivist choice unshackled the participants and me from the constraints of aiming for a specific end and allowed us to explore practical and collaborative pedagogy in the Kenyan context.

Although Mercer's (2000) and Alexander's (2008) work has been influential in conceptualising what dialogic pedagogy is, or might be, I argue that the time- and culture-specific aspects of dialogic pedagogy are missing. As a result, I am interested in exploring how dialogic approaches, originally developed in the United Kingdom, could apply to Kenyan schools and what space might be available for Kenyan teachers to develop them further. In this study, I built in an awareness of cultural and time-specific concerns, since they were likely to be significant to pedagogic development.

The outline of this methodology chapter is within these three sections:

1. The methodological approach underlines the positions taken on the study's data collection, describing the research aims and justification for choosing the primary methods.
2. The second part is the fieldwork, giving details of the data collection process. It includes the process of data collection, details about the participants and their engagements, and the surroundings of the study.
3. The third section outlines the details of the data analysis process, which includes transcription, coding, reflection and thematic analysis.

Overall, it is essential to note that the data collection was conducted in a rural community in Central Kenya, at two primary schools (Baraka and Elimu Schools). My study focus was Baraka School, but I undertook some observations in Elimu for comparative purposes. I also completed community observations at a local church (Maendeleo Church).

My study methodology was a mixture of methods under an ethnographic approach. The primary data collection methods were participant observation, teacher interviews, and a focus group. Five teachers at Baraka School were observed in their classrooms and later interviewed individually. The same teachers participated in the focus group.

3.2 Methodological approaches

According to Miell and Pike (2003), a methodology is mainly concerned with planning and implementing appropriate methods to obtain research evidence. However, methodology is more than its parts, and here I aimed to address some of the intertwined complexities and tensions. This part of my study mapped out the starting points and the questions, and how these evolved during my research. My values and life experiences shaped the quest for answers. The knowledge about schools and pedagogies in the Kenyan context could be approached from various theoretical and methodological perspectives, and here I adopted an emic perspective (Zhu and Chiappini, 2013). An emic approach describes a process of immersion in a culture, observing and recording participants' life experiences from an insider perspective, subsequently aiming to report the insiders' knowledge. In methodological literature, this is contrasted with an etic approach, which describes communities and cultures without the insiders' frame of mind or 'taking on' their world, and thereby the description can be perceived to be incomplete (Kottak, 2009: 47). Emic approaches have been said to centre on thoughts that are meaningful to the participants, while etic approaches are more aligned with positivists' 'neutral', top-down, scientific generalisations or 'truths' (Headland, Pike and Harris, 1990).

To achieve reliable and trustworthy research, investigators formulate research questions to guide their data collection, and use various tools to accomplish their research plan. Thus, my objective for this study was to use three methods to obtain data that would answer the main research questions to inform pedagogical reforms in Kenya.

The direction of my investigation progressed from previous research (Flick, 2014). Looking at the evidence from the preceding chapter on theoretical foundations, it was apparent that several gaps in the literature needed exploration. To do so, I applied a mixture of methods under an ethnographic framework, intending to attain knowledge to fill in some of those gaps when exploring my first two research questions on how schoolteachers talk about their teaching and learning and the kind of pedagogies they would want to develop in their practice. My approach rested on both my observations of participants and examining teachers' interpretations from the interviews and focus group discussion. The choice of this methodology was to provide an in-depth understanding of the context through diverse methods, which helps obtain rich data.

3.2.1 Research aims

The main research aim was to explore dialogic pedagogies in Kenyan classrooms. I examined these using four pedagogical 'spaces' as my lenses. To fully answer the above aim, I formulated three research questions;

1. How do schoolteachers talk about teaching and learning in their classrooms?
2. What kind of pedagogies would teachers in Kenya want to develop in their practice, and why?
3. How does teacher training in Kenya support dialogic pedagogic approaches?

To explore the above research questions, I utilised a mixture of methods in an ethnographic framework to understand the Kenyan teacher and student phenomenon as I examined their schools' settings.

3.2.2 Justification for my methodological approach

As my research questions above demonstrate, I aimed to focus on teachers' lived experiences in Kenya, therefore a qualitative design was deemed best suited to this study. I was interested in qualitative data and in giving a platform for teachers to voice, explain and reflect on their

classroom practice and further acknowledge their cultural values, everyday needs and limitations. My approach relates to Nyerere's (1968) advocacy for an education that values people's culture and meets their needs, while disabling hegemonies.

In this study, I applied an ethnographic framework to explore how teachers interpret their classroom engagement. Ethnography is rooted in anthropology but has been adopted by other social science disciplines. Ethnographers aim to understand cultures by observing groups of people in their daily setting for an extended period. For this study, I adopted an ethnographic approach by observing Kenyan teachers in their classrooms for five weeks to understand their practice through their activity and interpretations. Generally, when choosing to use ethnographic approaches, researchers aim to explore practices of specific social groups in their natural context, for example in their homes, their daily working context or in their communities (Miell and Pike, 2003; Flick, 2014). Interaction with the subjects provides the insiders' views that promote understanding of social processes in context, highlighting the group's cultural values and practices, daily actions and significant meanings of their choices and needs (Woods, 2006). This generation of subjective information is through integrating various data methods, for example participant observations, interviews and focus groups. After that, there is widespread triangulation of all acquired data during analysis to achieve increased reliability from the results (Helfrich, 1999). The interpretation of analysis develops meaningful understanding with theoretical support, which contributes to new knowledge.

The main reason for selecting a mixture of methods in an ethnographic framework in this study was to explore the real-world practice of teaching and learning in a classroom setting. The methodology aimed to relate daily classroom activities to theory and research concepts (Mills and Morton, 2013). There was a mixture of participant observations, interviews with teachers at a Kenyan school and focus group discussions. The participant observations were documented in detail in my field notes and they were complemented by photographs taken to help to illuminate the real-life context. It was important to observe the teachers' ordinary, everyday work to identify daily classroom practice and perspectives that might be overlooked during semi-structured interviews.

Another reason for taking an ethnographic approach was concerned with social justice; it was important to challenge and possibly reject predetermined ideas about Kenyan culture and education through investigating insiders' views. Most research studies tend to approach Kenyan and other African contexts with preconceived concepts, such as a holistic

representation of African childhoods being susceptible to HIV and AIDS, child soldiers and children in poverty, with limited or no access to social amenities such as healthcare or education (Diop, 2014; Poncian, 2015; Corrado and Robertson, 2019). These misrepresentations seem to ignore the majority of happy and fulfilled childhoods on this continent (African Development Bank. 2011; Benoit, 2013; Corrado, 2019). As a result of these perceptions, global organisations typically give directives on how to improve the education systems in Africa without much consultation with the teachers (Guthrie, 2011; Tabulawa, 2013; Schweisfurth, 2002, 2014). Therefore, this study provided Kenyan teachers with a platform to voice their views. As Mills and Morton (2013) state, one of the strengths of ethnographic studies is their focus on people's experiences and knowledge of their context, hence eradicating preconceptions, or at least diminishing them. This study also gave the Kenyan teachers a forum to reflect on their practice and a platform to negotiate superior practice for their schools. Their active participation helped to construct their identity and verify the historical, social and cultural background of Kenyan education.

There seem to be diverse positions in ethnography, which can create tensions. I argue that these are paradigm wars in ethnography. These arise when researchers' interpretations and perspectives vary concerning how ethnography should be conducted (Madison, 2005). This struggle is whether the original anthropological methods of data collection should be developed or remain unchanged. In traditional ethnography, investigators need to go to the context for lengthy periods and immerse themselves in the world of their participants. The data have to be collected through detailed participant observation, recording field notes and informally interviewing participants (Denscombe 2003; Siraj-Blatchford and Siraj-Blatchford, 2004).

New, emerging researchers have encouraged the use of a mixture of methods, whereby they can go into the context and observe participants yet at the same time incorporate other methods, such as conducting interviews or focus groups, vignettes and checklists (Woods, 2006; Pink, 2014; Fusch, Fusch and Ness, 2017). A mixture of methods under an ethnographic framework is especially possible when the researcher is conducting a focused study for a short period. The use of diverse methods can increase both validity and credibility (Kawulich, 2005). Some ethnographers argue that, as long as ethnographers take time to immerse themselves in in-depth observation of their participants in their daily contexts, these studies are taking an ethnographic approach (Denscombe, 2003; Madden 2010). Gage (1989) contended that education ethnographers have a moral obligation to conduct studies that aim

to emancipate their participants. Emancipation can be achieved by listening to participants' voice to understand their world and perspectives. To do this, a researcher may include semi-structured interviews to obtain in-depth information. Mannay and Morgan (2015) argue that, in discussing ethnographic approaches, researchers should not over-focus on the techniques and lose sight of the process. Their argument states that the inclusion of other methods in ethnography (such as visual aids, interviews and focus group discussions) is a way to gather fuller data, rather than losing the methodology (Mannay and Morgan, 2015).

The positionality of an ethnographer could be informed by an individual's preconceived perceptions and political ideologies. This can be another area where tensions in ethnography arise. Tobin (1999) argued that, at times, the researcher as an outsider can project their views as they interpret their observations of participants. A biased interpretation can overlook the perspectives of the participants who are the insiders. To overcome bias, a researcher should incorporate additional methods from other ethnographic studies. An example is in conducting a mini-ethnographic study, when the focus of the study is on a small scale and the researcher may spend less time in the context (Fusch, Fusch and Ness, 2017). In my study, I incorporated semi-structured interviews and focus groups to gain a deeper understanding and views from the teachers. I was able to have dialogic discussions to help my study. It was also for social justice, whereby the voices of teachers were listened to through the use of a bottom-up approach. In addition, I took detailed field notes during my participant observations and photos, as well. The majority of studies in Africa (including Kenya) have been conducted by 'outsiders' who, at times, come to the context with preconceived interpretations and political views. My study aimed to overcome this bias through illuminating the reality. I obtained varied data that were triangulated to overcome my own bias. I also gained data that illuminated participants' insights.

A drawback in taking an ethnographic approach is the lengthy time usually needed for data collection. Ideally, as noted earlier, traditional ethnographers advocate for a researcher to stay in the context for over a year. In my case, I spent only five weeks in Kenya, working with the teachers in the schools. That said, the advantages outweighed the disadvantages since, as a Kenyan professional, I was in a privileged position to access and to explore Kenyan teachers' perceptions. I am from Kenya, but I am not a teacher. I hoped that this additional difference helped to build trust between the teachers and me. I had no professional background in developing pedagogies, so the teachers could be open and reflective and recognise that it was not my role to judge their efforts.

Additionally, I contend that I have in-depth social and cultural knowledge of the setting. I lived in Kenya for 25 years and went through the education system from nursery to college. Most of my extended family members and close acquaintances work in education, from primary to tertiary level. My experiences and connections with the context have given me social and cultural knowledge and understanding, to a much greater extent than an ethnographer who might be within the context for several years. Jeffrey and Troman (2006) have argued that it is difficult to identify a specific duration for which ethnographers should be prescribed to stay in the context. They argue that it is dependent on the researchers' situation. An example of a short ethnographic study is that by Walford (2001), as he stayed in the context for only three weeks. In my case, I was in the context for five weeks and furthermore was familiar with the context, as explained above.

My research was a small-scale study, and some may dispute how it may inform another context. Over the years, I have visited several African countries, and while living in the United Kingdom (for 16 years) I have regularly engaged with Africans from various countries across the continent. These encounters have provided me with both an outsider's and insider's knowledge of these contexts. Through this information, I have some understanding of their similarities to and differences from the Kenyan context. Thus, my study may be able to inform some areas concerning the incorporation of dialogic practice in education (Corrado and Robertson, 2019). But, as noted earlier, the positionality of researchers and readers might lead to critical questioning of my claim that a small study can inform broader contexts. Still, I argue that it is crucial to break the hegemonic barriers between various ethnographic paradigms and be open to understanding the position of others. Such openness and inclusivity might create a platform for debate and dialogue, which may help to lessen the paradigm tensions.

3.2.3 Rationale for methods of data collection

I chose three methods of data collection, namely classroom observation, teacher interviews and a focus group with teacher participants. I applied the three methods to acquire reliable and rigorous data.

Observations

Participant observations are vital in ethnographic research, where investigators observe participants in their daily settings. Observations help to obtain in-depth knowledge of people and their context for a period. My observations of teachers' and students' engagement in

their classroom and within their school were to obtain useful data (Yin, 2009) in the context. Identification of group-specific speech patterns and rules of speaking were observed. Thus, my participant observations aimed to uncover Kenyan teachers' values, beliefs and practices within their classroom and surroundings. In this study, the main observations were conducted at one specific school for five weeks. However, for supplementary data on the social-cultural reality of the students, additional observations were made at my former primary school and local church. The data from the church provided insights on childhood experiences in the community. Elimu School observations supplied a variety of school experiences that illuminated the impact of economic background.

Arrangements for the process of observations were discussed with participants before data collection during a briefing to avoid any interference with the learning programme. All participant observations were recorded descriptively in a research field diary, and were coded and subsequently analysed to derive themes (see Appendix V and VII). Additionally, I documented my reflections during the study. Reflection was vital since ethnographic studies rely on representations of the context. In the words of Clifford, '(e)thnography is the interpretation of cultures' (Clifford, 1988), and here I aimed to interpret a Kenyan pedagogical culture. My reflections were written up shortly after the observations (example in Appendix V), and re-readings undertaken at a much later stage, when other datasets became available, as this enables researchers to present a trustworthy account of the context. Classroom reality, like all knowledge in the non-positivist tradition, is socially constructed, and my aim here is to represent a transparent account of how I constructed my own understanding.

A significant advantage of participant observation is obtaining rich data from a natural context (Flick, 2014). The engagement promotes understanding. One can combine various tools to record data, for example photos, video recordings, directly engagement in the field or observations and field notes (Denzin, 1989; Flick, 2014). In my participant observations, I aimed to make field notes and take photos to support my evidence.

Interviews

The second phase of my data collection involved semi-structured interviews. Generally, an interview is an organised method of acquiring data, where a researcher prepares a set of questions to ask a participant in order to gain information. Mainly, interviews are divided into three categories: structured, unstructured and semi-structured (Flick, 2007, 2014).

Semi-structured interviews were adopted for this study, because they would give me both a focus for my topic of investigation and some flexibility to probe for more information. They tend to be a common and accepted form of interview, and the researcher uses open-ended questions and gives participants time to answer in a flexible way (Flick, 2007, 2014). In this study, semi-structured interviews helped to create a dynamic and purposeful working relationship with the participants. I piloted this in England in a London school, where I undertook classroom observations, and this informed my understanding of dialogic practice. I further tested my interview techniques in Kenya with two participants, who helped me to improve before I commenced the actual study. Initially, there was a need to familiarise myself with the rooms and the recording equipment. Then, I briefed the participants, allowing them the freedom to participate in the interviews actively, and reminded them of their rights. The discussions were audio recorded to help to gather data more accurately, which I later transcribed to identify the emerging themes. I aimed to keep the conversation going for about 45 minutes to explore the issues deeply. I tried to be flexible and use good listening skills such as patience, noting non-verbal cues, allowing enough time to talk and asking clarification questions.

In these semi-structured interviews, open-ended questions (Appendix 1V) were used. The questions were further refined during the process of getting to know the teachers and their students, their shared classroom practice and the general school and classroom ethos. The questioning format gave participants the chance to explain their thoughts and ideas without restriction. Teachers could voice their identities, experiences and knowledge of classroom practices and methods of teaching and learning. They were willing to reflect on their daily practices and contribute to the advancement of practice. During the interviews, I sought to maintain a natural human interaction yet also endeavoured not to be obstructive. I tried to be flexible in wording while asking the questions. However, I remained focused on the subject matter. I probed for further information in some questions to achieve an in-depth understanding (Flick, 2007, 2014).

Focus group

A focus group discussion complemented my teacher interviews. Focus groups involve recruiting groups of participants and engaging them in discussion, as shared discussion tends to support participants to provide more profound accounts of their practice. According to Hautzinger (2012), the inclusion of a focus group discussion in mixed methodology enriches the data. During my focus group discussion, all the teachers sat in a circle to discuss the

questions that I read out. They had another chance to explore their ideas on dialogic pedagogies. I shared the study aims beforehand, and they all knew that I was interested in their teaching experiences and in exploring dialogic pedagogies with them. I moderated the session to make sure that all participants had an equal chance to contribute. From time to time I interjected to obtain clarification of issues or to involve all participants in the discussions. Still, I tried to stay non-committal by sitting further away and avoiding direct eye contact.

3.2.4 Ethical considerations

To conduct credible research, researchers have to consider ethical guidelines. Ethics are principles that help to protect all involved in the study from any harm and, at the same time, to promote social justice. These guidelines equate to moral values, professional ethics or law regulations, and they protect researchers and participants from psychological, physical, relational or financial damage (Potter, 2006; Gomm, 2008). BERA and Middlesex University ethics guidelines were followed throughout this study, especially while dealing with all participants (Potter, 2006; Gomm, 2008; British Psychological Society (BPS), 2014; British Educational Research Association (BERA), 2011). Though the data collection was in Kenya, BERA's ethical standards were followed and cultural sensitivity maintained.

The study posed neither physical nor psychological risks of harm to participants (Downie and Calman, 1987). In the United Kingdom, I had had a Disclosure and Barring Service check (DBS) to confirm that I had no previous criminal record, as required by the University. I obtained ethics approval from Middlesex University ethics committee and consent from the headteachers of the schools in both Kenya and the United Kingdom.

The information sheets (Appendix 1 and II) were shared and discussed with the teachers and the headteacher to inform them about the study. This promoted openness and respected participants' right to voluntarily participate and withdraw whenever they needed to. Their privacy was also considered throughout by using pseudonyms and by keeping the records safe, which helped to comply with the Data Protection Act (1998).

As a PhD student based in London, I was aware that my status could impact on the study. Kenyan teachers might see me as an outside expert, trying to critique their work. Therefore, it was vital to have preliminary visits to create rapport and explain my intentions. I aimed to

understand their perspectives and amplify their voice regarding developing pedagogies that suit their setting.

3.3 Description of fieldwork

The timings for data collection were aligned with the context suitability since, in Kenya, the academic year starts in January and ends in November. In the first term, which runs from January to March, students are still adjusting to the level of their new class, while between September and November they are busy getting ready for the end-of-year exams. May was considered to be the most settled time to carry out a study, as it is in the second term and there is relatively less pressure on teachers. Additionally, the teachers and students will have just come back from the Easter holiday.

Table 3-1 Research timetable

Timeframe	Activity
Initial contact (Researcher) February 2015	Obtain permission (H/T) in United Kingdom and in Kenya
Week 3 February 2015	UK pilot observations
Kenya preliminary visits April 2016	- Pilot interviews and discussions in Kenya - Create rapport/ Information sheets/ Consent forms
Week 1 May 2016	Briefing/Observations
Week 2 May 2016	Observations
Week 3 May 2016	Interviews
Week 4 May 2016	Focus group
Week 5 June 2016	Observations/Debriefing

Table 3.2 provides a detailed timeline for data collection, including the tasks, actual activity dates, specific spaces and participants involved.

Table 3-2 Data collection timeline

Week	Date	Task	Participant (role)	Class (age)	Subject
1			Jill (teacher)	6 (11 years)	Mathematics

	25 February	Pilot observations (UK school - Greene)	Jack (teacher)	6 (11 years)	English
2	29 April	Pilot Interviews & discussions (Kenya - family)	Christina (teacher) Pat (teacher) Paul (lecturer)	Primary High school University	Retired Experienced Prof/Researcher
3	3 May	Baraka - orientation	Building rapport/briefing/planning		
	6 May	Initial observations	Signing consent forms /Exam observations/photos		
4	10 May	Observations	Kim (teacher)	7 (12 years)	English
	12 May	Observations	Kuria (teacher) Gathenya (teacher) Pius (teacher)	5 (10 years) 7 7	English Science Mathematics
5	17 May	Interviews	Kim		
	18 May	Observations	Kuria Pius Elimu School (former primary)	Photos	
	19 May	Interviews	Mike (H/teacher) Gathenya		
6	24 May	Observations	Kim	5	Science
			Kuria	6 (11 years)	English
			Pius	8 (13 years)	Mathematics
	26 May	Focus Group	ALL (teachers)		
7	31 May	Final Observations	School	Debriefing/photos	
	4 June	Community Observations	Maendeleo Church	Photos	

3.3.1 Preliminary pilot studies

Pilot studies were undertaken both in the United Kingdom and in Kenya. The first was classroom observations in London, while the latter were two pilot interviews and one

informal discussion in Kenya. These preliminary studies helped to inform the pattern for this study's fieldwork.

United Kingdom pilot study

As a way of practising and testing the research methods, I carried a small-scale pilot in a UK primary school. This was to develop the research instruments, such as the interview questions. A pseudonym for the school was used - Greene - to uphold confidentiality. I visited this London school to observe Year 6 English and mathematics lessons. The recommendation for the school was by the University's teacher training department, as it was aiming to develop dialogic pedagogies, hence I could observe its practice for myself.

When I arrived at the school, I met the deputy headteacher and two teachers, Jack and Jill (pseudonyms), whom I was to observe. The school was clean and appeared quite modern. All the students were in their classes when I arrived. I sat briefly in the staffroom, chatting with some teachers, then I joined the lessons with Jack and Jill. In the classroom observation, I sat at the back as the teachers taught and engaged with their students.

The English lesson was about 90 minutes long and divided into three parts. In the first, students engaged in grammar and vocabulary, where they answered questions written on the whiteboard. They had a five-minute break, then they discussed 'protest'. They discussed types of protest, its advantages and disadvantages and used the 'Rosa Parker' experience in their discussion. After the discussion, the students engaged in guided reading, where the teacher read a book chapter aloud and the students listened. Then, the students had time to answer questions about the book chapter individually as the teacher marked their work.

During the mathematics lesson, there was a division of students into three groups according to attainment: booster; top; and middle group. The booster group had tuition prior to the start of the lesson, while the others studied on their own. Then, in the actual maths lesson, all the students went into three classes according to level. This categorisation promotes individualised teaching and support. I joined the booster class for my observations. There were two teachers (Jack and Jill) in the class, one teaching and the other giving support. The teacher informed the students about the topic. She did sums on the whiteboard. When she felt confident that the students understood the concepts, she asked them to do the questions on the board. All the students were involved. In the last part of the session, the students tackled sums on their own with individual support from the teachers. The lesson was about 90 minutes, which gave the students ample time to cover the topic of the lesson and to have

individual support. The students were actively involved in the lessons. For example, in the English lesson the students discussed and debated how social justice is important and the ways of protesting, such as peacefully or violently. They discussed how Rosa Parks in the United States protested peacefully against racial segregation. I found the lessons' timing and structuring beneficial for dialogic pedagogy, since they were long enough to engage students in discussion and there was time for individualised support. The classroom set-up was interesting and unlike my schooldays in Kenya. The students sat at square tables that could allow more dialogue between them than lecture style, facing the front. The set-up seemed friendly and less hierarchical to me than the traditional one.

3.3.2 Kenyan pilot interviews and discussions

Before I undertook the main data collection in Kenya, I completed two trial pilot interviews with my family members, Pat and Christina, to test my research tools such as the research questions and my recording gadgets. I also aimed to familiarise myself with the Kenyan context again, since I had been out of the country for a while. Pat is my brother, who worked as a mathematics teacher in a high school in Kenya for three years. He went through primary and secondary education in Kenya before pursuing his Bachelor's degree in Uganda. The second interviewee is my mother, who is a retired primary teacher. After undertaking her college qualification, she became a PI (Primary teacher Grade1). She taught in several primary schools for over 35 years. By the time she retired, she was an SI (Secondary teacher Grade 1).

I carried out the interviews in a home environment, in a quiet room. I recorded the interviews and followed all of my planned questions. I was able to practise how to ask questions and to probe for information. I was also able to time myself and to restructure my methods of interviewing as I received feedback from my interviewees. They noted that the questions made them reflect on their teaching experience, and suggested that I should give more time for to respond. Moreover, I also practised using the recording devices and attained additional insights about Kenyan education systems from my interviewees' experiences.

Prior to my study, I obtained guidance from an experienced Kenyan researcher, who is also my cousin and mentor, on how to carry out research. Paul, as I refer to him in this study, advised me informally. He has been a professor at a renowned university in Kenya for over 25 years, has been involved in various studies and supervised many PhD candidates. Part of his advice was to respect the context socially by providing subtle incentives to the

participants in the form of food or drink. This practice could be perceived as problematic in the United Kingdom and, in adhering to British ethical guidelines, could be construed as giving incentives. However, because my main aim in this study was to see classroom practice and pedagogy from participants' frame of reference, I decided to respect the culture of the context and comply with Kenyan practice.

Consideration for ethics is an ongoing process and much more than seeking ethical approval. The overall process includes acknowledgement of the tension between researchers' aims and their version of ethics and those of the participants in the field, which can arise at any stage of the study. Ethical consideration is about respect. The decision to respect the culture of the context serves here as an example of ethical listening and tuning in.

3.3.3 Community observations

As discussed in Chapter 1 (section 1.4), the Kenyan education system has its roots in its colonial past. However, I was also interested in investigating whether some of the older, pre-colonial traditions (traditional informal teaching and learning) were evident in the local community. The timetable for data collection was limited. It did not allow me to observe families, come to know them well or watch varied age groups of children engaging in play at weekends. Hence, I decided to take time to observe my former local church, Maendeleo (pseudonym), during attendance at church services, to explore these old traditions. The paradox that both institutions (church and school) were introduced to Kenya by the former British colonial masters did not escape me. Nevertheless, at the same time it made me observe a very different kind of context.

I chose 'Maendeleo' as the pseudonym for this church as it means progress. It is a Presbyterian Church of East Africa, with a congregation of over a thousand followers. Most are local people who speak Gikuyu, Kiswahili and English. They predominantly used Gikuyu to communicate daily. There were two main services on a Sunday, one in the morning in which the language of communication is English, which is popular with youth, and a second Gikuyu service which is family-based. The stone-built church is modern, with sheet-iron roofs and walls decorated in white and blue paint. They use electricity for lighting and equipment, such as computers, sound system, PowerPoint and music keyboards. The two-acre compound has two main gates, and is enclosed by a cypress hedge. The compound has various buildings: the main church hall (a single-storey building), which can accommodate about 1,200 people; the older church building, a two-storey administrative

building; and accommodation for the minister. There is space for car parking and toilets to one side. The infrastructure indicates the social status of the community and the resources that the children were exposed to.



Photo 4- Maendeleo Church congregation

Every Sunday, the children attend Sunday school. However, they engage with the parents in the main service (Photo 4 above) before they relocate to the older building for their service. The church setting was interactive, although formally organised. For example, in the above (Photo 4), the children and their parents were at the front of the church praying for the children and, later, they engaged in singing together. The atmosphere in the church was warm and joyful. People sang songs happily, clapped and danced. But there was a procedure for the order of service, and the leaders of the church directed the protocol.

It was in this church, then, I decided to conduct observations as a way to examine how students engaged in their communities outside of school, exploring whether this involvement can be valuable in classroom learning in Kenya.

3.3.4 Observations in Elimu School

While in Kenya, I visited my former primary school Elimu (pseudonym) to undertake complementary observations. Despite Elimu School and Baraka School (described in section 3.3.4) both being government-funded and in the same region, their resourcing is quite

different. I attended between 1983 and 1991 with my siblings and my mother taught there for over 10 years. Hence, I am well acquainted with the school's protocols, the headteacher and most of the teachers. During my visit, I took photos to support my field notes by providing visual evidence, particularly for readers who are less familiar with East Africa. Below are examples from Elimu School (Photos 5, 6 and 7).



Photo 5: Elimu compound



Photo 6 Elimu library



Photo 7 Elimu students in their classroom

During the visit, the school had over forty trained primary teachers, a headteacher and a deputy headteacher. It also had two early years teachers. It has two streams, from the early years class to Standard 8. It is in a district town centre in a rural agricultural region. The school has about 700 students in total, who come from the local area. The students are fluent in English and Kiswahili in school, and they also speak mother-tongue Gikuyu at home. The students' clothes and general appearance suggest that mostly they are from middle-income

families. The students were welcoming as I went around the school with the deputy headteacher.

3.3.5 Baraka School data collection

The main school in this study was Baraka School (pseudonym). I spent May 2016 in Baraka, where I undertook most of the observations and all the interviews with teachers, and where I conducted a focus group discussion. I also took photos of the school. The weather during this period was wet and cold since it was the heavy rains season, as is visible in Photo 8 below at the gate of the school.



Photo 8 Baraka School gate

The school was a typical Kenyan rural school. It has one stream, which included eight main classes from Class 1 to 8. The buildings are of stone, with metal and glass windows and iron sheets for the roof. The school is in a large compound with a playground and a large farm with bananas, coffee and trees. All upper-primary classrooms have electricity, but not yet the lower primary classes. The school also has two early years nursery classes. The pupils and teachers sit at wooden desks, and the teachers write on blackboards. Textbooks are distributed to the pupils at the start of the year, and they carry them to their home and back

daily. The school compound comprises about five acres, and on one side of the property are the classes, offices, staff room, kitchen and the playground are located (see Photo 10 below). The other half is a farm of banana plants, Napier grass and trees (see Photo 11). The school compound is fenced around, with only one main entrance (Photo 8 above). The school has tap water from the council and a big storage tank as well. The primary pupils eat a packed lunch, while the younger pupils have food prepared in the school kitchen. Most staff eat lunch from the kitchen, but a few prefer to bring in their own food.



Photo 9 Baraka classroom



Photo 10 Baraka students at the playground

Each of the eight classes had at most 20 students who come from the local area. There was a total of 10 teachers in the school who teach specific subjects. The funding of the school, according to the teachers, is poor, due to its size and locality, meaning that it is in a remote rural area and of small size hence fewer funds are allocated by local government, while the parents are in a lower socioeconomic class. As a result, there is less financial support from the parents. The location of the school is not very attractive for new teachers since it is in a village, hence most decline to teach there or, when posted to the school, they seek a transfer as soon as possible.

All the teachers in the school were trained teachers (PIs) and government employed. Most had many years of experience in teaching, and some were from the local area. The teachers' ages ranged between 30 to 55 years. The male teachers appeared to be in the lower range of 30 to 45 years of age, while the female teachers appeared to be between 40 and 55. However, most had taught in various parts of the country in both private and public schools.

During my stay, apart from its academic work the school was preparing for an athletics competition with local schools. The students used to practise in their 10 o'clock break and lunch hour (Photo 10 above). One afternoon, all the upper-primary students were involved

in planting trees in their school compound in collaboration with the local Equity Bank (a Kenyan bank), as an exercise in environment conservation. I took part with the teachers, students and bank staff, as shown in Photo 11 below. The students also went for a school trip, and the headteacher shared the photos with me (Photo 12 below).



Photo 11 Students & teachers planting trees



Photo 12- Baraka School trip

During my stay, I sponsored teachers' lunches. They appeared to be grateful for it. The gesture was relative to the context, as I had been advised by Paul (see fuller description in Chapter 3, section 3.3.1.2). Food is served as a token of kindness, and is acceptable in this context. I ate my lunch with everyone else in the staffroom, which was the right way to integrate into the setting.

Baraka School participants

Table 3-3 Baraka participants

Pseudonym	Subject taught	Observations	Interviews	Focus group
Mike	Headteacher	-	X	X
Kim	English	X	X	X
Kuria	English	X	X	X
Pius	Mathematics	X	X	X
Gathenya	Science	X	X	X

The participants who took part in the study were all men, even though all teachers were invited to take part. My participant observations were in the classrooms for students aged 10 to 12 years, who were predominantly taught by male staff. The other reason could have been age variation, given that the male staff ranged between ages 30 and 45, while the female staff were from 40 to 55. The male teachers were younger and probably more receptive to taking part in the study.

Mike

Mike is the headteacher of Baraka School and my main contact for this study. He is an experienced teacher and a headteacher, since he has taught in many schools in several parts of the country. He speaks English, Kiswahili and Gikuyu fluently and has a smattering of other Kenyan languages. Mike is from the same county and uses his motorcycle to travel to work. He has an amiable personality and seemed able to keep his teaching team united.

While I was in the school, Mike engaged in official duties outside school, for example at meetings at the district education headquarters. He was one of the heads of the athletics committee that organised the local schools' competition. He informed me that, in the coming months, the school committee would be holding a fundraising event to develop the school's infrastructure. They were to invite school alumni.

Kim

Kim is a qualified teacher who mainly teaches English. Kim appeared very active in the school and engaged very well with me. He helped me plan my data collection, aligning my timeline to the school timetable. He qualified as a teacher more than ten years ago, has predominantly taught in private schools and was recently recruited by the government. He seems to enjoy his teaching, although he feels that it was not his first career choice.

Kuria

Kuria is an experienced teacher who has taught for over thirty years. He is an English teacher and is from the local area. Kuria appears humble and approachable, and he appeared to enjoy teaching.

Pius

Pius is a younger teacher, who actively engaged with the students in class and even outside class. For instance, he was organising the school athletics team to compete with the local schools. He teaches mathematics and appears to enjoy the subject.

Gathenya

Gathenya is a science teacher who was observed actively involving students in his classes. He conducted some experiments where students mixed substances to observe solubility. The pupils appeared to enjoy being allowed to take part in the tasks.

Gathenya is a P1 trained teacher. It took him 10 years after finishing his training to be employed by the government. After college, he studied an additional diploma course in

computers and went on to teach computer courses in private establishments. At the time of this study, the government had recruited him six months ago.

Interviews in Baraka School

The interviews were all conducted in the headteacher's office. I had arranged with the teachers to interview them during their free lessons, when they were less busy. The headteacher stayed away from the office during the interviews to ensure that the teachers could talk freely.

The five participants interviewed engaged fully as we discussed their experiences in Kenyan schools as students and as teachers. They appeared quite prepared for the interviews, and I was able to question them on all the key areas, as I had planned. On reflection, perhaps if I was in the context longer, additional interviews could have led to further discussion, since some teachers approached me after our interviews with more information. They appeared to have had a deeper reflection on their practice.

Focus group in Baraka School

The focus group was conducted in the headteacher's office with five teachers, including the headteacher. As an icebreaker, I gave photos of diverse classroom settings from across the globe (Appendix VIII) for the teachers to look at. Then, we discussed the methods of teaching in the pictures and whether they could apply some of these methods in their context.

After discussing the photos for a while (see Appendix VIII), I started to ask the participants about their practice through my interview questions. The teachers discussed freely from their experience, and I tried to probe further where necessary. The discussions appeared to flow successfully.

Class observations in Baraka School

All classroom observations were conducted during normal class time, as per the timetable. I organised with the teachers prior to the day when to observe their lessons. This arrangement gave the teachers and the students time to prepare psychologically and physically. I always sat at the back of the class during observations. I wrote notes and took photos for my records. The classes observed for this study were from Year 4 to Year 8 in various subjects - Science, English and mathematics. The pupils were between 10 and 13 years of age. The study observations were ongoing throughout my stay; however, the classroom observations were initially planned for the second week of my being in the school (10-17 May) while the others

were after the week of interviews and focus group (24-31 May). Four teachers were observed engaging with students in their classes while teaching various lessons.

At the end of the study, I took the time to visit the school at a later date for a debriefing. During the debriefing, I spent time with all the teachers at Baraka School in their staffroom. They all took the time to discuss with me their experience while I was in their school, and their hopes. They were all quite reflective.

3.4 Data analysis process

Data analysis is the interpretation of the data collected in research. There are various methods of data analysis, but for this research I used thematic analysis, a method of identifying and reporting the key patterns found in collected data (Flick, 2014). In this mixture of methods under an ethnographic framework, examining data in this way was considered since it would help to demonstrate significant themes related to classroom practice in Kenya.

The process starts by preparing the transcripts from the collected data documented in audio or video recordings, field notes or journal writings. After that, identification of short description codes from the data transcripts is undertaken, and then recurring themes are sought. Afterwards, the process defines and names the themes from the data, then reviews the overall major themes identified across all the data collected. Themes, according to Gomm (2008), are the meanings, perceptions and interpretations derived from participants' data. When more than one method of data collection is applied, as in my study, triangulation is undertaken to compare and combine the thematic analysis findings (Flick, 2014).

For analysis, I first gave all the transcripts numerical and colour codes (see samples in Appendices VI & VII) and then identified emerging themes from the three data collection methods (participant observations, interviews and the focus group). After that, I matched the emerging themes to associate classes/categories of main themes (see Table 3-4 in the following section 3.4.1). Triangulation of themes is complex since, as a researcher, one has to compare data attained from various tools. Indeed, triangulation's purpose is to increase research rigour, as demonstrated through the consistency of the emerging themes. It also indicates the validity and reliability of the investigation (Flick, 2008, 2014).

3.4.1 Thematic analysis

In this study, thematic analysis was used to reveal recurring themes emerging through participants' perspectives, experiences, knowledges and observed actions that were obtained

from the collected data by various methods. Although thematic analysis can be messy and time-consuming (Flick, 2008), it was very helpful for me since it facilitated a deeper understanding of human experience and, in this study, a deeper and richer understanding of teachers' teaching experiences and professional pedagogic choices. Initially, I completed careful data transcriptions, which later aided in the identification of initial codes. These initial codes were then grouped into various categories under 25 main codes (Appendix VII).

After identifying the main codes, I started identifying apparent subjects as I assembled my main codes into emerging groups of themes. These initial themes were then refined in the light of the questions. This method of relating themes to research questions is called the inductive method. In addition, other themes arose that were not necessarily related to the research questions yet were also identified (Braun and Clarke, 2006). As a researcher, I allowed this flexibility in order to capture all the themes obtained from my data. This exercise demanded going through the transcripts over and over again to enhance my understanding and identification.

I then examined the initial themes, scrutinising whether they occurred in all the data transcribed from various tools such as observations, interviews and the focus group. Their distinction, consistency and coherence were considered to produce the final overall themes. These were classified into main categories, which are discussed as four chapters (Table 3-4), namely: students and families; teacher identity; society, government and hierarchies; and classroom environment. In each chapter, the main identified themes are closely analysed, using extracts from the data transcripts as evidence. Also, theory from literature is used to provide theoretical support. Throughout my discussions, I try to balance the extracts from the transcripts with analytical claims.

Table 3-4 Thematic analysis

Code nos	Main themes	Theme classes	Discussion chapters
5,9,12,1,3,8, 25,14,620,11 ,2,415,3	1. Pedagogy practices 2. Language 3. Government funding and investment 4. Socioeconomic class	Pedagogical choices Resources	Classroom environment
9,7,11,23,8,5 ,22,14,6,16,2 1,19	1. Classroom engagement 2. Children rights 3. Family background	Students Empowerment Parental Involvement	Students and family
12,16,11,17, 19,20,13,15, 8	1. Teachers' self-esteem 2. Career development 3. Job satisfaction and motivation 4. Social-cultural influences	Professionalism Teacher autonomy	Teacher identity
20,24,19,7,1 6,17,4,21,19, 16,1,23,21,1 8	1. Cultural attitudes Perspectives 2. Social inequalities and tensions 3. Government involvement and politics 4. Global impact	1. Social-cultural power 2. Government policy and investments	Society and government

(NB: Code numbers represent code names, accessible in Appendix VII)

3.4.2 Reflection on being a researcher

I now turn to the credibility of the data collected. I aimed to discuss areas of bias and my feelings and reflection of the whole process. First, before proceeding for my primary data collection, I completed a pilot study in the United Kingdom, where I witnessed dialogic pedagogy in practice. These observations helped me to understand how dialogic approaches work practically in primary school classrooms. I noted that most of the time, the teachers had longer lessons of about 90 minutes and divided the lessons into three sections. Students were able to have one-to-one support, participate in discussion and also have time for instructions and feedback and whole-class interaction. In some lessons, there were two teachers working together, with about 15 students per class, which facilitated talk in the classroom.

I also conducted pilot interviews and discussions in Kenya before going into the field. The pilot studies helped me to restructure my questions and allowed me to practise my methods

of data collection. Besides, I gained extra insights into Kenyan schools from my pilot participants, as well as learning how to conduct data collection in a Kenyan setting.

During my data collection in Kenya, despite being heavily pregnant, I tried my best to follow my timeline. I resided with my parents, who were supportive of both me and my work, and staying in a familiar place and location supported me to tune into school and the children's experiences. Still, I was worried about the weather since data collection coincided with the wet season (cold and rainy), which might have made my trip to the school challenging. However, the conditions throughout my data collection were favourable. On most days, it rained at night and the days were dry. The roads were accessible and I had a reliable taxi that dropped me at the school of study and picked me up at the end of the exercise. My means of transport was not usual for the teachers and students of the school. Most of them walked to school, and only a few teachers drove, hence the wet season made it a little difficult to get to school.

The advantage of collecting my data in Baraka School was that I became close to the teachers and pupils, since they were not many of them. The headteacher's attitude was very positive; for example, he guided me throughout and maintained very good communication whenever necessary, especially if there were changes. Most teachers remained extremely supportive throughout my stay. Indeed, the teachers' teamwork made my stay conducive. This could have been as a result of the trust established between the headteacher and me. Also, as I took time to build rapport, I made it clear I was not there to judge them but to understand their practice. Indeed, some teachers felt free to confer on some of the issues in afterthoughts following our discussions.

My position as a researcher appeared to change over time. I initially started as an outsider. However, as I stayed longer in Baraka School, I seemed to move to be an insider. This was apparent in the focus group audio recording, where I asked a few times what 'we' can do to address some of the issues that came up. The use of 'we' signified my inclusion in the context, even though, in the study, I had aimed to remain an outsider observer. This change came as a surprise to me when I listened to the audio recordings, as I had moved my position unconsciously. Perhaps this behaviour indicates how well I integrated into the setting and, over time, felt like I was one of them. As Woods (2006) notes, it is hard for ethnographers to distance themselves from the context and pose as outsiders. Still, it was noticeable in the

discussions such as in the interviews and focus groups that the participants saw me as an outsider who would help them voice their perspectives.

At the same time, the participants had time to reflect on their practice. I observed some of the teachers' practice becoming more engaging after our discussions; they applied a variety of teaching methods. This is discussed further in the discussion chapters.

A reflection on the credibility of any data collection and analysis is constructive in research. The use of three methods in data collection provided rich data that revealed fascinating insights into teachers' practice and perspectives. The use of photos to support the discussions also provides further visual evidence of the data. As Pink (2014) argues, when ethnographers use visual images, they represent a range of factors such as the context culture, personal experiences at the time and reflections, among others. These 'elements combine to produce visual meanings and ethnographic knowledge' (Pink, 2014: 29).

Additional credibility was provided by the rich knowledge of the context by the teachers and all participants. As James and Prout (1997) argued, they are 'social actors' in their classroom practice and in their society, so they are experts in their environment.

The use of a small sample in the study helped me to have quality interaction with the participants. The teachers reflected on their pedagogical practice and raised their views on classroom needs, as well as providing insights into how future development can be accomplished. Given the timescale of my investigation, having a small sample helped me to meet my objectives. The focus on a single school gave me enough time to build good rapport with the teachers, who then engaged honestly and freely in my interviews and focus group. As a result of their participation, I obtained rich data that could be used to inform teaching practice in Kenya and other contexts. Duan, Hu and Bu (2017) argue that the use of a small study can help researchers to obtain quality data, as they can focus on specific data. Hacksaw (2008) also argues that small studies require fewer resources to carry out investigations and less time collecting and analysing data, which seems to be the case in my study. I had limited time in Kenya, therefore a small study fitted my research timeline.

Duan et al. (2017) have also argued that, while collecting emic data, a researcher could obtain accurate subjective data, which could be compared to other, larger data obtained from diverse cultures. Similarly, in this study, the data collected could be utilised in the schools of study and in similar settings across Kenya and in other countries across the African

continent and the globe. For example, analysis of my findings led to conceptualising the Harambee pedagogical approach, which could aid the teachers at the schools of study to develop their pedagogical practice. Once Harambee has been implemented successfully, it could be contextualised to other settings to develop teaching and learning practice there. The use of a small-scale study in this investigation can, therefore, inform practice both in the schools of study and, at the same time, broader contexts. This supports Duan et al.'s (2017) argument for the advantages of a small-scale data collection. The data collected from this study led to conference paper discussions, keynote addresses and lectures, and two peer-reviewed publications (Corrado and Robertson, 2019; Corrado, 2019). These outcomes have led to crucial discussions on international education platforms on the position of African children and their education needs.

3.5 Layers of analysis

The data analysis provided significant themes that will be discussed in following chapters. Figure (3.1) below demonstrates the framework of the discussion chapters. Each discussion chapter is a cluster of related themes specific to the central subject, which is the chapter's heading. The four chapters discuss: Classroom environment; Society, government and hegemonies; Teachers' identity; and Students' and families' backgrounds.

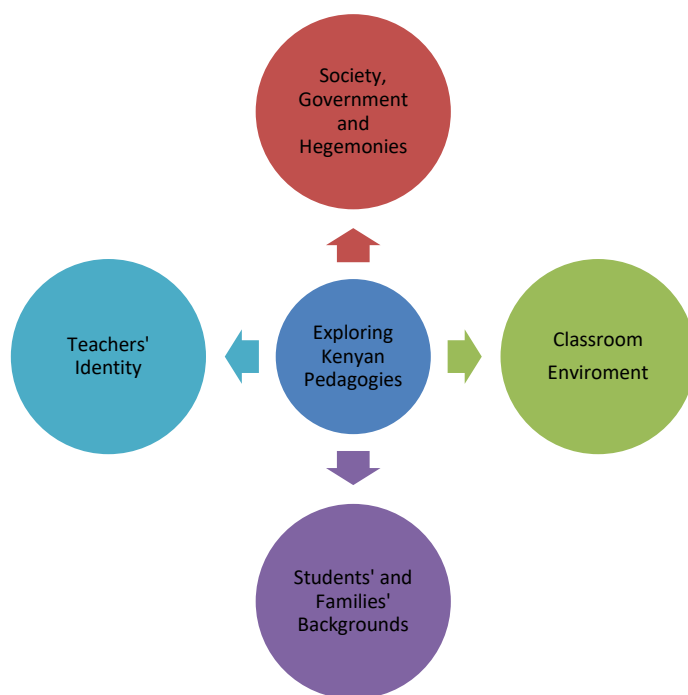


Figure 3-1 Discussion chapters

The main topics deliberated in the above discussion areas (Figure 3.1) are not just distinct, but interrelated. This interrelation was seen in the analysis discussions, demonstrating how diverse social structures influence learning in Kenyan classroom practice, moreover signifying their interconnectedness. These social layers include: classroom interaction; school settings; Kenyan communities; Ministry of Education; government structures; and global organisations. Figure 3.2 below shows how these layers are placed and linked to classroom practice, whether directly or indirectly.

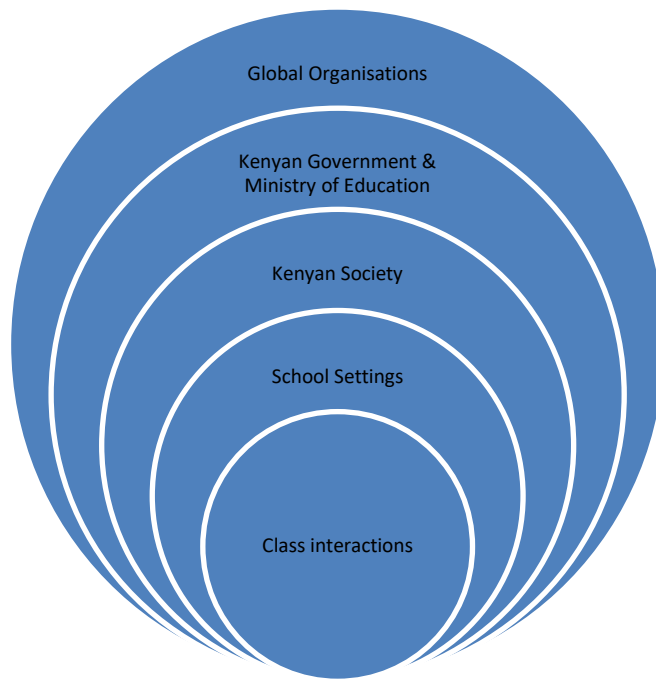


Figure 3-2 Layers of analysis

As the above layers of analysis are mirrored in the main themes, they address the main research questions. Their autonomy is discernible through the discussions. But they also align with key dimensions of dialogic 'spaces', which are essential for pedagogic advancement in Kenya. In the coming discussion chapters, I will be using the onion metaphor for my analysis, comparing how the layers are interconnected, and each is part of the whole, similar to the layers of analysis in the Figure 3.2. Since these layers of analysis are intertwined, they somehow influence classroom practice. As a result, the metaphor will draw on themes related to the social, economic, historical, political and cultural factors behind Kenyan classroom practice. Moreover, I will demonstrate how these layers are significant in pedagogical 'spaces' and can be used for practice advancement.

My field notes made during data collection were thematically analysed and triangulated, alongside other data collected through interviews and focus group discussion (see Appendix V). In the discussion chapters, I have referenced my field notes of the participant observations in detailed descriptions. These are supported by photos taken during my observations.

Chapter 4. The position of Kenyan students and their families

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the specific themes that emerged from the data as relating to Kenyan students and their families. I examined the emerging themes with respect to my conceptualisation of space and aimed to show how dialogic pedagogies are not neutral, fixed or unchallenged but are always negotiated in the context. I scrutinised the positions that students take during classroom engagement, as well as within their community interaction. In addition, I considered how these students' rights emerge within the space available.

In the second part of the chapter, I demonstrate how family backgrounds affect students' spaces for dialogic learning and engagement as these emerged from the analysis. The data show that variations in family socioeconomic backgrounds predispose parental involvement in their children's education, as in other parts of the world. Indeed, this was supportive of Bourdieu's perspective on social capital and of previous research findings on parental involvement (Berk, 2002; Effective Provision of Pre-School Education (EPPE), 2014; Alenan, 2015). The argument is that family circumstances and intellectual exposure have an impact on how students participate confidently in their social situations, including in the classroom.

Overall, the chapter reveals the factors that contribute to or hinder students' engagement in pedagogical situations.

4.2 Kenyan students' empowerment

In Kenya, the curriculum is structured by the KICD (Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development), which is a branch of the Ministry of Education. The syllabus is given to schools with guidelines on how and what to cover in school learning. Teachers disseminate the syllabus in the best way possible to facilitate learning and empower students for their future lives. As teacher Mike notes with pride in Extract 1 below, when the Kenyan teaching practice and syllabus content are compared to other countries such as Tanzania, Kenyan students are prepared for advanced engagement in their world. In the overall context of the study, Mike's claim shows that the teachers are proud of being able to complete the syllabus as they help their students to pass exams and cover aspects such as foreign languages, like English. This preparation for international engagement through English language empowers students to participate in the global field. Indeed, most young people from Kenya after O-

levels are able to move abroad for further education and work. Still others in the country use English because it is the official language for communication and work purposes.

Extract 1

Mike Kenyan teaching is one of the best because we teach well and actually the mode of language we use, actually English has helped Kenyan children to go far. I give this example when I compare with our neighbouring country Tanzania, I have my friends who work in Tanzania and they normally say that because of their language because they normally use Kiswahili, they say the kind of teaching there is not well complexed. It is not well advance like the Kenyan one. Even the curriculum and syllabus of Kenyan is actually one of best, although we are doing some amendments or some changes in the curriculum. So, the strength in the Kenyan teaching is that, it is good and we are working hard. (Interview 4)

Subsequently, close analysis of the data suggested that, in the interaction learning space, students are empowered in their learning and in their local and international participation through language. This empowerment, however, seemed structured by the policy space during curriculum development, according to Mike's assertions above, then executed in the space for interaction during teaching and learning.

4.1.1 Examining students' classroom engagement

From my classroom and school observations, students always smiled at me and appeared enthusiastic when answering questions posed by their teachers. Still, they appeared to have boundaries when engaging with adults. For example, with their teachers and with visitors like me, they waited for adults to initiate conversations and then would respond. For example, in Extract 3 below, teacher Kim greets the class and they respond. This mode of communication is evident throughout the extracts in most of my participant observations. The students attended their classes on time and always promptly followed instructions given to them by their teachers. From Foucault's claims about power dynamics (Taylor, 2011), discipline is vital in institutional organisations, for example these schools. The students in this study knew their timetables and their responsibilities, and they appeared to follow them well. When the bell rang, they prepared for the next action. This was evident throughout my stay in both Baraka School and Elimu School; there were no differences in how the students behaved. Indeed, some of teachers participating argued that, in learning, discipline is vital since schools are formal institutions.

Some teachers argued that the use of dialogic pedagogies could hinder formal discipline, and in this case students in these Kenyan schools had learned to play their role of obedience. In my participant observations, the students in Baraka School always responded to teachers' instigation, not the other way around. Although the classroom set-up could be viewed as lecture style, it appeared to work for them as they had visible and defined roles that designated their outcomes (Bernstein, 2003). These roles arguably empowered students to fit into a formal system where they are able to follow structure and order. They were able to relate to others with friendliness and respect. One may argue that they were constrained from initiating engagement, for example the students were never observed asking questions or having debates on complex issues in the classroom. Some teachers even noted that their classroom structure hindered the application of dialogic pedagogies and, in our discussions, there was a fear of challenging the power dynamics. Consequently, the students participated in IRF in their lessons, as directed by their teachers, as is evident in the extracts below (Extract 3; Photo 17).

Extract 3

'Morning, Class, get out your science books,' **Kim said.**

The students stood up and answered back, 'Good morning, teacher'.

'What is the date?' **Teacher Kim asked.**

'24th May 2016', Students said together.

'Recap on sound energy; last week we did an experiment,' **Kim said.**
Students: 'Yes.'

Today we will cover heat energy,' **Teacher.**

'Heat energy,' **Class repeated.**

'State of matter?' **Teacher asked. Students** give answers i.e. 'gas', 'liquid', 'solid'.

Kim: 'What are good conductors and bad conductors?'

One student: 'Good conductors allow heat pass through them.'

(Participant observations in a science lesson. Topic: Energy)



Photo 17: Baraka students raising hands to answer questions in their classroom



Photo 18: Baraka students engaging in science experiments

From my participant observations in the classroom, the teachers planned topics then invited students into question and answer participation. Sometimes, the students answered together, or they raised their hands and, when the teachers' named them, they answered. As in Extract 3 above during a science lesson, teacher Kim asks the students 'What are bad and good conductors of heat?' and one student raise his/her hand and answers 'Good conductors allow heat to pass through them'. At times, students were invited to participate in solving problems on the board or to complete tasks, for instance in a science experiment (Photo 18) above. In Photo 18, the students volunteered to take part in mixing solutions to test substances' solubility. They participated in tasks and appeared exultant to do so, hence their attitude towards engagement in their learning is positive. The teachers did not need to motivate them, so they perhaps had self-determination other than compliance. Either way, the lessons

progressed smoothly, without disruptions. The students were given feedback on their work as the teachers gave them tasks.

During feedback, the teachers could assist those who were struggling, for example in key areas such as handwriting, grammar and organisation skills. This gave the students time to have face-to-face, one-to-one time with the teacher during lessons. Teachers tried to promote understanding by involving the students in their learning through question and answer and also through experiments, which is evident in Extract 3 above. Even so, these activities and questions were directed by the teachers, as shown.

Referring to the theory of active learning, Robinson (2001) argues that when students are actively involved in their learning they tend to remember much more than when they listen passively. During my interviews, some teachers denied using the lecture method and said that they felt that the students were actively engaged in their learning. This denial is problematic, since it can be a hindrance in developing actual dialogic engagement. It also became an ethical issue and a methodological concern, as I was no longer sure whose version of classroom practice I should be documenting and examining: mine or theirs? Possibly, the denial is because of teachers' awareness that dialogue should be happening. Through triangulation, I was able to shed light on these dilemmas. During the interviews and focus group discussions, when further questioned about pedagogical choices, some teachers admitted that much could be done. I was then more able to understand the discrepancy between what they say they do and what I witnessed them doing. For example, teacher Mike noted that teachers forgot to use appropriate methods so that they could complete the syllabus quickly and prepare their students for their exams (refer to Extract 11 in Chapter 5 and Extract 20 in Chapter 6). The pressure to achieve excellent exam results is also real in their lives. Nonetheless, the initiation of engagement is always from the teacher, not students.

In my participant observations, the languages of instruction were predominantly English and Kiswahili, which are the official teaching languages, as Mike states in Extract 3. However, most students come from backgrounds where they speak other languages as their mother tongue. This aspect of multilingual classroom practice was an unplanned part of the study that essentially relates to my overall aim of unmasking pedagogical space and exploring dialogic approaches. Here, I aim to show how my participant observations became more nuanced as the fieldwork progressed. I will return to multilingualism in section 6.2 to develop this discussion.

In Baraka and Elimu Schools, the mother tongue is predominantly Gikuyu, which is widely spoken in the community, for example in church or at home with the family. However, the language is less used in school and was perceived as interfering with the academic language used by teachers. At times, Gikuyu was spoken by teachers to emphasise points and foster better understanding. During my classroom observations the teachers largely used English for instruction and Kiswahili and Gikuyu only to emphasise learning points. Teacher Pius (Extract 4 below) noted that the students in Baraka Schools were not fluent in English due to lack of practice at home, hence they were not confident. Their poor language skills could at times hinder their participation, as reported by teachers in discussion. In interview, Pius felt that students in private schools were more confident to engage (Extract 4 below) and fluent in academic language, since they came from families that easily used Kiswahili and English. Teacher Mike (Extract 3), too, felt that use of these academic prepared students for the future.

Extract 4

Pius it is a change and I am still trying to adapt. Because in private children are well prepared from the beginning. (...) because in private they are very strict on what you are teaching, because it is a kind of business. So, they have to be very focused on what they are giving out. (...) so, the children are fluent in English and they can do a lot even from the lower classes. Even class one and two you can explain something in English and they can understand. But when I joined here, it is a big challenge. (...) because of most of them are still using mother tongue so when they come to school, English become like a foreign language to them. (Interview 3)

Nevertheless, the use of local languages enhances students' engagement and understanding, as reported by UNESCO (2015), since students use a familiar language to learn. As a result, they are more confident in participating in the classroom, since they can express their views extensively. Moreover, the use of familiar languages has the potential to strengthen students' ethnic identity and self-esteem. Drawing on Thiong'o (1986) views, conversing in African local languages should be promoted, since it makes individuals feel grounded in their roots, and it also liberates them to study additional languages such as English, German, Hindi and Ibo, among others. Thiong'o argues that learning in another language first, before one's own ethnic language, is a kind of mental enslavement. He suggests that African languages should be advanced by schools, not repressed, which resembles the situation in Kenyan schools.

From this insight, maybe the students from Baraka School should be encouraged to use the language that they are most fluent in, such as the one they use at home (Gikuyu), and in

addition learn other languages. This may make them more confident in classroom participation and uphold their learning and their ethnic identity. Undoubtedly, teachers would find the use of local languages in classroom learning more appealing to their students in rural schools, such as in Baraka. Perhaps teachers might then stop comparing the interaction space of private and public schools, since the engagement would be equally positive and possibly more dialogic. Consequently, as in Freire's (1995) decree on the use of dialogue to liberate the oppressed, Kenyan students could use their home language to emancipate themselves from colonial mentality and practice. By using local languages, they could simultaneously liberate themselves from passive ways of learning through active participation in their interaction space.

When teachers have a constructive attitude towards the use of local languages in learning, they would be able to promote all languages in their schools. The use of multiple languages is an advantage that can be promoted, since it may break down the social barriers that seem to influence classroom engagement. Additionally, research has revealed that multilingualism helps brain development, multitasking, problem-solving and integration. Individuals who use multiple languages are able to be more understanding of others and have good social skills (Berk, 2013). There is an occupational advantage for those who advance to using multiple languages, progressing to professions in broadcasting, language interpretation and work for international corporations.

Additionally, research has revealed that bilingual and multilingual individuals have a five-year delay in the onset of Alzheimer's disease (Bialystok, 2001). Therefore, instead of ethnic languages being discouraged in these Kenyan schools, maybe they should be encouraged. The use of the official language could be advanced concurrently. As a result, it would help to stop people's perceptions of rural students as restricted to their ethnic language and to start seeing them as knowledgeable individuals with multiple languages. Therefore, there is a need to allow these students to use multiple languages in the classroom during learning interaction. I argue that this need should be addressed when setting the curriculum and developing the pedagogies.

Unfortunately, currently there are both visible and invisible rules in the classroom (Bernstein, 2003), placing some students at a disadvantage due to their lack of fluency in English, attending a public school and being from lower social classes. Teachers' knowledge of these students' backgrounds may shape how they engage them. As noted earlier, if teachers

perceive students' use of other languages as an advantage, they might be able to promote their confidence in learning through practising foreign languages such as English and Kiswahili, which are vital to their academic qualifications, as well as such local languages. The visible and invisible rules (Bernstein, 2003) are deeply connected to family background, as discussed in the coming chapter (in section 6.3). However, Alexander (2010) and Mercer (2010) argue that through cooperative learning and dialogue students can improve their language skills. However, these authors do not address multilingual practice as a way of developing cooperative learning and dialogue, even though their work took place in the United Kingdom where there are many students whose home language is not English. Their work focused on the use of English, which may inadvertently promote a language hierarchy. Nonetheless, as teacher Pius noted (Extract 4), the use of English language has its benefits, especially when encouraged in daily conversation so that students improve in fluency. This competence in language skills is a fundamental key to learning (DFES. 2008), as one of the teachers noted, so these skills need to be promoted in classroom engagement.

In Baraka School, students' determination was at times evident in their classroom demeanour, as observed in Extract 3 during a science lesson. They volunteered to answer questions and to take part in the experiment. Another good example during my stay in Baraka School was when there was an athletics competition with neighbouring schools and the students needed to practise. One day, while I was in the staffroom having tea with the teachers, the staff were surprised to see students training for the races on their own initiative. They took responsibility for their input and were able to organise themselves without guidance from their teachers, and such actions display determination (Photo 19 below). But this instance of students' taking control was outside of their classroom learning, without their teachers, and this indicates that the hierarchical order in the interaction space of the classroom does hinder students' determination. However, when these students were on their own, they were able to exercise control over their physical and interaction space among themselves.



Photo 19: Baraka students running in their playground

Additionally, there were factors that controlled their determination. For example, in the field events mentioned above (Photo 19), students' activities were challenged by their lack of a javelin, discus and shotput. Although the resources were inadequate, the students used their initiative. Similarly, in the case of involvement in classroom experiments, as previously discussed (Photo 18) the teacher noted that the limited resources disadvantaged their lesson planning, shaping the teaching methods applied in the classroom and dictating students' engagement. This is evident in Extract 5 below, where the teacher, Pius, deliberated that when resources are scarce their work is hard. He noted that there are some schools in the country with leaking roofs, poor floors and not enough desks. This inadequacy in the physical space led to poor classroom engagement in the interaction space, since there are resource restraints. Pius argued that students' independence and privacy are restricted when they are uncomfortable and have to share books and desks.

Extract 5

Pius: In other places like here the classes are not that bad, the population is not big so it is every easy to contain then them, again some classroom needs some restructuring, some of them if it rains the roof is leak, the floor is not okay, the desks because the floor is not smooth write the desk moves, and they share a desk, one of them three, so if one of them move and the other one is writing they make mistakes.(....), so there is trouble. If they had, if they could afford a locker a desk per person it could be easier and they can even have that privacy(..). (Interview 3).

On the other hand, my interviews suggest that sometimes the teachers were under pressure to complete the syllabus on time, which in turn limited classroom engagement. According to one of the teachers, to complete the syllabus he had to skip areas that involved active engagement, hence controlling the students' actions. It is interesting to note that what was missing from the learning to complete the syllabus was students' engagement, as Alexander (2010) and Mercer (2010) advocate students' engagement in their learning. Nevertheless, in Extract 5 above, Pius stated that in some Kenyan schools the student population is quite high, leading to strain on the resources available. These issues in physical space impact on the pedagogies applied in the classroom and, at times, seemed to limit the students' autonomy in learning. However, the students continually appeared keen to be involved using what was available, such as the outdoor area in the field.

4.1.2 Kenyan students' position

Kenya is one of the signatories of global children's rights protection, as a member of UNCRC (1989) and also a member of the African Union that signed the African Charter (1990), as mentioned in the literature review. These memberships signify the country's outlook on upholding the welfare of its children. Thus, understanding how these children are protected is vital. In the last few years, Kenya has engaged in the global field through its membership of these significant bodies and, as a result, its policies have changed. Indeed, Kenya has redefined the guidelines for children's rights in alignment with the specifications of the UNCRC, African Charter and Law Society of Kenya. All children have the right to live, to have their basic needs met and to have good care from their parents and safety, healthcare and education from the government, which aligns with the African Charter (Organisation of African Unity, 1990; Republic of Kenya, 2008). The new guidelines have impacted on education policy space and, further, on interaction space in the classroom. As teacher Gathenya stated in Extract 6 below, there is a policy for all Kenyan children to have access to 'free and quality education', confirming that the government has taken initiatives in policy space to improve access to education first by making education free for all and second by trying to improve standards.

Extract 6

Gathenya: Like the right of children to have free education, the quality of what the child is getting is what we should be dealing with. The opportunity is there and everybody should take the child for that free

education, and if you are found not doing the same the law will take its place. (.....)

Pius: I think the rights are well observed, and with all what my colleagues are saying here, there is not much left, (...) yeah, because the children knows their rights, it is being taught in classes and. If anybody is going against their rights, we are trying to help them talk it out(...)

Kim: maybe the only disconnect is the children rights versus culture! Because sometimes culture steps on children's' rights, because these are referred to as African children, and we have rights that are not there. Or if they were there, in the cultural set-up, children didn't have as much rights as they have today. So, our mindset is coming from the culture, so culturally we have rights for children, now constitutionally today we have rights for children which are not naturally intertwined. So, there must be, there will be some friction at some end, because this is what is demanded as per constitution but culture demand something else (.....)

Kuria: I thought he shed light with that, with the issue of FGM, it now interferes with the children rights, and it is done by the community. (...) some cultures (in Kenya) have made some children not to go to school because it is time for circumcision. (Focus group)

Teacher Pius (Extract 6 above) agrees with Gathenya on the improvements, noting that most students' needs were being met through these government initiatives in policy space and the provision of more resources in physical space. This was evident during my participant observations that almost all children were well dressed, had access to food, shelter, clothing, healthcare and education. From 2001, all Kenyan children have had free accessible education and it is against the law for any child not to go to school (Wanjohi, 2011). From my participant observations in the community, there were no children out of school during school times and students were well-presented, as Photo 20 and all the other photos in this thesis confirm. Indeed, Photo 20 below is of the students engaging in a tree-planting exercise, for environment conservation. Their facial expressions and bodily postures appear happy, healthy and positively involved. The evidence contradicts the global rhetoric that African children are hungry and deprived, with no access to social amenities (Cohen, 1994; Kilbride, 2010; Cheney, 2010; Harber, 2002, 2014). The children in this Kenyan rural school were engaged beyond their classroom on global issues such as environmental conservation. They are not victims of their surroundings but consumers who are solution seekers. Moreover, as Pius in Extract 6 above noted, these students have an awareness of their rights since they have been taught social studies in school.



Photo 20: Students planting trees in collaboration with their teachers and local bank staff

There were contested spaces in policies and in interaction with regard to changes in the education system. Teacher Kuria reported in Extract 6 watching a television documentary on how a Kenyan community forces its female children to undergo genital mutilation. The parents in this community insist on it, and if individuals challenge this practice they can be excommunicated. This causes conflict with the government's agenda on free education for all, as parents may disengage their girls from school to involve them in such rituals. As argued earlier, dialogue can be used in some of these contested spaces to establish a balance where students and parents are able to align their wishes to policies without any group being left out. There should be interaction on some of these contested spaces. Twum-Danso (2013: 1) contends that 'childhood studies should move beyond simple dichotomies and seek to understand complexities around children lives'. Her argument is based on how rights for children in Africa can sometimes be defined from a global view, without any in-depth understanding and respect of society's or the children's views of the context. These tensions between local and global policy were evident in Kenya with regard to changes in Kenyan education policies, as discussed above.

In most cases, Kenyan children are much involved in social events and, from my participant observations in church, it was clearly evident that the children engaged collaboratively with adults and peers. These children were made to feel a part of society and allowed to participate actively in events. For instance, I observed children singing to the congregation, also leading prayers and reading the Bible. After these performances, the adults applauded and gave constructive feedback. Children's engagement helped them to feel valued. Moreover, such community involvement (as in Photo 21 below of children singing alongside their parents) is likely to improve these children's social skills and build their confidence in reading, public speaking and collaborative presentations. Some children collaborated with their peers, while others collaborated with adults in singing and in reciting poems and biblical verses. The efficacy and esteem of these young children were enhanced (Zimmerman and Cleary, 2006; Dweck, 2012). They demonstrated self-determination as they took part. Most of the skills being modelled in these experiences are vital in life, whether in academic, social or career terms. Society appeared to engage its children actively in these events hence, drawing on Bandura (1977), this is a great example of social learning. Moreover, there is acquisition of knowledge and skills that are vital in classroom learning and future life. In addition, some of these platforms provide physical resources that are not available in school; for example, children could learn specific skills such as playing the piano or using audio/public-speaking equipment. Thus, involvement in community events provides support for space for interaction where children can attain social, cognitive and practical skills. In terms of physical space, these platforms provide access to resources that are not available in schools.



Photo 21: Children presenting a song with their parents in church

Giddens (1979) argues that children who participate actively are agents within a context, since they are taking an active part in the structural system. His argument is visible in the Kenyan arena, where children take part in community events, although this is seldom appreciated. As children grow up in Kenya, they take on active roles in the community, similar to the church event in the photo above (Photo 21). These community events can be viewed as learning spaces and should be acknowledged as informal education. They foster creativity and problem-solving skills that are important in both the education sphere and beyond (Robinson, 2001).

Unfortunately, in most cases these skills go unnoticed by the schools, where students are mostly passively engaged, as is evident from a previous extract (Extract 1). In my classroom observations, I never saw or heard students discussing their outside activities. Moreover, when most Kenyan young people are looking for a job, they omit these skills from their curriculum vitae because they have not been valued in their formal education. The skills that they learn at home while helping their parents in housework, farm work or the family or neighbour's businesses should not be ignored. When contextualising any education system, it is important to value society's way of life and revere its strengths. From this study, I recognise that these skills are significant and should be included in classroom learning, where students and teachers can draw knowledge from these encounters. These practices are acceptable in these communities, so they should not be undermined by school. But it is important to note that the teachers did not mention these informal experiences in my discussions, perhaps because they have been undermined for such a long time in an education system that is so strongly exam-oriented.

Nyerere suggests that education should be relevant to the context to provide skills that the children will use in their environment (Sifuna, 2007; Ibbott, 2014). Education should not be limited to school, and community and home-life experiences and knowledge should be included in learning, for example in exploratory discussions. Dialogue in the classroom should engage the outside life experiences of students, but it needs to be structured in the curriculum in order to support dialogic practice. This will make learning more relevant and perhaps even exciting for the children. They might be able to be more creative in their classroom learning because they could draw on all their life experience. Their active input might even challenge the predominantly negative view of African childhood (Maathai, 2009;

Diop, 2014), give students real constructs (Twum-Danso, 2013; Corrado, 2019) and improve their learning engagement.

4.3 Family background effects

The study's interviews confirmed that parents were key influences in their children's lives, so their position cannot be overlooked. Therefore, in this section I discuss how parental involvement emerged from the data, and the impact of social, cultural and economic background on education access.

Kenyan students come from varied family backgrounds. These appeared in this study to determine the type of school that they attend. From Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological systems theory, the family is the immediate influence on individuals' learning and development. Parental and extended family members are in the microsystem section of the ecological cycle, since they are in contact with the child from birth and as they grow up. The initial support and exposure given to the child have a great impact on their individual physical, cognitive, psychological and intellectual development (Department for Children, Schools and Families, 2008).

4.1.3 Effects of parental involvement

The roles of parents were discussed by teachers. For example, in Extract 7 below, Kim claimed that parents who send their children to a private school provided better social and economic support than those who send their children to a public school. The purchasing power of the upper and middle class was advantageous to their children, while children from poorer homes were disadvantaged in school since their parents could not supplement the government's school funding, as teacher Gathenya admits in Extract 7 below. In discussions with these teachers, it appeared that they put the responsibility for physical space resourcing on children's families, not the government that had aimed to provide equal and adequate resources for all students.

Extract 7

Kim Private schools are better because of the nature of the kids; the parents are motivated; that's why most of them are willing to pay an extra coin to take kids to those schools, but in public schools most parents do not value education as much. So, you that in term of teaching, the class in private school becomes easier as opposed to public schools. But again, in private schools you work under a lot of pressure and very little pay, very little pay..... (Interview 1)

R- how can we empower not just those one but all students to engage in their learning more?

Kuria: ...through providing learning materials. Like now parents are talked to in meetings and they are told good books they can buy for children as supplementary. (...) so, it could be through parents buying supplementary materials, and teachers giving plenty of homework, assignments. (Interview 2)

Gathenya: I believe, it is only here, but where I come from parents have accepted that there is no free education, and they go back to their pocket. The government may, whatever the government does the parents come in, they ship in and the school there are performing well. You find where there are exercise books, but you find some parents believe the government is giving books and that is a wrong perception. (...) (Interview 5)

The teachers' perceptions of parental responsibility were predisposed by the knowledge that most Kenyan public schools had been built by parents and communities coming together in Harambee fundraising, then the government provided the teachers and curriculum. The collective funding of schools demonstrated that society wanted to see its children educated. However, to support this society vision, the Kenyan government committed itself from 2001 to provide FPE for all children across the country and took on the entire funding of schools. But, according to Gathenya in Extract 7 above, some parents have now taken a back seat, expecting the government to provide everything for their children's education. This interpretation was especially common among parents from lower social classes, as mentioned by the teachers in interview. Even though the FPE initiative was successful, it was never without challenges that needed parental involvement. Some were caused by the high enrolment in schools, leading to greater numbers in classrooms, thus a requirement for more resources and infrastructure. As a result, funding for extras in schools remained scanty, despite government's determination, and parental involvement in equipping schools became imperative to meet the shortfall, as discussed in Extract 7.

Indeed, Gathenya (Extract 7 above) noted that some parents in Baraka School were aware of FPE and were unwilling to pay any additional costs. Consequently, there have been lower standards of teaching across the country due to under-resourcing and little upgrade of school infrastructure. Unfortunately, this is mostly evident in schools with parents of lower social class. As the teachers interviewed noted, private schools are better equipped and have better teaching standards, and public schools with families with a good economic background also have better resources and infrastructure (Extract 7). In areas where parents can afford to pay extra and are willing to do so, schools are better equipped. At the same time, most parents

prefer to send their children to well-funded schools, hence under-resourced schools are deserted by the wealthier, better-informed parents.

From my participant observations in Elimu School, which had students from middle-class families, it had more resources and two class streams with 30 to 40 students per class, while Baraka School had one stream with 16 to 20 students per class. The enrolment differences were due to the social and economic status of the parents, as noted by some teachers in interview. Reduced enrolment in schools like Baraka further disadvantages poorly funded schools, since the government ratio of teachers to students awards less money to schools with a lower enrolment. These issues were the same in similar poor schools. Therefore, parental socioeconomic background and attitude to education support affects resource availability in school and also impacts on the methods of teaching in those settings. From my interviews, it was obvious that when teachers had fewer resources they were not motivated to implement diverse methods of teaching. Thus, funding better resources is essential to good classroom practice. Perhaps there is a need for parents, teachers and government to discuss these funding issues.

In interview, teachers argued that it was necessary for parents to supplement school resources to fill government funding gaps so that the physical space could support a good interaction space for learning. According to teachers, when they have adequate resources such as books, desks and science kits, they are able to involve students more in their classroom learning. Support for physical space is not an issue just in Kenya, and it is an important role for parents to be involved in. In the United Kingdom, according to the DCSF (2008) report, parents who are actively involved in their children's home and school lives impact positively on their children's education. Indeed, parents should be the first to provide the basics for children to be healthy, safe and alert enough to participate well in school. In addition, they need to support them to get to school and to provide aids such as books and pens. It is important to create a home environment to stimulate their children intellectually, too. Furthermore, forming a secure parental bond and providing a stable home are fundamental to physical, moral and psychological sustenance, enabling a child to have decent participation in their classroom (Vygotsky, 1978; Berk, 2013). These are universal vital needs for all children, drawing on Maslow's theory (1987), including those in Kenyan schools. Indeed, this was noted by the teachers in discussion, as most needs are met but it remains a challenge for the few individuals who have a lower socioeconomic background.

There are some cultural aspects that affect parental involvement, such as cultural beliefs, practices and expectations. Most Kenyan communities value education, and they are motivated to take part in their children's school learning by supporting them to do their best. Nonetheless, a few parents have distinct cultural values and they might not be as engaged as expected. As claimed by teacher Kuria earlier in this chapter (Extract 6), some Kenyan communities, especially nomadic cultures, value traditional practices such as feminine genital mutilation. Hence, parents may disengage their children from school in order to implement such rituals. Although the government is trying to deal with these issues by promoting children's rights to education, among their other rights, they remain problematic. As a result, cultural practices in these communities can be an occasional hindrance to parental involvement.

4.1.4 Socioeconomic background factors

As seen from Extract 7 in the preceding section, the socioeconomic background of parents is significant to their awareness of and involvement in their children's learning. Kenya has diverse communities from varied socioeconomic backgrounds. Many Kenyan families are from upper- and middle-class backgrounds, while some are from a lower socioeconomic set-up (Africa Development Bank, 2011). Some families are educated to above-college qualifications, while some have no qualifications. Communities like the Maasia, Turkana and Samburu are quite traditional and attend school hesitantly, like those discussed earlier who live nomadic lives. Even so, all these categories are diverse and can be found in both rural and urban areas. On the other hand, there are invisible and visible rules that control settings, including schools and classrooms (Bernstein, 2003). These rules relate to the family social and economic background.

The visible rules correlate to the social and economic status of families, thus impacting on the child's school enrolment and experiences. Parents with good economic status in Kenya enrol their children in private schools or well-equipped public schools where the education standards are higher (Extract 7). These parents are able to pay the extra for their children to attend. Parents of low economic and social status have less purchasing power, hence they send their children to poorer schools, which are at times underfunded. The different datasets reveal that physical space differs according to parental economic background. In my discussions on physical space, it is acknowledged that these differences mean that students have very different learning experiences. These differences were observed between Elimu

and Baraka students, and were discussed by teachers while differentiating between private and public schools' practice.

Extract 7b

Kuria: so parents who are more enlightened they employ more, some teachers are paid by the parents. But we have others who complain a lot and then they say no - one teacher, one class, you are enough. And people who are in the environment, some environment are considerate, they try to look for people, personnel who have gone to college and have not secured a job, then they employ about two or three. (Interview 2)

Similarly, parental education attainments influence their attitudes to education (Berk, 2013). In Extract 7b above, Kuria claims that 'parents who are more enlightened' are motivated to pay extra for additional teachers to spread the workload. His argument is that the parents' knowledge and understanding influence their willingness to support the funding of resources in schools, which in the end helps to support a better interaction space. Another good evaluation was apparent at Baraka School, which is of lower economic status than Elimu School. When I compared these schools, Elimu seemed comparatively well off, for instance it had a fully equipped library and good classrooms, and the parents are from middle-class families (Photos 5, 6 and 7 in methodology section 3.3.3). By contrast, Baraka's parents have lower economic status and the school was underfunded at the time of the study. As noted by Berk (2002), parents' education, household income and family social class are interrelated and they all impact on their children's education.

4.4 Chapter summary

From my discussions with teachers, there was a need to improve the classroom space for interaction, since it is more teacher-centred and less student-centred. There were several instances of students engaging in IRF (see Extract 3). In the science experiments (Extract 3), the teachers had full control of their involvement. Overall, from my participant observations in Baraka School, students participated only when requested to do so by their teachers, and there was no incidence of student-initiated participation in classroom learning. However, outside of their classroom learning the students demonstrated self-determination through active involvement in informal settings. Good examples were in the church, as children collaborated with their peers and parents in song presentations, in the Baraka field where they practised for the athletics event and on the school farm where they planted trees with their teachers (see Photos 19, 20 and 21). I would argue that these collaborative experiences equip students with knowledge and skills that may be useful in classroom learning. If these

informal encounters are used in classroom dialogue, students' learning would draw on their social-cultural experience, making it relevant to them. Furthermore, the teachers suggested that students should participate in diverse ways in classroom interaction, for instance through dialogic pedagogies and practical experiments. I noted that, in their discussion, the value of informal activity in the community was rarely discussed by teachers but, from my participant observations, those involvements seemed to add valuable experiences and skills. Some of this involvement by the children could fill the gap in practical skills mentioned by the teachers.

In physical space, the provision of resources and infrastructure seems unequal and reliant on the setting. For example, Elimu School was better resourced than Baraka School, and this shaped the kind of classroom practices used. According to teachers like Kim (Extract 7), private schools were better equipped for active learning due to their better resources. As a result, there were invisible and visible social-class power issues that impacted on the funding, such as socioeconomic background and funding inequality, which ultimately impacted on a school's interaction space. The teachers appeared to blame the parents from lower socioeconomic backgrounds for the inadequate resources in Baraka School while, paradoxically, it is the role of government to provide funding. There seemed to be an expectation for parents to fill the funding gaps left by government.

Unmasking the policy space, teachers Kim and Gathenya noted that the Government of Kenya and society were both trying to uphold children's rights following global and local changes in policy. These changes have, however, created cultural and socioeconomic tension, because some of the children's rights over issues such as female genital mutilation seem to conflict with community practice, which leads to students and families being left in a dilemma over whether to follow education policies and stay in school and be ostracised by their community, or vice versa. As a result, there is a need to contextualise some of these policies so that no group of students is marginalised. In addition, there is a need to achieve cohesion between classroom practice and policies by upholding good communications among all key players in education.

Overall, it appears that Kenyan children's welfare was safeguarded through policy and funding initiatives by the government to improve physical space, and ultimately interaction space. Nevertheless, there are gaps that need addressing in pedagogical space, for example

having student-centred and dialogic pedagogies in teaching and learning practices, which will be outlined in the recommendations in Chapter 8.

Chapter 5. Kenyan teachers' professional identity

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I reveal Kenyan teachers' professional identity as it emerged from the data analysis. I discuss their professionalism and autonomy by examining their training, past teaching encounters and perspectives on classroom practice and Kenyan education in general. Teachers in Baraka School willingly discussed their teaching methods, reflecting on the key influences on their choices of practice and how they could make classroom interactions more productive for their students. They considered the key contributors and challenges to their professional identity and also to their choice of practice in the spaces available to them.

When examining space for interaction, it is important to have a clear idea of Kenyan teachers' identity and how it impacts on interactions inside and beyond their classrooms. Wermke and Höstfält (2014: 58) argue that, even though internationally teachers are perceived as 'reflective, self-determinant and lifelong learners', this universal outlook needs to be contextualised. With this in mind, it became imperative to understand how Kenyan teachers participate in their profession.

4.2 Professionalism

The teachers in this study were critical of the level of training for their careers and the continuous professional development available. Most teachers participating in the study had many years of teaching experiences in various settings. They accessed occasional training workshops, which helped them to upgrade their practice. This study provided another platform for teachers to reflect and see new ways to move forward, towards improved teaching practices. At the same time, the study acted as a platform, a helpful place for teachers to dissect their professionalism and discuss their agency as they voiced their concerns. These are discussed further in this section.

4.2.1 *Kenyan teachers' training and professional practice*

This section discusses how teachers perceive their professional practice and their relationship with Kenyan education, as both students and teachers.

Extract 8

Kuria: I started primary, studied from class 1 to 7. I sat for my CPE (Certificate of primary Education) in 1976, then joined Form 1 and did

ACE (Advanced Certificate of Education) in 1980. Then proceeded into college and I finished there in 1986 as a P1 (primary teacher, Grade 1). Then after 15 years we got promotion, it normally stays for a long time I became a TS4. (Secondary teacher, Grade 4) (Interview 2)

Teacher Kuria in Extract 8 is an experienced teacher with many years of teaching in Kenyan primary schools, which makes his accounts trustworthy. He had been in the education system since 1980s, as it changed over time, so he was able to give insightful information in the interviews. From his discussion in Extract 8 above, it was evident that it took him 15 years alongside others to be promoted, which might be seen as quite a long time. In Baraka School and Elimu School, the teachers underwent professional training before working in schools. In my interviews, this was the case for all the teachers, for example Kuria (Extract 8), Pius (Extract 9) and Mike (Extract 9), who all outlined how they had to go to college for training as a PI (Primary schoolteacher, Grade 1). This professional training represented the start of their career identity, as is evident from their discussions. These teachers recalled how, after training, they were able to secure government posts to teach in schools. According to Graham and Phelps (2003), teaching identity is developed through a process. It takes training and practice in school to understand the profession. A teacher develops skills learned in training by integrating learned theory into daily classroom pedagogies. The teachers practise how to manage classroom interactions and how to work with other teachers. Moreover, with experience, the teacher will learn how to relate to parents, policy-makers, wider society, the Ministry of Education and the government (Graham and Phelps, 2003; Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009). Once the education system is understood, the teacher is assured a welcome from the profession, and will develop an identity. Subsequently, a teacher's identity is shaped significantly by interacting within the professional space available, as was evident when I interviewed the teachers in Baraka School. They were able to draw on their perspective from their experience as professionals.

In Baraka and Elimu Schools, as mentioned earlier, all teachers were full time and professionally trained in college prior to working in schools, for example teachers Mike and Pius in the Extract 9 below. Some felt that they had not always been appointed to teaching posts by the government quickly enough, creating a void when they were trained yet unemployed. Some of these individuals ended up working either in private schools or in other professions. An example is teacher Pius, who admits below (Extract 9) that he worked for almost 10 years in private schools before being appointed by the government to a public-school teaching job. There were other teachers in the institutions of study who took time out

to do other jobs before being employed by the government. The gap between training and job appointment can be problematic, since some can lose their motivation for the job, or even lose some of their skills, while waiting. At the same time, it is a paradox that teachers like Pius, although they note that private schools have better resources, highly value their employment by the government in a public school. In Extract 9 below, Pius said that he had been in private schools since he graduated in 2008, later saying that he is just six months into his role in a public school, demonstrating how much he values work in public schools.

Extract 9

Pius: that is how I got myself to a teacher training college, for another two years. (..) that is where I trained as a teacher. (..)

Pius: I have been teaching since 2008, I graduated in college since 2008 and since then I have been teaching all through. (...) but I was in private school, I joined public last year in the month of end august. So, in public school I am 6 months old. (Interview3). (...)

Mike: I actually trained as a P1 (primary one) teacher in the year 1993 at a place called Embu, college called Kigali and then I graduated in year 1995, I was posted in the Eastern province. We used to call them provinces then, at a place called Kitui. Then after 7 years I came to Central province. (Interview 4)

Using the onion metaphor, where all layers are significant to the whole, in Extract 9 above Mike similarly located his personal experiences in the broader historical and geographical context. He stated that he trained in Embu, first worked in Kitui in the East and then moved to Central province. Mike acknowledged that the term ‘provinces’ was used previously but has changed (now known as regions and counties). His statement shows how the Kenyan geographical boundaries and governance have changed over time. Mike’s experiences and professionalism were informed by those encounters in diverse regions in the country, which gave him an informed perspective on Kenyan education practice. His outlook in the discussions demonstrated the importance of key layers of analysis. He was able to relate to various pedagogical spaces and how they impact on classroom practice in specific areas and at different times across the country. All the teachers in this study had good experience from diverse school backgrounds (Extracts 8 and 9). They had a rich knowledge of the system, which again relates to the significant layers. As noted earlier, some trained teachers took longer to be employed in a public school. According to these teachers, most government-employed teachers earned more than those in private schools. Their jobs were also on permanent basis, with better benefits and job security, making government employment

more attractive than the private sector. Therefore, like Pius' statement (Extract 9) on being six months in a public school showed his sense of satisfaction, government employment is the main target: even though the physical space is less advanced, it has professional stability.

The teaching conditions are better in private schools due to better resources and more confident and experienced students, who make the learning environment conducive to interactive pedagogies. In private schools with adequate resources, teachers reported enjoying having students who were more confident, so the teachers were able to be more creative in their lessons. For example, teacher Kuria (Extract 10) noted that when science kits are available the students can become involved in experiments to demonstrate theoretical concepts, hence increasing their understanding. By contrast, public schools are under-resourced, making practical work tougher since they have fewer materials to integrate into their teaching. Yet most of their students were not exposed to a variety of situations, hence had less practical experience and little confidence. Some teachers voiced frustration, especially those who had only recently made the transition from private to public school, like Pius (Extract 10 below), who states that 'it is a change and I am trying to adapt'. One of the teachers noted that students' lack of confidence in using English made them fail to engage actively in class. Kuria in Extract 10 noted that the shortage of books stopped some students from finishing their homework or doing efficient private study. Hence, these students are limited in their classroom engagement. The interaction between the different spaces is evident. For example, the physical and interaction spaces complement one another. As the teachers discussed, when there are adequate resources, classroom practice can be more advanced. In addition, government activity in policies, resources funding and staff employment appears to influence all other key spaces. The four pedagogical spaces, though distinct, are also intertwined and contested within and among each other.

Extract 10

Kuria: the only area is the supply of learning materials. (...) like in science, we recommend that we be given science kit, a box with several items for experiments. But in most primary schools the headteacher find that it is costly and they do not buy it, so you end up doing things on the board and the children may not catch properly. (Interview 2)

Pius: It's a change and I am still trying to adapt. Because in private children are well prepared from the beginning (...) because in private they are very firm on what you are teaching, because it is a kind of business. So, they have to be stricter on what they are giving out. (Interview 3)

Public schools' teaching procedures were not as firm as in private schools, hence teaching was comparatively relaxed. Pius, in Extract 10, noted that in public schools the teachers do not have to prepare lesson plans and they are followed up in their teaching to a lesser extent. However, it was recognised that there were new rules on the need for teachers to follow professional standards strictly. The headteacher needed to follow up each teacher's progress and keep records, which were to be held readily accessible for professional appraisals. As a result, there was a directive for standards for professional practice, and the teachers were aware of it. Indeed, before my participant observations of lessons, some teachers handed me well-written lesson plans (see Appendix V, Photo L) that met the teaching professional standards. Furthermore, the teachers followed them accurately, demonstrating their expertise. Even though they appeared to be skilled, it remained questionable if this was daily practice or was mainly for my benefit.

In the classes observed, teachers used the IRF method in most of their lessons. They appeared to involve students by asking them questions, which they answered. At times, the students were asked to carry out tasks. During mathematic lessons, for instance, they worked out sums on the board. In science experiments, some students volunteered to mix soluble substances and solvents. The engagement in the classroom had a degree of dialogue and students had the autonomy to volunteer for the activity. Nonetheless, in most cases the teachers initiated the interaction, hence appeared to have overall control of the space for interaction, as they determined the mode of engagement. Indeed, in interview some teachers agreed that they used teacher-centred pedagogies since these helped them to complete the syllabus quicker. They also blamed the lack of resources. However, they noted that there was value in active student engagement, as it could enhance understanding and create a good rapport with students. It could also help to build their confidence, which would enable them to ask questions for clarification. Teacher Mike (Extract 11) confirmed that teachers have knowledge of several teaching methods yet prefer to use easy methods where students are passively engaged so that the syllabus can be covered. This shows the power that teachers wield in negotiating interactional space in their classroom, even though these interaction spaces are at times challenged by physical space, due to the availability or otherwise of resources to enable active engagement. Nonetheless, Mike's acknowledgement that teachers are aware of alternatives serves as an indication that there are opportunities to make their interaction spaces more active, when they are willing to do so.

Extract 11

Mike: I think us as teachers we tend to forget the most appropriate methods to trail the point home, but we normally take the easiest, the shortest that will normally help finish the syllabus quickly. And most of us use teacher-centred method which are actually not usually good. Described as teacher-centred methods, well, well, like this one of pupils raising their hands, I think this is the method we normally use but we never use this collaborative learning or involving pupils learning or in teaching, so we don't. Normally teachers stand there, asks questions, pupils answer, if they do not answer we forget about it and we move on. That is the kind of teaching that is normally done in our primary schools. (...)

Kuria: Sometimes we use teaching aids, where the lesson requires especially in sciences, you may give them materials and then you lead them to draw conclusions, and then you record. But some subjects you may not get real teaching aids, and then you end up lecturing. Yeah like English. Yeah languages not all of them, we are not able to get teaching aid for all of them. But we try to.

Mike - but I think as he puts it, science subjects are experimental, they use a lot of teaching aids. But with languages, actually science demands that you use teaching aid but those others but for languages (giggles), use short cuts, very few. (Focus Group)

Kuria in Extract 10 justified that when he does not have teaching aids, he ends up using the lecture method. He seemed aware that lecturing is not best practice, but when restrained by physical resources he would choose lecturing as his mode of teaching. This choice is easy, even though he was aware that it is not very productive. Mike put the blame on resources, asserting that these easier choices are made by teachers because they fall back on familiar practice in full knowledge that, with more effort, they could make learning more active. He gave an example of 'collaborative learning or involving students in their learning or in teaching' in Extract 11 above.

Even though most teachers complained that there was lack of follow up after college training and their skills were not remunerated, there were means available to equip teachers with skills and reward their career development. For example, there was continuous career development in teaching accessible to all teachers, as disclosed by teacher Mike when I interviewed him. One mode of assessment for career development is through academic study. Teachers who add to their academic qualifications are promoted in terms of both grade and salary. The other means of career development is merit. Each teacher's performance is assessed, and those with outstanding achievements are acknowledged and, at times, promoted. From my participant observation, the headteacher's office had several trophies

that he had won in his education zone (district). Whenever there is outstanding performance in a subject, the teacher is given a trophy. Teacher Kim won an English trophy while I was in his school for data collection. The school headteacher, Mike, also noted in interview that he had been promoted due to good performance in his previous school. Consequently, professional promotion in Kenya appeared to be through expertise, knowledge, performance and academic qualifications. Teachers' efforts do not go unnoticed, and are rewarded. There are platforms for career development, even though teachers felt they were inadequate.

Teachers choose to use teacher-centred methods of teaching, which limit students' involvement. Their choices are informed by their feelings of inadequacy and the pressure to complete the syllabus and prepare for exams, as noted by Mike above. Nonetheless, teachers are aware of the ways in which they could enhance the level of dialogue within their classrooms, yet they choose to focus on the need to pass exams. On the other hand, although the trophy initiatives (noted from my participant observations) were put in place to motivate teachers to work hard with their students in their classroom, they may actually have impeded teachers' dialogical interaction, as that could risk delaying completion of the syllabus in good time to prepare for the exams. Previous research has found that Kenyan education is highly exam-based, as seen in most of the classes observed, yet Kenyan teachers may need to reconsider their methods. They can use space for interaction to engage dialogically with their students to promote effective learning for all, as noted by teachers Mike and Kuria in interview (Kassam, 1995; Robinson, 2001; Mercer, 2010).

5.1.1 Kenyan teachers and society

Extract 12

Mike: the strength in teaching, well okay the other strength is that are opinion shapers and they shape the community. I can give this example of when I look around the pupils I have taught and they have grown, I see that as my fruits. I see my work coz I am shaping the community and their lifestyle. (Interview 4)

How teachers engage with their communities and wider society appeared important to the Kenyan teachers. As teacher Mike (Extract 12) stated above, teachers are opinion shapers and they influence their community. Here, Mike elevated the whole profession by giving them the high-status role of 'opinion shapers'. This acknowledgement shows Mike's pride in his profession, playing an important role in society. At the same time, a teacher's identity is embodied in its social construction (Brown and Manktelow, 2016). Consequently, how

society perceives and relates to the teaching profession has an impact on the identity. For instance, Mike further noted that he witnesses his work in the community when he sees his ex-students, whom he calls ‘the fruits of his work’ (Extract 12 above). The social-cultural influences and expectations of teachers in context are vital to their professional identity, as further noted by Kim in Extract 13. In Kenya, a teacher is perceived as a role model and an educator. For many years, the profession has had high regard, as noted by the teachers in interview. Generally, teachers are respected in the community, act as role models to their students and are expected to have a good standard of life.

In the region of study, since it is a rural setting, teaching is one of the most highly regarded professions (see Extracts 12 and 13). However, according to Kim in Extract 13, over time society’s attitudes towards teachers have changed. Gathenya seconds Kim’s assertion by stating that, previously, joining the profession was good, ‘but now people are running away from teaching’. These two teachers demonstrate how the profession’s outlook in society has changed. One could argue that, with globalisation and advanced technology, the intercultural and intergeneration attitudes are being critiqued. The effects of global interrelations are challenging the traditional mindset, which includes teachers’ status. Evidently, in the United Kingdom and in Australia the teaching profession has changed in terms of how people perceive it (Graham and Phelps, 2003; Brown and Manktelow, 2016). These changes are not just in Western countries, but are visible elsewhere, including in Kenya. In interview, the teachers claimed that society has changed how it perceives teachers (Extract 13). They felt that teaching was highly respected in the past but, in recent years, it has altered its outlook. They also felt that the government has not been supportive of teachers when they voice their needs, creating tensions, even though these teachers felt that they were destiny shapers and had a vital role in the community of which they were proud. At the same time, they voiced a need for more support and understanding from society, which could be significant to their professional identity and career. Similarly, in Extract 13 below, Kim and Kuria admit that they are ‘trying to change attitudes’ to fit society’s changes. Kim further compares teaching in 2016 to the 1990s and he feels that the current attitude of teachers is friendlier than in the past, justifying the impact of the social-cultural changes on education.

Extract 13

Kim: I must saying we are trying as teacher to change the attitude, that is why, education 2016 is not what it was 1990. Because teachers are friendlier, the attitude of the teacher has changed toward the children and

the children have a better attitude towards the teacher. But basically, what we are saying is that these things can be looked at, but it must be an all-inclusive kind of arrangement. (...)

Gathenya: I believe some years back teaching was a very good profession and many people wanted to join teaching. But today there is a big challenge. First of all, you go to college and wait for almost 10 years before you are employed. When you are employed, whatever you get is not making people happy. It is in the newspaper every day like us people now are not thinking to go toward that. In fact, people are running away from teaching. You would hear somebody is a teacher and was respected, am telling you today you hear people are saying we will leave this job and go and become maids. Because there was a comment about what a maid is paid, so you see now we are not heading towards the right direction, but we believe that with time things will improve. (Focus Group)

Gathenya, in Extract 13 above, voiced his professional frustration, to the extent of stating that even housemaids are better paid than teachers. He was frustrated by poor payment and delays by the government to pay teachers better. The teaching profession and politics seemed entangled. For instance, from the above focus group discussion, Kim and Gathenya's understanding of teaching identity and practices were being influenced by politics, society's outlook and socioeconomic status. In any setting, these factors change over time, affecting the education system and its policies, which ultimately affects teachers' classroom practice. Another good example of change was when the Kenyan government took on education funding and policy guidance. It tried to match the education policies to its political agenda and global education policies, such as the UNCRC and African Charter. As a result, the curriculum was changed to fit political leaders' manifestos and global demands. In the end, the syllabus was affected by politics and 'outside policies', ultimately shaping what the teachers have to teach. Therefore, the economy and direct government funding and policies have impacted on the resources available for teachers, which, in the end, determines the teaching pedagogies chosen. According to Maathai (2009), one of the challenges for African education is economic and political stability and the priorities that control government input into the education system.

5.1.2 Kenyan teachers' voice

Teachers' voice on their profession was a theme that emerged in this analysis, and it was evident how it varied between the classes and in comparison, to other areas in the education system. Baraka teachers seem to have a voice in their classroom, as they had the freedom to choose their specialist subject and their teaching methods. From my participant observations,

all teachers instructed their students to follow their guidelines. Additionally, teachers made pedagogical choices in their lessons, despite being restrained by external factors (Wermke and Höstfält, 2014). Indeed, some teachers were observed to react creatively to the constraints, for example using mobile phones to undertake research or to listen to audio clips in lessons. Other teachers asked their students to bring in materials from home for class experiments, which made it possible for these teachers to demonstrate the concepts practically.

Although it was noted earlier that the Kenyan teachers had an overall choice of pedagogical practice, most appeared to prefer IRF. This method of teaching leaves less room for student involvement, the students are more passive in their classrooms and there is no room for dialogue. This choice of pedagogy demonstrates how teachers' autonomy can paradoxically hinder students' autonomy to engage in their classroom learning (Akter and Fatima, 2016).

Teachers at Baraka School expressed feelings of helplessness (Extract 15), since their voices were not being listened to. Some teachers argued that the profession had lost its high regard, and they appeared to feel looked down upon by both society and government. Generally, Kenyan teachers have procedures for support and the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) to deal with professional concerns. It is through KNUT that issues on practice and on remunerations are aired. Then KNUT goes to the party concerned for resolution. Good examples are the issues between teachers and government over salaries. The KNUT shows support for Kenyan teachers, providing a space to express their needs, however they felt that this space for interaction was ineffective. At the time of the study, teachers felt unsupported by the government as a result of disputed remuneration, and some stated that KNUT and the government communications had come to a dead end. There were tensions between the government, the teachers and the unions, and these had led to several countrywide teachers' strikes and numerous negotiations without any progress. The frustration at teachers' positions left them feeling dissatisfied and demotivated. This discontent needs attention, as it may affect esteem and even classroom practice. Hence, there is an urgency for dialogue on these platforms to unlock the teachers' and government's interaction.

Extract 15

Kuria: No. teachers do not talk, we only talk in the staff meeting the problems you have, when you tell the headteacher, I think he doesn't have another area, because when they go to the meetings with the DEO (district education officer), they talk about teaching, professional documents, but

not about money and the office think the money they are given is enough, so a teacher has no voice there. (Interview 2)

Kim: ... because at the end of the day it is a career. You know, it is not volunteering, so you must get commiserating remuneration. So, if the government want to change the attitude of the teachers, because that is the bottom line, I strongly believe. You change the attitude of the teachers, appreciate what they are doing, appreciation can be in any kind of appreciation, maybe pay maybe just appreciation whatever they do it. And the attitude starts with the teacher, the teacher is able to change the attitude of the children. Which we can without even the remuneration and that we are trying. (Focus Group)

Teachers' voice on training requirements appeared suppressed, which was seen in discussion. They identified a lack of support from training colleges after graduation and, as a result, they were limited in enhancing their practice. Some teachers, like Kuria in Extract 16, felt that they needed in-service training for practice development. There are some workshops delivered by the Ministry of Education, however the teachers reported a need for superior trainers and researchers (Extract 16). They claimed that it was only colleagues from better-performing schools who delivered the workshops, suggesting that it would be productive for college trainers and education researchers, instead, to come to update teachers on new practices. Similarly, they felt that the curriculum developers (Kenyan Institute of Curriculum Development) did not communicate directly with the majority of teachers, resulting in a gap in their professional input, which limited their autonomy. It was only a few chosen teachers who became involved in curriculum development, leaving others feeling excluded. Teachers in Baraka School felt that the majority of Kenyan teachers should be part of curriculum development since they have a good insight into the students' and classrooms' needs.

Extract 16

Kuria: They finish with you, now they bring you to the officers. Officers when you go they call one of you to come and tell the others what they do at their school. Even the officers they do not have (giggles) they do not tell us anything, any *mwongozo* (direction), they pick one of you, I saw your class improving can you tell the others how they do.

Kim: basically the education system and what you do after college looks totally disconnected. So that becomes incumbent upon the government to ensure we have people on the ground, officers on the ground without break. Updating teachers on what is happening and what is expected. (Focus group)

Similar issues were apparent when it came to policy-making and government funding. There was less communication with the teachers at grassroots level, who might have enormous

insight into how to tackle the issues. These issues include the lack of effective professional platforms, poor moral support for teachers and poor communication with other key players (society, government and KICD), evidently affecting teachers' autonomy in their professional practice (Extract 16). Consequently, these issues added stress to their work, impacting on their identity and practice. These were clear indications of a need for dialogic interaction with the key professionals involved in education, such as teachers, teacher training colleges, government and policy-makers. Use of effective dialogic interaction could uphold teachers' autonomy and enhance classroom practice.

Even though teachers' autonomy is damaged by social tensions and professional dilemmas, it should be promoted (Wermke and Höstfält, 2014). Teachers' need to feel heard and supported, moreover they should be well equipped to execute professional autonomy in their practice. Indeed, they should be supported to meet the needs in schools through the government and Ministry of Education supplying adequate resources and quality infrastructure to create a good learning environment. Curriculum developers and trainers need to collaborate with teachers to identify the best teaching methods to enable creativity and good student learning. All these gaps within space for interaction are opportunities for dialogic engagement to develop progressive Kenyan education practices.

Indeed, when teachers are supported suitably their efficacy increases, enabling them to negotiate pedagogies that meet their students' needs. To uphold this, teachers should be entrusted to make classroom decisions without micromanagement, supporting and resourcing them adequately, as noted. They should be supported by all involved without intimidation or being left to feel hopeless. They could have open platforms to voice their concerns as they define their teaching needs. Communication channels would be best if they were open both ways (top-down and bottom-up). It was evident in discussion that the mode of communication in Kenyan education was mostly top-down, and rarely bottom-up. I argue that teachers' voices seem to be predominantly silenced, in their profession. However, teachers should be able to interact professionally with others (Beauchamp and Thomas, 2009). How these interactions are negotiated determines teachers' identity in a specific society. Moreover, teachers are conversant with their classroom's needs, therefore their contribution is advantageous.

As teachers discussed their practice and voiced their concerns, they appeared to appreciate a space for interaction where they could reflect on their experiences and further envision

their future practice. Indeed, after the interviews, some were observed engaging more with their students and being creative in their lessons. An example was the use of a group competition (section 8.2.2, Photo 28), allowing students to talk more in the class as they took an active role in their learning. These changes in practice appeared to have occurred after teachers had an opportunity to reflect. As Beauchamp and Thomas (2009) contended, reflection can help teachers to be in tune with themselves and their work. They have a chance to connect with their career's identity and mission, thus formulating their future performance, which gives them agency in their work, promoting their autonomy.

4.3 Chapter summary

It emerged that teachers' monologic practice in their classrooms contradicted their aspirations for making learning more student-centred, as Mike admitted that teachers tend to use teacher-centred methods. Teachers in Baraka School were aware of diverse methods of applications but predominantly used teacher-centred methods. Their choice of interaction space was fundamentally influenced by key factors such as physical space, which included training, funding of resources, time structures and society's mindset. Nonetheless, some teachers demonstrated autonomy in negotiating their performance in this space, since they could intermittently involve their students more. Teachers such as Mike and Kim admitted that the dialogic approach could be included in their practice, yet some were reluctant as they felt that they needed to maintain control of the class. It was also evident that teachers need a platform to voice their concerns about their profession and foster reflection on their practice to improve their performance.

With reference to physical space, the teachers at Baraka School granted that there were some resources available yet stated that in specific areas they were inadequate. They noted that the location of their school disadvantaged their physical space, since it was a deeply rural area with parents of low socioeconomic power. This affected the rates of admission and thus the funding from government. It contrasted with Elimu School, which was well resourced, had access to more teachers and had a better infrastructure. Some teachers acknowledged that the school's status affected teachers' motivation, as those with better affiliations avoided schools like Baraka. I contend that possibly the teachers' awareness of their students' background influenced their activity in the classroom and, through reflection, they could critique their attitudes and improve their practice.

Career development is a process, therefore a teaching identity is formed over time. There are numerous social, cultural and phenomenological factors that influence Kenyan teachers' professional identity. Their interaction with others prior to and during professional practice sets the trajectory for the identity development. Considering cultural space, it was evident that Baraka teachers were competent yet had feelings of dissatisfaction. They expressed a need for their voice to be heard by society and government. Although they had some platforms on which to voice their concerns, such as KNUT, there were feelings of frustration. They were content with their professional identity, despite their autonomy being restricted. Those interviewed understood that they had an important role to play in society. Overall, these teachers' identities were correlated to external influences, which possibly impacted on their teaching in interaction space.

On the other hand, there is a need to contextualise policy space by involving teachers more. This study's participants critiqued some government initiatives because they felt that there were better ways to distribute funding in order to meet the key needs in school. They contended that if the government had consulted teachers, they would have voiced their immediate needs. Their suggestions echo Tabulawa's (2013) assertions that African education developments need to be contextualised before implementing changes to policy space. It was therefore apparent in this study that all parties involved in education need to build cohesive relations with teachers. Overall, continuous communication between the four pedagogical spaces are indispensable, and the teachers need to be involved.

Chapter 6. Classroom environments in Kenya

6.1 Introduction

Although previous researchers have looked at Kenyan classroom practice and advocated for reform (Bunyi, 1999; Akyeampong, 2009; Ackers and Hardman, 2012), some were conducted from an outsider's perspective. As a result, together with Kenyan teachers, this study has tried to unmask their classroom practice and their realities, capturing their understanding while at the same time undertaking ethnographic observations. I was aware of the risk of romanticising Kenyan classrooms and I hoped to work towards a balanced and more inclusive practice, eliminating the social-cultural and political tensions seen in previous studies (Said, 1994; Guthrie, 2011; Tabulawa, 2013).

6.2 Dissemination of infrastructure and resources

In my inquiries with the teachers, it was evident that at that time the Kenyan government was the main funding body for schools' infrastructure and learning resources. While most public schools' buildings had been funded by communities earlier through Harambee initiatives, since the introduction of FPE, education was free for all Kenyans and was now funded by government. Even older people, who had not had the opportunity earlier, took advantage of free education. Indeed, the initiative was so prevalent that the world's oldest person to obtain primary education (at 88 years old) in the *Guinness Book of Records* in 2009 was from Kenya, as a result of FPE (*Guardian*, 2015).

This study disclosed that there were both high-intake issues and socioeconomic aspects. For example, it was apparent that resources and infrastructure concerns were mostly a class issue since they were dependent on the socioeconomic background of the parents. Teachers in Baraka discussed how the socioeconomic background of the students' families affected how schools were funded. Furthermore, my participant observations in Elimu and Baraka Schools revealed pronounced differences in resource availability. Although both were in rural areas in the same constituency, Elimu had more resources. Teachers explained that Elimu had middle-class parents, while Baraka had a majority of parents from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, and this was obvious in the differences in resources and infrastructure. These issues cropped up despite the success of FPE in Kenya, creating inequality in resource distribution and poor infrastructure, among others. I would argue that these issues are more a class issue than whole-society issues, as claimed by most reports discussing African

education issues (Rolleston and Adefeso-Olateju, 2014). In Kenya, there are many good schools with adequate resources and good infrastructure. As earlier discussed, these are mostly private schools and good public schools in affluent areas, where parents are either from the high or middle economic income brackets. However, apparent inequality issues need exploration through dialogue; as Freire (1993) argues, the oppressed can use dialogue for emancipation. Moreover, as Kenya needs to provide quality learning for all, perhaps teachers should engage dialogically in addressing these inequalities and in making learning relevant to all students, even for those from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, as Nyerere (Ibbott, 2014) stipulates when advocating for education for self-reliance.

Since the distribution of materials is by government agencies known as CDF (Constituency Development Fund), political affluence plays a great part. First, parents from poor economic backgrounds are unable to put additional resources into schools. Moreover, they lack any political connections in CDF due to their poor socioeconomic background, which disadvantages their children's school, as they are unable to ask it for more resources. Moreover, these parents cannot provide the school with additional resources or send their children to costly private schools. These issues were obvious in Baraka School, as Kuria discusses in Extract 17. Kuria acknowledged that it is a rural school in the interior, where teachers complained of poor roads. Pius claimed that teachers from well-off backgrounds managed not be posted to such poor schools (Extract 17 below). Teachers also complained of the lack of resources that made their school admission rates low, since only poor parents would enrol their children in an under-resourced school. Moreover, Kenya is facing inequality issues that make the distribution of resources politically influenced and unequal. Individuals with political and economic connections are able to access some of these funding privileges, meant for all citizens. The situation in Kenya replicates Bourdieu's perspective, where a lack of social-cultural and economic capital can hinder access to specific fields and habitus (Alenan et al., 2015). According to Bernstein (2003), there are visible and invisible rules that control society and at times alienate certain groups due to their positions. In the Kenyan case, political affiliations lay out invisible rules that control physical space in terms of resources, and further impact on space for interaction, where pedagogies are practised.

Extract 17

Kuria – yes and infrastructures, like now you had gone to assess a lady in Class 4 Swahili, and the way you go there, the floor there. I would like you to photo that class. (.....) it is my class and the infrastructure there

is not very good. It is like neglected, that lower primary yote (all) the floors are of mud. (Interview 2)

Pius: again in a very rural school like this one, you find that people who are well up are never posted to this kind of schools. Because of accessing the place, it is very hard, especially when it is raining it is very hard to use a car you have to walk and the way you walk, sometimes you trek through bushes to access the place. (Interview 3)

It was evident from the interviews that FPE money is allocated according to the teacher-student ratio. Therefore, schools like Baraka, with fewer admissions, are apportioned minimal resources, disadvantaging their classroom engagement. Indeed, as teachers noted, the use of practical methods during science lessons was limited by the low number of science kits in the school (see Extract 7 in Chapter 4 and Extract 10 in Chapter 5). In some subjects, the students had inadequate books, making it impossible for them to do homework, and they had to share these books in their classroom. In some lessons, one book was shared by five students, while in other lessons one book was shared by two. Overall, there was availability of books in the school, with imbalances in supply for just some subjects. All the students sat at desks. The classrooms had blackboards, glass windows and wooden doors, and they had electricity, although this was rarely used due to the availability of daylight. Overall, the resources and infrastructures existed, but they needed upgrading, warranting CDF funding.

Political connections enhance CDF funding allocation to schools, influenced by the headteacher's and parents' association with government officials and the political climate, as well. Less than a year after my data collection at Baraka School, as I continued to maintain correspondence with the school headteacher, I heard of several changes. To my surprise, the school's infrastructure had been upgraded (Photo 22). In addition, the government initiative to provide laptops to all primary schools in Kenya had been completed by March 2017. Moreover, the school's buildings had been improved. This could be seen as a move by politicians to win votes from the parents and teachers, since it was near the general election. The funds for this work, perhaps, had been there all along. In Photo 22 below, one can see the difference in the school since I was there (Photos 26 and 27 in section 8.2.1). As Maathai (2009) notes, one of the challenges for Africa is politics, which decides resource distribution. This political influence will be discussed further in the following chapters, for instance how politics impacts on the education system.



Photo 22: Baraka classroom refurbishment in April 2017

Despite the inequality of resources distribution and poor infrastructure, teachers can negotiate their practice. Teachers can be creative with materials and use space for interaction to engage their students actively in their lessons. As outlined earlier, at Baraka School I observed teachers using mobile phones to undertake research. Another teacher asked the students to obtain locally available materials for a science experiment. They brought from home pinches of salt and sugar, and they fetched soil and sand from the school compound. As a result, the class carried out the practical experiments and, in the end, played an active part in obtaining the materials for their classroom learning. Moreover, I observed teachers taking time to further support their students beyond their timetable. Viewing time as a resource, the teachers used their own resources to revise papers and mark books, and even to offer private tuition. Due to teachers' commitment to their students' success, they applied themselves.

The issue of resources can be an opportunity for teachers and students to be creative with the materials and resources available. This could be a chance for dialogic interaction in their classroom, where they can establish what to use and how to use the physical space. As Robinson (2001) argues, with a progressive mindset, limitations and failure need not be perceived as permanent, as there can be an opportunity for imagination, creativity and growth in classroom learning. Therefore, if Kenyan teachers and students perceive their limitations from this positive outlook, they could be more creative within their space of interaction.

6.3 Pedagogical practices in Kenya

Pedagogic exploration in teaching and learning is at the core of this study. As Leach and Moon (2008) claim, pedagogy has power since it helps teachers to determine how to support their students' learning suitably. They argue that even 'unteachable' students can learn when the right pedagogies are applied. Teachers should, therefore, communicate effectively with their students as they help them to develop the cognitive and social skills required in learning. The methods of teaching and learning should inspire, challenge and excite students, so it was important for me to understand if dialogic pedagogies can make this contribution to Kenyan classrooms.

In Kenya, methods of teaching and learning have been slow to change over the years, despite many changes in other areas of the education system (Ackers and Hardman, 2012; Uwezo, 2012). The outcomes of my data analysis illuminated both current practice and the spaces where dialogic approaches can be applied. These outcomes from my study are discussed in this section in regard to the classroom environment.

6.3.1 Current methods of teaching

As previously noted in Chapter 4 (section 4.2.1), most teachers in this study predominantly used the IRF method of teaching, which confirms previous reports (Ackers and Hardman, 2012). They read out instructions while the students obediently followed their guidelines. Students responded by raising their hands and answering questions, or by saying them out loud together (see Extract 3, Chapter 4). This choice of instruction has been used in Kenya since the introduction of formal education by the missionaries and colonial government. Although it has been viewed as the best way to learn and appears to be ingrained in the education system, it is problematic. As Mercer (2000) argues, when students are passive learners, they easily forget the information studied. The teachers who participated in this study acknowledged a preference for the IRF method of teaching. They reasoned that prioritising finishing the syllabus prior to the end of the academic year was significant for revision for exams. Therefore, the time limit dictated their pedagogical choice. They further cited the lack of resources as a limitation to their chosen method of teaching. All the same, they pointed out that teachers had overall power to negotiate their pedagogical choices, despite external restraints.

Various childhood studies have advocated for children not to be passive observers but to actively participate in the world (James et al., 2002; UNCRC, 1989). Most children in Kenya,

just like in the rest of the world, spend most of their childhood in school. Therefore, it is important that these children actively engage in their classroom learning, since their lives are shaped by it. In school, they should gain fundamental skills that are vital for their future education, career and life (Ibbott, 2014). Robinson (2001) has contended that education should be a platform on which learners are free to engage creatively. They should be allowed to collaborate with others as they problem-solve and try new ideas. According to Piaget, education should go further than repeating previous knowledge, and students should come up with new ideas and knowledge (Garton, 2004). However, this can only be possible when teachers scaffold the learning (Vygotsky, 1978) and students freely exercise their creativity (Robinson, 2001).

In interview, it became apparent that non-academic subjects were overlooked, as noted by teacher Mike in Extract 20 (section 6.5) when he said, ‘There was a time we used to have art and craft, music and whatever, home science and those subjects were aimed at helping the pupils to be self-reliant. Nowadays they are not there...’. From Mike’s argument, for students who are talented or interested in subjects such as agriculture, domestic science, music and physical education, their learning needs are not met by current practice. Following Robinson’s (2001) argument, everyone has potential but, when not sufficiently explored in classroom learning, some students are disadvantaged. For instance, when schools are based on academic subjects without any inclusion of practical subjects, some individuals are left out, as noted by teacher Mike (Extract 20). Furthermore, Robinson (2001) acknowledges that not all students are academic, therefore the education system should be diverse enough to address their potential. This would make education student-centred rather than teacher-centred. Similarly, Gardner (2006), in his multiple intelligence theory, deliberates that people have diverse intelligences and that these cannot be fully utilised in a narrow curriculum. Intelligence, as in music, the environment and athletics, are at times left out of the curriculum. This was visible in the Kenyan system, as non-examination subjects are not on the timetable. Indeed, the teachers at Baraka School noted that the preceding 8-4-4 system had subjects like home science, art and craft and music that, since the curriculum review, were not emphasised. The deficiencies in attention to these subjects in classroom learning disadvantages students who are talented in those areas. Even though the review of the 8-4-4 system was due to an overload of subjects, these practical subjects should not have been ignored. There should be a way to balance the syllabus without disadvantaging individuals who might benefit from such areas. Unfortunately, the subjects are in the syllabus and in

schools' timetables, yet are not taught since they are not examined. This demonstrates how the exam-based mindset impacts on interaction space in Kenyan classrooms.

Baraka students appeared to appreciate dynamic practice in teaching and learning. They volunteered enthusiastically, as seen in Chapter 4 (Extract 3), which demonstrates that students were eager to participate in their world, as has been advocated by childhood studies. Indeed, James et al. (2002) argue that children are social actors in their world and should be supported to engage fully. However, if the engagement is all about the question and answer methods, it remains limited. There is no meaningful debate where students and teachers can engage in exploratory talk and build on each other's knowledge. It hinders interaction engagement, where creativity, imagination and problem-solving can be fostered through the possibility of using dialogue.

Nevertheless, after my interviews with the teachers, they appeared to have reflected on their practice since I observed them being more creative in their lessons, for example in Photo 23 below of teacher Gathenya engaging his students in the lesson. He split the class into two groups and asked the students to ask each other questions as they competed (Photo 23 below). The students in both groups were actively participating in the competition, asking each other questions and collaborating to find the correct answers. Similarly, as noted earlier, during some science lessons practical experiments were conducted by the teacher and students. The teachers instructed the students on what to do and they followed the instructions. The students rarely initiated engagement, which evidently demonstrated the classroom's hierarchical order. Although the teaching was more teacher-led than student-led, occasionally I observed teachers creating opportunities for students to engage actively, as in the photo below (Photo 23). It was evident that teachers could use their autonomy to find additional platforms with the possibility of fostering more creative interaction in their regular classroom.



Photo 23: Baraka students engaging in groupwork

Moreover, the teachers during interviews specified that they had been trained in diverse methods of teaching, which they used at times (Extract 11). They further stated that their teaching would be more beneficial if there was more practical involvement. Although they restricted experimentation to science subjects, they stated that even subjects like English could be more proactive. One teacher gave an example of a debate with students from another school. This gave students an experience to speak in public and express their opinions. Another teacher suggested the use of an English dictionary to look for new words as students engaged in English lessons. These kinds of suggestions demonstrated that teachers were aware of their need for creativity and for lessons to be relevant to the students. Nyerere (Kassam, 1995; Ibbott, 2014) advocated for an education that relates to students' lives and environment. Therefore, they should have more practical sessions to relate classroom learning to their daily lives. Indeed, this kind of learning, which is practically engaging, is easily retained in the memory since students are actively participating (Alexander, 2008; Mercer and Dawes, 2014).

6.3.2 Exploring spaces for dialogic pedagogies

Although formal learning in Kenya was observed to use the IRF method, teachers occasionally diversified the space for interaction through the use of integrated pedagogies. Students had additional opportunities in their home and community engagements, with more active interaction space, for example in my community observations of church engagement (Photo 21, in Chapter 4). In African traditional learning, children and young people engage through storytelling, wise sayings and taking an active role in their community's activities (Kenyatta, 1965). These active roles are modelled by peers and also by elders, who appeared to scaffold their learning process. In the current Kenyan setting, life may have changed, but

there are areas where children engage actively while an adult both models and scaffolds their engagement. This involvement instils vital knowledge and skills in these children, which should be acknowledged as informal learning. According to Vygotsky (1978), individuals' learning takes place through social interactions with others, during collaboration and when supervised by knowledgeable others. This is visible in the current Kenyan setting, as it was in the traditional lifestyle. Also, from Piaget's perspective, one needs a good environment to nurture physical growth and cognitive development in order to assimilate and accommodate knowledge during one's development (Garton, 2004; Berk, 2013). Therefore, physical space in the community and in schools should be equipped to enhance children's development.

Drawing on these constructivist perspectives, when Kenyan children are growing up, they are exposed to diverse learning situations where they acquire knowledge and skills within their environment. It is therefore important to include these vital experiences and skills, gained in these community and home settings, into classroom learning. To enable Kenyan education to move away from the colonial system that has dictated students' outcomes through exam measures and alienated their cultural practices and knowledge, it is significant to use these experiences in classrooms' interaction space. The past colonial education subdued traditional learning and promoted formal school learning, which aimed to prepare students for exams and to have jobs (Kenyatta, 1965; Adeyemi and Adeyinka, 2003; Njoya, 2017). Formal education was authoritarian learning, where students passively learned, and had no space for analysing issues and innovation. In Baraka School, like many other Kenyan schools, the interaction spaces have remained formalised, despite the end of colonial rule many decades ago. School students passively follow instructions given by their teachers and have no space for thinking for themselves (Ackers and Hardman, 2012; Benoit, 2013). Although these old methods of teaching have been challenged, it seems from my study findings that they have not progressed. As a result, Kenyan education needs pedagogical development that is student-centred and both locally and globally competitive. There is a need to continue working with teachers here to determine the best way forward, evading previous limitations (Guthrie, 2011; Tabulawa, 2013). This study aimed to work with teachers to establish how to achieve this, and it was noted that some of the active involvement in the community should be included in formal education space. This might be a chance to uphold not just interaction space but also cultural space, where students can bring their social and cultural experiences into the classroom and engage critically.

If space for more enhanced interaction in classrooms can include outside experiences, it would be possible for students to use dialogic skills not just in their formal education but in other relevant aspects of their lives. For example, they would start to question issues in their lives and in their society. They would also use dialogic pedagogies for problem-solving and creativity to meet their immediate needs. As Freire (1970) claims, for individuals to liberate their lives in any area, they need to cooperate. Thus, in my view, it is essential for all Kenyan students and teachers to engage in dialogue in their classrooms. The dialogue, discussions and all kinds of conversations should be both asymmetrical and symmetrical, between students and teachers, and among students (Mercer, 2001). According to Mercer and Dawes (2014), for productive dialogue there should be rules to endorse respect for all participants. All should engage freely and uphold democracy by allowing themselves to agree and disagree. Mercer stated that there should be use of exploratory talk where there is openness in the dialogue. While using exploratory talk, students are not perceived as silent learners, but are active learners. Students are not empty banks in which teachers deposit knowledge, as Freire (1970) critiqued; in the dialogic approach, they are perceived as knowledgeable others. They have knowledge to offer and they feel valued in their learning (Freire and Macedo, 2012; Mercer and Dawes, 2014). Therefore, the use of dialogic pedagogies is significant and should be incorporated in learning. Unfortunately, this was not the case at Baraka School, which replicates most Kenyan schools.

While exploring spaces for dialogue in Kenyan learning, I observed classroom interactions and spoke with teachers to obtain their outlook. The teachers' perceptions of dialogue further demonstrated their social-cultural outlook. Most teachers conceived the importance of active dialogue with their students (Extract 18). In Extract 18, Pius acknowledged that when there is dialogue, students have confidence in the teacher and can ask for clarification if they do not understand the information being taught. Then, teachers are able to support them appropriately. Teacher Mike added that the authoritarian barriers would be broken down and communication between teachers and the students eased. Some teachers perceived that their daily interaction entailed dialogic practice but, drawing on Mercer's descriptions of classroom dialogue, exploratory talk was rare in the Baraka classes that I observed. While teachers talked with students all the time, these conversations could be seen as cumulative and disputative (Mercer, 2001), mostly initiated by the teachers while the students answered in few words (minimal feedback). They rarely explored ideas collaboratively. Similarly, the students rarely initiated conversations, so they participated passively.

Extract 18

Pius: it is important to have it apart from the challenges from the children's background, sometimes they tend to try and.., it is like they are exempting from the other group, apart from those ones the others are very okay. It is important to have that dialogue because if that child will not get what you are trying to teach they are willing to ask, for clarification (....)

Mike: one advantage of dialogue or the good thing is it improves teacher-pupil relationship because there is one on one (1:1) talk. And the child is feeling they belong because you are not the teacher who feels that this is the teacher who comes stone face but this is the one who talks, so we are communicating. So, it improves the relationship... one way of improving dialogue that is done. Well well well, what do I say? (silence), challenges.

Kim: It is something that can be cultivated in class. And the dialogue is cultivated by the setting of the environment, and that is about the teacher setting the environment. Because in as much as we have challenges with the children from those backgrounds with very many problems, we have a system, we have a way of making them feel appreciated. (....) One-way dialogue can be done is setting the environment, and that squarely lies upon the teacher. That is if I went to class and I want to kill dialogue am able to kill dialogue because am able to kill communicate to the kids that am not in the mood of dialogue. So that squarely lies on me, I can kill dialogue or I can make dialogue very possible. (Focus Group)

From the focus group discussion in Extract 18 above, teacher Kim said that he could 'kill dialogue' if he wanted to, for instance when he was not in the mood. His statement strongly exhibited how teachers dominate the power in the interaction space to choose the methods applied. In cases like these, students have no way to negotiate the mode of teaching and learning. This is challenging in pedagogical spaces, since all participants should be at the same level, where they can have input, and their input should be respected. However, when there is a power imbalance, effective dialogue is restrained. When the teacher chooses to 'kill dialogue', students' participation is incapacitated and the relations between students and teachers are controlled. As teacher Mike in Extract 18 stated above, dialogue would enhance teacher-pupil relations, but he goes on to admit that the use of dialogue is challenging, and I quote him saying, 'Well well well, what do I say (silence) challenges'. This statement displays how teachers might struggle to share their power over interaction through allowing students to take part in exploratory talks when building each other's knowledge. Teachers' authoritarian background seems to be causing a dilemma in which they were aware of the benefits of dialogic pedagogies yet felt conflicted about letting go of their control.

Indeed, despite supporting the need for dialogue in classrooms, this is difficult due to the tensions (Kessler-Singh and Robertson, 2015). Mercer (2001) and Alexander (2001) also recognised that most schools' systems are exam-based, thus limit the use of dialogue. For example, in most countries like Kenya, passing exams is highly valued, so teachers focus on completing the syllabus and preparing their students for exams. The practice was evident in Baraka School, where some teachers admitted that they mainly went through the syllabus quickly in the first two terms so that they could focus on preparing their students for exams in the final term (3rd term). Regrettably, other studies have shown that, after passing these exams, some students can barely remember what they have learned (Robinson, 2001). Hence, their learning in such schools is not beneficial to their lives outside of school. This contradicts the view that the main value of education is to gain skills for use in the world and life; on the contrary, in these kinds of systems the focus is just on passing exams (Freire, 1970; Mercer, 2001; Sifuna, 2007; Ibbott, 2014). No wonder, then, that most Kenyan students are unprepared for the work environment, since most of their knowledge is forgotten straight after taking their exams. As teacher Mike in Extract 20 (section 6.5 ahead) claimed, the Kenyan system is exam-based and students do not gain practical skills, making them unmarketable for jobs, which, in the end, may affect their lives negatively, despite passing.

Kessler-Singh and Robertson (2015) claim that dialogic pedagogies are too political, therefore some people avoid them. On the other hand, hooks (1994) and Ladson-Billings (1995) argue that dialogue helps to challenge the status quo, therefore it is necessary. Indeed, through dialogue students can start asking deeper questions and can challenge the issues that relate to them and their world. Although this should be the essence of education, teachers might fear losing control of classroom discussion. Therefore, apparent disengagement from open discussion could actually be favourable to teachers. Foucault (Ball, 2013) alleges that teachers exercise control in their classrooms by maintaining discipline, therefore use limited dialogue. Indeed, some of the teachers I interviewed in Kenya approved of this view, stating that dialogue would compromise discipline. One teacher argued that dialogue was informal, thus it can be used outside but not within school, which is a formal setting. The teacher went on to state that he had open dialogue with students in the past when he had met them outside the school, however this was dissimilar to the classroom. The view may symbolise the need for a teacher to have control in their classroom. The invisible rules (Bernstein, 2003) upheld by teachers and students influence their pedagogy practice. They seem to have a conservative need to maintain an authoritarian style of teaching and learning. Nonetheless, Freire (1993)

argued that fear of dialogue makes the oppressed remain so, because there is no challenge to the situation. Therefore, it is crucial for students and teachers to address these contradictions in order to advance their practice.

As noted by Baraka teachers, there were other challenges facing the use of dialogue in Kenyan schools, such as the lack of confidence to engage by those students from poor backgrounds, who appear to lack good language skills. Teacher Pius (in Chapter 4, Extract 4) noted that students from some deprived schools did not have a good command of English and therefore could not express themselves confidently. As a result, they might not engage in productive dialogue. Even though I asked them how teachers could build these students' language skills and confidence, there is a limit to their input. The students' backgrounds determined their exposure, as Pius noted in Extract 18, which seemed to dictate their language acquisition and freedom to dialogue. This encapsulates Bourdieu's perspective on how people's social capital can enable or hinder their participation in specific fields (Alenan et al., 2015). Still, if teachers are motivated to creatively support their students and are well resourced, they can overcome these limitations. These students have local languages which they could use to communicate, which they would feel more confident in speaking. Perhaps, if these languages were used, such students might take part actively in the interaction space, as discussed in the following section 6.4.

Extract 19

Mike: the colleges, they don't, once you are out

Kim: ...they finish with you,(...) basically the education system and what you do after college looks totally disconnected. So that becomes incumbent upon the government to ensure we have people on the ground, officers on the ground without break. Updating teachers on what is happening and what is expected. (Focus Group)

Teachers in Baraka School appeared open to learning new pedagogies so that they could perform better in teaching. Teacher Kim in Extract 19 above suggested that there was a need for professional development and updates on practice. Other teachers like Mike also seemed to recognise the need for in-service training and workshops to help them to update themselves on new methods of teaching. They distinguished that there was a lack of contact with training colleges and education researchers, but that they were open to learning new pedagogies. Still, it is important that they are involved in dialogue with the trainers and Ministry. They felt that dialogue was not ingrained in the system of education and society.

They voiced the need for dialogue, not just within their classroom but with outside key players like parents and government. When open talk is advocated in school and society, then all would reap the benefits of using dialogue. Furthermore, the barriers could be confronted. Murphy and Iverson (2015) argue that there is a correlation between social-cultural perspectives and pedagogy. The learners' and teachers' interaction space is based on cultural and social rules. They play roles that are acceptable to their community. In relation to classroom paradigms, Kenyan society experiences are shaped by historical education practices, when students were passive learners. In addition, since Kenyan society is hierarchical, in most spheres any dialogue is limited, including in education. The authoritarian education inherited from colonial and missionary formal education still haunts the Kenyan education system, as in many African countries (Mazrui, 1986; Maathai, 2009; Njoya, 2017). As Said (1995, 2003) distinguished, it is hard to dissociate formal education from colonialism, especially while dealing with ex-colonies, as is the case in Kenya. As a result, the old formal styles are upheld in education, but perhaps they now need to be challenged to allow progress.

There is a need to challenge these long-standing paradigms, such as that traditional African ways of life are backward and should be alienated from formal learning. On the contrary, education should use cultural tools and experiences, integrating them into pedagogical spaces to meet the ongoing demand. Education practices should have student-centred pedagogies that are locally and globally competitive (Harber, 2002; Olatunde and Omondi, 2010; Ackers and Hardman, 2012; Benoitte, 2013). Dialogue engagement in the classroom can help to address some of these issues. The students would relate their classroom learning to their outside world, for example their involvement in community and home activities. Their practical activity and experiences in the community can inform their learning (Freire and Macedo, 1993; Kassam, 1995; Mercer, 2001). They can start challenging issues in their learning and their world (hooks, 1994; Kessler-Singh and Robertson, 2015). This can make classroom learning more productive and more interesting. Using the space available for dialogic engagement in the education system, it is imperative to engage teachers and students in reviewing classroom pedagogies. This inclusiveness might overcome the tensions apparent, which were previously correlated to the incorporation of new pedagogies in Africa, specifically Kenya (Guthrie, 2011; Tabulawa, 2013; Schweisfurth, 2014). On the other hand, developing culturally acceptable pedagogies that are relevant to the context can be valuable for learners in Kenya (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

6.4 Use of multiple languages in Kenyan classrooms

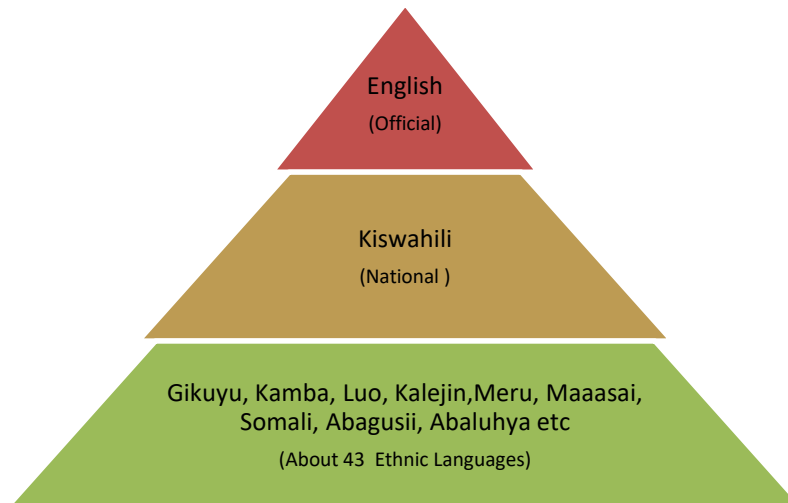


Figure 6-1 Kenyan languages

Unexpected findings from this study relate to the dynamics of language use and multilingualism in Kenyan education space. Kenyan society is multilingual, yet the language of instruction in the classroom has been largely English. English is Kenya's official language since colonial rule, while Kiswahili is the national language. Kiswahili is also used as a medium of communication in East African countries such as Tanzania, Rwanda, Uganda, Burundi and Congo. Most Kenya communities have tribal languages, about forty dialects in total, which include Gikuyu, Luo, Kamba, Kiisi, Meru and Kalenjin, among others (Figure 6.1 above). These tribal languages are mother tongues and are predominant in the regions of the country. Gikuyu is used in Central region, where this study was conducted. All the students and teachers in the region use Gikuyu, Kiswahili and English. In Elimu and Baraka Schools, the teachers and students formally use English to communicate, however two other languages are frequently used. This was evident in interviews and classroom observations in Baraka School, where English remained the medium of communication.

Although teachers use English as the main language in interaction space, paradoxically I observed teachers using Gikuyu and Kiswahili to emphasise on matters aiming to promote students' understanding. Similarly, when teachers and students were interacting outside of their classroom with their peers, they frequently used Gikuyu and Kiswahili. These practices indicate the need for the inclusion of ethnic languages to promote conversations and understanding in interaction space (Ngugi, 2018). The issue of using home languages in school has been raised by UNESCO (2015), which reported that this promotes learning for most students from bilingual and multilingual backgrounds, such as most Kenyan students.

The use of local languages should be encouraged, not penalised; it should be promoted in the interaction space of the classroom. It would stimulate dialogue in learning, which in the end would advance comprehension. Teachers, students and schools could be creative with language diversity, which can make learning more engaging and interesting. They could use their languages to learn more about various cultures in society, which would enhance social understanding and cohesion. Conversely, multilingualism would promote dialogue in the classroom, which would engage students in their interactions and draw in issues related to other pedagogical spaces (Mercer, 2014).

In post-colonial Africa, the use of local languages in education was promoted immediately after Independence to enhance Pan-Africanism. Kenya, being a Pan-African country, encouraged the use of African languages, but they were taught only to lower primary students. They learned these mother-tongue languages as school subjects. Nonetheless, over time this practice ceased and the official languages of Kiswahili and English have been promoted. This has been seen as a way for schools to become more international and for students to be prepared for exams, even though critics like Thiong'o (1986) have called it enslavement. As an advocate of African literature and languages, Thiong'o (1986) argued that Africans need to decolonise their minds and appreciate these languages. They should uphold their use to communicate, and students should not be reprimanded for speaking them (Ngugi, 2018). Nonetheless, in interviews with the teachers, their preference for English recurred in discussion, which displays the invisible power imbalance of language (see Extract 4 in Chapter 4).

Universally and historically, multilingualism was perceived as a disadvantage, and highly discouraged in formal settings (Berk, 2013). This dogma negatively shaped how communities that spoke many languages perceived their ethnic languages. They discouraged their children from speaking their mother tongue and encouraged them to speak in Western languages, which were perceived as more civilised. Kenya was no exception, hence schools and society encouraged children to speak English in formal settings. This practice is still evident to date, and was evident in my research. However, students use local languages in informal settings, like at home and social situations. As a result, most Kenyan children, especially those from affluent backgrounds and attending good private and public schools, predominantly use English as their medium of exchange and, at times, Kiswahili (Extract 4, Chapter 4). Other ethnic languages are not allowed in school. The practice affects their social

competence in their ethnic languages, since younger people can only speak them, not read or write these languages.

In recent years, the use of multiple languages has been seen as an advantage. Researchers have proved that previous studies were culturally biased, since there are benefits for multilingual people (Bialsky, 2001; Berk, 2013). As previously discussed in the section on classroom engagement (Chapter 4, section 4.2.1), benefits from using multiple languages include a five-year delay in the onset of Alzheimer's disease, multitasking, international links and a better understanding of other people (Berk, 2013). As a result, it is valuable for students to use multiple languages and should be encouraged in classroom learning. Thiong'o (1986) argued that, for individuals to free themselves from the colonial mentality, they need to appreciate their ethnic languages first, before learning another language. He advocated for the use of African languages in school and in informal settings.

Even though the new Kenyan curriculum (2017) has outlined the need for including mother-tongue languages in early years education, the reality could be different. Attitudes towards these languages are still constrained by earlier, biased ideologies. Indeed, most of the teachers at Baraka School felt that there should be better use of the English language, since it is the exam language. They argued that private school children were more fluent and confident than poor public schools (Extract 4). According to the teachers, students' socioeconomic background perhaps predicted their English language competence. Wealthy families used English and accessed good schools, whereas poor families with lower educational achievements did not use English but their mother tongue, negatively affecting their children's formal language skills. This is problematic, since competence in local languages appears to be perceived as an inability to acquire formal language, which is English. I argue that these students are competent in local languages, and that these are as important as any other language, and the use of local languages should be promoted in interaction space. They should not be looked down upon but used to improve dialogue within interaction space. When students feel confident to use their familiar language in education settings, they might become more involved, helping to erase the inequality in education interaction space for students and parents from lower socioeconomic backgrounds, as discussed in Chapter 4. At the same time, it would break down the language and education hegemonies that promote the notion that Western languages are formal, while local African languages are inferior and informal. This would empower rural communities to move away from the colonial past and to respect their traditional values and practices.

There is a need to encourage fluency in all Kenyan languages in schools without discrimination. If Kenya, like other member states of UNCRC (1989), aims to promote students' rights to engagement, their rights to use home languages alongside other languages such as English should not be penalised. Indeed, if their mother tongue is discouraged it might intimidate students, especially those who use it at home. They might disengage from classroom talk, and this could affect both their esteem and their grades. Their ethnic background should be accepted and respected, which includes promotion of these languages. Since Africa has multiple heritages, Mazrui (1986) argued that society's languages should be included, not excluded. Promoting African languages supports people's identity and reduces the prevalent social-cultural dominance and tension. Freire's (1993) argument that there was a culture of silence, where some individuals are oppressed to accept inequality, demands emancipation. Oppression can be challenged through active engagement and dialogue. The sidelined poorer students with rich African language knowledge should not accept being silenced, but should actively use their languages in their learning. Their activity will determine their destiny. As argued in the theoretical foundation chapter, cultural and critical pedagogic approaches would help students to be critical, enhancing learning. Part of engaging in cultural practice would be the use of local languages in the classroom.

Promoting the use of multiple languages in Kenyan schools would lead to many benefits. First, students would have all the benefits aligned with multilingualism (Berk, 2013) and also strengthen their identity. Therefore, the curriculum could aim to make an interaction space for multilingual language use within the classroom. Good examples are both the school subjects and the wider curriculum, such as debates, music and drama, among others. The use of exploratory talk in these areas could go beyond language knowledge to having dialogue on students' social-cultural and historical background, thus promoting social cohesion and learning in schools, which are necessary in multiple-ethnic Kenyan society. Furthermore, students would engage better since they are fluent and confident in local languages. For Kenyan school learning to have culturally relevant pedagogies, it needs to embrace its own ethnic languages (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Ibbott, 2014; UNESCO. 2015).

In recent years in Kenya, the use of ethnic languages has become highly marketable. Kenyan media have embraced local languages to communicate through radio and television. Local journalism and broadcasting need people who are competent in local languages. Other professionals like businesspeople, doctors, teachers and even politicians need to communicate with local people via these media, and also need local language competence

themselves. This was evident during my community observation, where students participated in the church reading a Gikuyu Bible and singing Gikuyu songs, as well as reading prayers in the Gikuyu language (Photo 4 in Chapter 3). For these children to participate, they need competence in reading and speaking their local languages. Unfortunately, most young people in Kenya are disadvantaged in these skills since they cannot read or write them, while some do not even speak these languages. Therefore, they lose the chance to participate in these interaction and cultural spaces. As a result, it is important for classroom practice to support the use of multiple languages spoken in Kenyan daily social settings. This would include local languages, and even foreign languages like English. By doing so, the classroom interaction space would nurture cultural and critical engagement.

Multilingualism was not covered by the dialogic discussions by Alexander (2008) and Mercer (2008) on how to apply the pedagogies. From my study, there is evidence that the use of ethnic languages in interaction space can promote learning, since it can enhance students' and teachers' participation in dialogue in a familiar language. On the other hand, since this study supports the use of culturally inclusive pedagogical spaces, the predominant use of English language raises social-cultural and political hegemonic issues. These tensions can be resolved by incorporating the use of local languages in interaction space.

6.5 Reviewing the Kenyan curriculum

The Kenyan primary education curriculum is prepared by the KICD (2017). This is a department of professionals who focus on developing the national curriculum. They then prepare the syllabus from the curriculum and pass it to teachers via the Education Ministry hierarchy through top-down channels. The group of KICD is reported to have been constituted of teachers in the past, however it transpired in the interviews and focus group that, of late, it is a group of professionals with just a few teachers. There seems now to be less input from teachers into the curriculum, since only a few are engaged in the process. Other teachers seem unaware of the process and feel left out, without a voice, even though they are the ones who disseminate the curriculum to the class. Moreover, they have know-how about their school and the needs of their students. This poor communication is also evident in the distribution of resources to support the curriculum when it is reviewed.

Some of the teachers whom I interviewed voiced frustration at the fact that, when the curriculum is changed, they do not have the materials needed to fully engage in the teaching. Government funding is not aligned to the curriculum review, hence the breakdown in

distribution. Unfortunately, there is no active platform on which teachers can voice these concerns. Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009) claim that when teachers participate actively in their work and their voices are heard, they are able to make a valuable contribution to the education system, which includes reflective practice and involvement in research, policies and curriculum development. Regrettably, Kenyan teachers are not fully involved in most of these areas and their voices appear suppressed, as remarked on by the Baraka teachers. Mike in Extract 20 referred to curriculum developers as ‘they’, indicating that his teachers are not part of the process.

Extract 20

Mike: I think they should improve the curriculum. The curriculum should be improved and made to help this child because curriculum as it is now, it is only teaching the child only to pass an exam. As when I go to class, I go to teach them how to pass an exam. Like the lesson I was in class eight I was telling them, you know there will be a question that will be asking you like this so answer such a question like this. So, the curriculum is. (...) exam based and exam oriented. We do not teach pupils how they can help themselves or become self-reliant, because there was a time we used to have art and craft, music and whatever, home science and those subjects were aimed at helping the pupils to be self-reliant. Nowadays they are not there, the government should make sure that the curriculum is changed so that the pupils once they finish, they can help themselves, instead of being just exam oriented. (Interview 4).

Nonetheless, teachers work hard to teach to the curriculum. Each year there is a set syllabus to be completed by students, and teachers work very hard to do so, as Mike acknowledged in Extract 20 above. Other teachers reported that they aimed to complete the syllabus ahead of time so that they could revise for exams. Hence, there was less time to actively involve students in class discussion or in practicals, as was evident from my earlier discussions. This process disadvantages students from full engagement in their classes. Unfortunately, the time issue is not a problem just in Kenya, but is universal. According to Mercer (2001), most teachers have not enough time to engage in dialogue since they have a set syllabus that they need to cover in a limited time. Therefore, there is a need for education policy-makers and curriculum developers to engage with teachers to align the best pedagogical approaches for their school. The curriculum and policy developers should provide the means and time to promote productive pedagogies. Indeed, that was one of the issues that faced the 8-4-4 system that overloaded students (Republic of Kenya. 1985), which in the end was reviewed by cutting vital subjects, and it is still problematic since it has alienated students with diverse interests, talents and skills, as discussed earlier. As a result, the Kenyan curriculum seems to

need further review to accommodate most of the classroom needs discussed above, such as pedagogy and practical subjects.

6.6 Chapter summary

In this chapter, I have confirmed that the Kenyan classroom and surrounding environment impact on spaces for interaction. In this study, it was evident that there were internal and external influences that shape these environments, such as social-cultural, economic and political factors.

In Baraka School's space for interaction, there was use of teacher-centred methods, where students were minimally involved in answering questions or taking part in tasks (Extract 3 in Chapter 4). The teachers seemed to accept authoritarian styles of teaching, despite their awareness of their drawbacks. Teachers like Mike and Kim in Extract 19 noted that they needed to update their pedagogies but that these had limitations, due to the lack of open communication with colleges and the Ministry of Education. They also blamed the lack of adequate resources to support their choice of pedagogies in their interaction space. There was evidence of a reluctance to change, possibly due to the challenges that progressive pedagogies pose, for example that dialogue in the classroom can challenge the status quo or become political, and that the interaction space can pass out of teachers' control (hooks, 1994; Kessler-Singh and Robertson, 2015). Nevertheless, high-quality education should help students to use their experiences in classroom learning. The practice can enable students to reflect on the past and present, and plan for the future, interactively and creatively. The latter cannot happen if teacher-centred methods are predominantly used. It is not to suggest that current methods should be discarded, but they should accommodate other pedagogies, such as dialogic pedagogies.

From the data collection, it was evident that there is a disparity in the distribution of resources and in the maintenance of infrastructure in physical space. This was evident when looking at Elimu and Baraka Schools' resources and infrastructure (Chapter 3, Photos 6, 7 and Chapter 4, Photos 17, 18). I contend that inequality is more of a class issue, where the lower social classes are unable to access the best facilities or influence government distribution. In my study, it was evident that the political climate influenced school funding, which ultimately impacted on classroom practice. This was evident when Baraka School was refurbished (see Photos 22, 26 and 27 in the following chapters).

In cultural space, there were obvious social-cultural, historical and economic effects. The Kenyan curriculum seems to overlook students' cultural experiences, such as community involvement and use of local languages. The system seems to have traces of the colonial education that estranged the traditional African culture. This could have a massive impact on students' social identity and participation on local and global platforms. Therefore, cultural pedagogies should be included in pedagogical spaces, since research has stressed the benefits of an education that relates to students' cultural background, including the use of multiple languages in learning (Thiong'o, 1986; UNESCO, 2015). Dialogic researchers (Alexander, 2008; Mercer, 2008) seem to have overlooked how multilingualism can promote dialogue, which in this study appears significant for students in schools such as Baraka.

In policy space, concerns were discussed in this chapter that need addressing, especially when developing the curriculum. According to some teachers like Mike (in Extract 20) and Pius (in Extract 4), some students are alienated due to their social habitus. These students' positions require emancipation if Kenyan education is to attend to all students' learning needs. Additionally, teachers require an active role in curriculum development to contextualise students' learning needs. Even though there is a new curriculum (Matiang'i, 2017) with some progressive aims, such as exploring learners' potential in classrooms learning, its goals are restricted, devoid of practical subjects, any use of local languages or progressive pedagogies. These would provide opportunities for independent participation in the classroom, where teachers and students can use dialogues and start problem-solving and being creative.

Chapter 7. Social, political and global influences

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I demonstrate how social-cultural practices and values impact on classroom practice. I further discuss how the government and global organisations appear to influence teaching and learning in Kenya.

Giddens (1984) posited that social lifestyles are not accidental but are shaped by social forces. Some of the social forces influencing education in Kenya emerge in this chapter. From the analysis, the significance of social-cultural and structural systems for Kenyan education became apparent, also how they impacted on pedagogical spaces. For instance, they influenced how education policies were managed and disseminated. These accounts indicate the need for dialogic interactions across various spaces to enhance inclusion and progress.

7.2 Social and cultural influences on Kenyan education

Kenya, like the rest of the African continent, has a triple heritage comprising African traditions, colonial influence and post-colonial effects (Mazrui, 1986). For today's generation, these influences are further shaped by global activity, for example the use of social media, universal policies and global identities. Even though some of these multiple heritages are evident throughout Africa, their dynamics is dependent on economic and political activity and stability. In Extract 6 below, the teachers discussed how their social-cultural practices and attitudes influenced Kenyan education. Teacher Kim, in particular, outlined the conflict that arises between 'what is culturally acceptable' and 'what the law states'. In his statement, he referred to children's rights where global policies have influenced local policy yet appear to conflict with cultural norms. The participants in this study provided similar examples where communities' values were contradicted by new government policies. In Extract 6 (in Chapter 4), teacher Kuria also specifies how these new policies on children's rights conflict with the cultural rights of some children from specific communities. They have to choose whether to follow the education path and reject cultural practice, or vice versa. The tensions in policy space are seen to create gaps that need addressing through dialogue.

As part of Africa's triple heritage (Mazrui, 1986), there is evidence of post-colonial social order in current social structures. This was visible in the Kenyan education system when I spent time in the two Kenyan schools. Largely, there was a common belief that to succeed

in life one has to have to access formal education, hence the provision of FPE and affordable secondary education. Nevertheless, there is a minority of communities in the country, such as Samburu, Maasai and Turkana, which have preserved their traditions, as noted by Kuria in Extract (6). These communities' ways of life can sometimes be perceived as backward by other Kenyans, in a mentality that is predisposed by colonial mindsets to consider that anything traditionally African is uncivilised (Kenyatta, 1965; Poncian, 2015). As a result, education officers seem to force students from these traditional communities to follow education guidelines without consultation. As a result, as teacher Kuria in Extract 6 claims, these students are left to choose between school rules or community values, and some chose to leave school with no qualifications. Nonetheless, if the interaction spaces were structured in such a way that there was inclusion of these communities' cultural values, these students' educational continuation could be a possibility. Then, they could intertwine the two instead of having to choose, which is psychologically stressful for young children. This inclusion would draw Nyerere's (Ibbott, 2014) advocacy for African values and needs to be integrated into the education system. In Njoya's (2017) argument, Africans cannot attain sovereignty if their education is devoid of their values and practices. Therefore, by addressing these contested policies through dialogue among key people such as parents, teachers, policy-makers and communities, the end result might be effective policies that work for all. Communication among all would promote people working together to problem-solve these tensions. These interactions would pave the way for dialogic practice and help to address inequality in education, and perhaps in society.

During my participant observations, it was evident in Baraka School, like most schools in Kenya, that teaching focused on only the five main subjects that were examined. The other non-examinable and technical subjects are on the syllabus yet are widely overlooked, as noted earlier. From my discussions, the teachers appeared worried that they are helping only those students who are academic and that those with other talents are left out. As Mike noted in the previous chapter (Chapter 6) in Extract 20, students were not prepared for the world and their potential was suppressed. The apparent gaps in the curriculum and in practice are critical and need to be addressed. Indeed, if all students are to be supported despite their background, perhaps these colonial mindsets might be changed. Apparently, most Kenyans prefer to have an education that furthers their pursuit of economic, social and political success. So, after education, most move to the city to look for official jobs. This kind of mindset is conveyed by former colonial education, under which traditional rural lifestyles

were despised, and this remains the same today. But although the majority of Kenyan people have been academically educated, some are living in poor conditions in cities (Harber, 2002) and would not consider living in rural areas. Sometimes their conditions lead to further problems in their pursuit of a civilised life. Agricultural and manual work is left for the old and uneducated, leaving a vacuum in a crucial sector, especially since Kenya is an agricultural country (Nyatuka, 2014). These post-colonial crises have been due to social beliefs that anything rural and traditional is backward, and this could be how schools such as Baraka, although in a rural area, are overlooking practical subjects (Extract 20). If Nyerere's model was applied to having an education of self-reliance, then schools and the whole education system would start to address these mindsets.

On the other hand, maybe the pursuit of 'white-collar' jobs has intensified the rate of disparities in the country. It has led to inequality in funding distribution and the dissemination of services, where poor-quality service has been rendered to people of lower socioeconomic background. This was visible in Baraka School, where they had fewer resources than Elimu School, which even had a library full of books. Unequal social structures and practices can impact on the distribution of resources and infrastructure. This inhibits classroom practice, which was noted by most teachers interviewed. They blamed their lack of activity on the lack of resources. These kinds of practice are publicly condemned in Kenya, but they are practised silently. They lead to inequality in practices. As teacher Kim in Extract 22 states, some of these gaps need addressing since they impact on interaction spaces in their classroom.

Extract 22

Kim: ...From the cabinet secretary in charge of education, the systems are there. Like again we have most of the schools' education is free education and there everybody is supposed to be sponsored by the government. That has been a challenge because, number one parents think that education is free and therefore they are not supposed to chip-in, that becomes chaotic because the children will ultimately suffer, because from how the funds are released by the government it becomes very hard for the specific funds to reach the children in an adequate manner. (Interview 1)

The social structures have created cracks in Kenyan society. For example, there are major class differences in Kenyan cities, where the upper and middle classes have good jobs and businesses, while the lower social classes remain at the bottom. The class clusters shape people's access to amenities and to schools' funds, as Extract 22 above indicates. But these

inequalities are just like in other countries, where the upper- and middle-class families access better schools that poor, lower-status citizens cannot. Their low habitus defines their field, as in Bourdieu's perspective (Alenan, 2015). Indeed, this is apparent both in cities and in rural areas in Kenya. This was evident during this study, where teachers claimed that Baraka was in an area with poor road access. They also noted that most teachers from wealthy backgrounds preferred to work in well-built areas with better infrastructure and resources. They were able to manage the system to be posted to good schools with better infrastructure. Teachers from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are posted to the poorer schools, and this demoralises their practice.

The teachers participating in this study stated that parental involvement in schools has a great impact on the schools and on students' engagement. Parents from poor social backgrounds have less confidence to engage with school and are less informed about the education system. From discussion, it was apparent that there are gaps in understanding what FPE provides. Kim stated in Extract 22 that some parents from poor areas believed that they did not need to contribute, while those who sent their children to private schools were willing to pay extra, which enhanced the practice there. Moreover, parents in poor areas have little control on funding as they cannot influence government officials to consider the school. Therefore, the resources available to schools and the support given to students and teachers are related to families' social class. The apparent inequalities in these Kenyan structures are a result of social attitudes and mindsets, which need to be confronted through dialogue for emancipation and empowerment. The disconnect among classes and between parents, teachers and the government is real. As a result, there is a need for dialogue in spaces for interaction by these groups in order to meet all students' needs. The policies need to be understood by all key groups, including parents. Hence, there is a need for more interaction space in policies. Likewise, the physical space accessed by all students for learning needs to meet the requirements for the policies applied.

Teachers, students and parents from all social backgrounds should be able to access equal funding in their schools, as discussed in Chapter 4, section 4.3.2. The government's policy to provide free education and adequate resources should be noted. The attitudes and actions embedded in social structures should be challenged to overcome the inequalities. However, from this it was evident that there is a need for communication between various bodies to overcome some of the barriers to progress, especially those impacting on the quality of education. When dialogue is cultivated across various spaces, most of these issues can be

addressed. According to Giddens (1984), all humans are knowledgeable, and they can contribute despite their class or social status. Therefore, all citizens of Kenya should access equal amenities and overcome inequality.

For instance, the teachers interviewed acknowledged that the school neighbourhood had an impact on the students' aspirations, goals and support. They noted that students are motivated by people in their society. One teacher noted that the students in Baraka had lower expectations for the future, since their neighbours were poor and had not achieved much. As a result, there is a need to inspire those children by exposing them to diverse experiences. The other teachers also noted in interview that exposure was vital to educational engagement and success. They noted that students from good social backgrounds were more confident. Still, we discussed how teachers can help engage these students whose backgrounds are less favourable. It was apparent that there are ways in which students can be inspired in Kenyan schools. The teachers act as role models and they try to raise these students' aspirations. At the same time, they arrange school trips for students to visit other parts of the country to see professionals working in various settings. These tours open the minds of the students, as in the photos below (24, 25). In these instances, the teachers have used their autonomy and creativity to shape interaction spaces. They have also tried to access the physical space within their reach to promote learning that is both engaging and relevant to their students. These kinds of practices should be promoted and applauded.



Photo 24: Baraka School trip to local industry; Photo 25: Baraka student trip to a river dam

The above photos (24, 25) demonstrate how context application and creative education could be used to promote learning and increase students' aspirations. These Baraka teachers in the photos above were able to support students to increase their imagination through exposure to new experiences, when at times these students could be restricted by their social background. Even so, it is important for teachers to note that their attitudes and motivations

in their teaching are contributors and are rooted in their personal, cultural and political outlooks. A good example was apparent in Baraka School, where teachers' expectations for their students were shaped by the socioeconomic of their students and the school's neighbourhood. Some teachers felt that some students might not do well academically, due to their background (refer to Chapter 4, section 4.3.2). Other teachers reported that colleagues had avoided coming in rural areas such as Baraka. The social stereotypes about rural settings were that they are backward and under-resourced, and this informed those individuals' decisions and actions. According to Gillborn (2008), teachers' unconscious stereotypes of their students can influence classroom engagement. They can choose to actively engage with students in their classrooms or to hold back. As a result, their attitudes, beliefs and social perceptions can profile their classroom practice (Akyeampong and Stephens, 2002). Unfortunately, how teachers perceive students' backgrounds in Baraka School appeared to shape their expectations. The acknowledgement of their social backgrounds predisposed them to expect students' lack of confidence in speaking English in the classroom, as an obvious example.

From the study, it was evident that there was a recurring blame mindset, which ultimately related to their teaching practice. Gathenya in Extract 23 below suggested that the teachers' commitment to improvement determined their motivation to use available resources. The indication is that although there were barriers that hindered active participation, such as a lack of resources, lack of support from teaching colleges to update training and lack of teachers' voice at the Ministry of Education and government, teachers still had some autonomy. It is debatable whether some of the concerns raised by teachers in Baraka School were real or imagined. Despite the barriers, some teachers demonstrated that they had overall control of their spaces of interaction and could make their classroom more engaging through use of available resources. They could improvise materials, as noted by teacher Gathenya (Extract 23 below) for science experiments. Most of the teachers agreed that they could employ more activity in their interaction space and had the skills to do it. This was evident after my interviews, when I observed improvements in classroom engagement and activity.

Extract 23

Gathenya: (giggles) we would I am sure, some of the teachers are committed to improvement. For example, use the books that are there we try what we can afford so that we do not miss out. There is also improvisation of materials, for example I am a science teacher, we have

nothing, totally nothing and science is a very practical lesson, and we have nothing that we have been given to show these pupils just a simple like sieve, you ask the principle to buy but they say I have nothing unless I go back to my pocket, the pocket which we are saying its strained. We try to ask them to ask their parent for salt, but their parents cannot understand why you ask for it, but the few who bring us work with what is there and we try and make the child see something practical. (Interview 5)

Similarly, Baraka teachers could make choices to meet their needs in relation to finishing the curriculum and preparation for exams. Their syllabus catered for practical subjects as well, but they chose to overlook these in their daily practice. Even though their focus on examinable subjects was aligned to society's mindset and beliefs that passing exams is most important in the educational journey, when these teachers reflected in interview they were aware that there were gaps in their practice. Nonetheless, they appeared to push the blame onto the curriculum and its emphasis on syllabus coverage, while most of the time non-examinable subjects in the curriculum are not a priority, despite their necessity. Teachers choose to spend extra time to prepare students to pass exams, ignoring these non-examinable subjects. These teachers needed space for reflection on this practice, where unhelpful values and practices may be identified and unlearned. This study appeared to have prompted this reflexivity among teachers, since during our interviews they identified the gaps and suggested some solutions. Nonetheless, further dialogue is a necessity for continuous progress.

According to McWilliam (2008), teachers should unlearn unhelpful schemas in order to accommodate new ways of teaching. McWilliams argues that teachers' knowledge and practices are influenced by their past experiences, beliefs and social values. Hence, UK teachers may need to continuously re-evaluate their practices and discard old unhelpful schemas. As Mercer (2001) noted, one of the barriers for UK teachers in using dialogic approaches was a persistent mindset about what teaching entailed. Those teachers' experiences and social exposure had shaped their practice. Similarly, for teachers in Kenya, to be effective in their use of updated progressive pedagogies they need to reflect and unlearn some of their practices. For them to help their students to explore their potential and in addition engage critically and creatively as outlined in the new 2017 curriculum, they may need to unlearn old ways. They may need to learn various new methods for engagement with their students and wider society. Even so, the Kenyan Education Act has aimed at the reform of the teaching profession through effective recruitment of teachers and advocacy of

pedagogical improvement (Nyatuka, 2014). Subsequently, any significant progress should be examined, and areas that still need review can be carried out as outlined above.

As discussed in previous chapters, Kenyan children engage actively in their communities and homes (refer to Chapter 4, section 4.2.2). They help their parents with simple jobs, which they enjoy and at the same time it teaches them skills. These kinds of involvement have been carried onward from traditional African systems, where children used their peer and elders as models. Even though most children learn immensely in this way, their skills are not fully acknowledged by the mainstream education system. Community settings are perceived to be informal and hence divorced from formal school learning. Nonetheless, it would be essential for these skills and experiences to be included in classroom learning.

As the society scope continues to change, with easier links to global phenomena due to technology, there is a need for dialogue and a review of attitudes. In Chapter 5, Extract 13, Kim and Gathenya claimed that Kenyan society's attitudes towards teachers have changed over time. The respect accorded to the profession has changed. Indeed, this has happened across the globe. Thus, there is a need for social groups to talk to understand the change and how it can be explored through critical analysis and dialogue. According to Maathai (2009), African countries have gone through many phases economically, socially and politically. All these changes have impacted on people's social attitudes and values. As a result, it is crucial to examine how these changes can be addressed, especially in the education sector. For example, one of the teachers noted that the introduction of laptops for all classes is a good initiative yet poses challenges. First, the initiative equips schools with laptops and trains teachers, although some teachers' computer literacy is limited. One teacher argued that the funding could have been managed in such a way that other needs are met first, such as for more books and then, instead of so many laptops, purchasing a few computers that are accessible to all students of the school. Therefore, in these cases, the lack of consultation on the ground seems to be a barrier to teachers voicing their insights and concerns.

Other contradictions were pointed out by teachers. For example, government policy on corporal punishment conflicts with the cultural practice of chastening children (see Extract 6). Kim felt that the children had learned the benefits of chastening and hence, at times, still needed it. According to Twum-Danso (2013), when children were interviewed in Ghana, they appeared to accept the practice and expected their teachers to exercise it, for them to be respected. Another cultural practice that some communities feel is contradictory is female

genital mutilation, as noted earlier. According to teacher Kuria (in Extract 6 in Chapter 4), some students are pulled out of school for this reason and, when individual girls refrain, they are excommunicated by their community. Evidently, some of these practices can raise tensions, hence they need to be contextualised. Therefore, when these changes are necessary, perhaps all the parties need to be included in the process, such as the communities, parents, teachers, students and policy-makers. This inclusion should also be practised when making pedagogical changes, in which, according to Tabulawa (2013), a lack of consultation and contextualisation becomes a hindrance.

According to Akyeampong (2009), teachers' practices are informed by cultural attitudes and knowledge. One major advantage for most Kenyan teachers is knowledge of the context and cultural values that inform their practices. In some cases, the teachers lived in the same neighbourhood as their students and spoke similar languages, as was the case for Baraka and Elimu Schools. Therefore, they were equipped to deal with the cultural issues and attitudes that would be barriers to learning. This is unlike some contemporary countries in Europe, in which teachers have no cultural knowledge of their students from diverse communities and are at times challenged to address cultural issues in their classroom (UNESCO, 2015). For the teachers and students in Baraka and Elimu Schools, their values and practices were similar, hence there was no conflict. As Said (1994) argued, culture is the humanly made structure of both authority and participation, and their boundaries are fuzzy and can change over time. Hence it is important for teachers in Kenya to reflect on their cultural attitudes and how they are intertwined with their students' cultural experiences and needs. These were possibilities for positive use of the cultural tool in their interaction in their dialogic classroom.

Extract 25

Kim: but as you come up the ladder, dialogue becomes inhibited. So, we should look at where does rain start beating? Where is dialogue lost and not within our structure but along the national structure? And we going to, in my view if we change the focus, the focus here we are not going to group kids here as bright kids and as you know, everything is rated as individual rate, so that the child individual performance, will, first of all, have the confidence at all times. Because I think what kills dialogue is that lack of self-confidence for whatever reason, be it background, be it lack of that brightness, so to speak. That is the first thing we should check, number 2 is that we must try to make our children exposed no matter what it takes, by that we mean children should have an environment where they go and meet with other children. We increase the exposure level. (Focus Group)

Teacher Kim in Extract 25 above described the system in Kenya as top-down, inhibiting dialogue, yet he argued that instilling confidence and dialogue skills in the classroom environment can be beneficial. This acknowledgement of the lack of dialogue in education demonstrated a significant gap, which he seems willing to explore as a possibility. Nonetheless, it is important to note that the other participants agreed with him reluctantly that there was no dialogue in their learning, for various reasons. Some cited the need to complete the syllabus in good time. Others claimed that dialogue was informal and would compromise discipline. All these social attitudes and practices are aligned to Kenyan society's multiple heritage (Mazrui, 1986; Maathai, 2009). This can at times hinder pedagogical progress but, if available spaces are engaged dialogically across the key groups, progress may be established. Furthermore, the participants in the study established that there was a need for dialogue in their classroom interaction space to improve learning. However, it would be beneficial to involve all key players in engaging in all the pedagogical spaces to foster effective progress.

7.3 Kenyan government impact on education system

The Kenyan government has made progress in education (Nyatuka, 2014), for instance in the provision of FPE since 2001 and funding schools. This was evident in Baraka School, where the buildings were upgraded (Chapter 9, Photos 25 & 26). There had been reviews of the curriculum (Matiang'i, 2017) and of teacher training recruitment with the aim of improving standards. Some of these areas have become effective, while others need enhancement. In this section, I discuss how the government systems and policies have impacted on education in Kenya.

In Kenya, the government has played a bigger role in education since colonial rule, despite criticism. For instance, initially the colonial government education had a three-tier system, where Africans accessed only basic skills and knowledge to provide cheap labour, then after Independence education changed. As Cunningham (2012) claims, education is usually influenced by local and global politics, as has been the case for Kenya with these changes to the education sector. The political influence has been through new government policies that outline rules to guide educators and specify how classroom learning spaces are utilised. Since Kenyan Independence in 1963, the Kenyan government through the Ministry of Education has aimed to provide equal education for all its citizens (Republic of Kenya, 2015; Nyatuka, 2014). This process has metamorphosed. Indeed, over the years there have been several reviews of the education system: on curricula, the number of years taken to complete

education, the number and kinds of subjects taught, the facilities available and teacher education (Wanjohi et al., 2011). Nonetheless, in my study, there were criticisms about the government's involvement in education. For example, teachers noted that there had been a lack of pedagogical review over the years. There was also a lack of use of Kenyan languages in learning and a lack of teachers' involvement in developing the curriculum. Moreover, most of the government involvement appeared to be authoritarian, with little communication with people at ground level.

Although Kenya is in an era of post-Independence, it suffers from the effects of colonialism and the neo-colonialism (Maathai, 2009). Most education systems in Kenya were first introduced in the colonial era and some practices remain unchanged. In my study, this was evident in classroom practice, where teachers prefer to use old teaching methods and their perceptions of schools are that they are formal environments, where teachers should disseminate knowledge while students are passive learners (Extracts 3 and 20). From this study, Mike and Kim (in Extract 19) acknowledged that dialogic teaching could be beneficial yet argued that schools are formal settings, hence it would not be practical. The same teachers complained about the lack of communication with the government (Extract 15 in Chapter 5). They stated that their voices were not listened to when it came to their profession, and that they were expected to follow the guidelines given to them. They wanted to have a voice themselves, but at the same time they suppressed their students' voice in the classroom. These mindsets and practices were acquired from the old authoritarian education systems, and they persist. Moreover, that kind of education was transmitted from old Western perspectives and was dominated by Western ways of thinking, which perceived African values and practices to be irrelevant to education (Said, 2003; Maathai, 2009; Ibbott, 2014). According to Said (2003), it is hard to divorce neo-colonialism and Western cultural systems. Thus, African contextual needs and systems were thoroughly disregarded in education (Njoya, 2017).

Extract 26

Kim: mmmh, I think the whole system from the government, there is some, some missing gaps, missing links. Because, it is because, of course the Kenyan system has some problem, is unfortunately a little bit corrupted. (Interview 1)

Kim, in Extract 26 above, acknowledged that there were gaps in the Kenyan education system. For instance, the Kenyan government seemed to consult Western communities in

reviewing its education system, while engaging in minimal dialogue with Kenyan teachers. A good example was that the current curriculum by the Ministry of Education (Matiang’i, 2017) appears to have borrowed heavily from Western countries, such as Britain. It appears to perceive British education as superior, since it lacks any contextualisation. Indeed, despite advocacy for Kenyan education to assimilate Kenyan languages into the curriculum (Thiong’o, 1986), these subjects were promoted only at lower primary level. The perceived inferiority of Kenyan languages appeared to persist into the new curriculum.

The Kenyan government appears to take policies and funding from around the globe. For example, in upgrading its education policies and structuring of curriculum, there was poor consultation at ground level yet much was borrowed from abroad. As a result, some initiatives do not work (Tabulawa, 2013). The lack of consultation to contextualise the guidelines leads to failure. Nonetheless, African governments, including in Kenya, are at times restricted in terms of system development due to the funding conditions imposed by donors. As a result, some global organisations can disenable local education systems. In Maathai’s (2009) argument, as long as African countries continue to accept donations, they will be dictated to. Some of the reasons that have led to the conditions attached to these funds are previous governments’ poor money management and corruption. In Kenya, as elsewhere on the African continent, the need for good governance is significant. Similarly, there is need for dialogue on all key platforms, from the base to the top, since pedagogical development can only be established when all groups are involved. This supports Njoya’s (2017) claim that education can only happen in a country where all citizens are sovereign and contribute.

Indeed, from this study it was evident that governance is co-related to education progress. According to some teachers interviewed, funding for schools is linked to political affiliations. A lack of political influence by school headteachers and parents can lead to their school not receiving enough funds. Similarly, it was evident that some politicians could use education funds to woo support for re-election. This was evident in Baraka School, where the infrastructure (Photo 26 & 27 in Chapter 8) and resources were enhanced just before the country’s elections. Therefore, as Maathai (2009) specifies, African governments (including in Kenya) need good governance to reduce inequality and, as a result, funding would be adequately distributed, and well. Government stability and competence are vital to the progress of education systems in all countries, including Kenya.

The Kenyan government has proposed advancing its systems through several progressive initiatives. The first was to sign the African Charter (1990) and UNCRC (1989), where children's rights were strongly promoted. Thus, most governments in Africa (including Kenya) have successfully begun FPE provision and reviewed the rights of the children in their countries. The Kenyan government has gone further by arranging for all primary schools to have laptops by 2017 in order to promote information and technology education for all learners. It has also provided funds to upgrade resources and infrastructure through county development funds (CDF). These funds have enhanced the conditions for learners, such as the improvements to the schools in this study. At the same time, the Kenyan Ministry of Education is trying to fill gaps in education by reviewing the curriculum (Matiang'i, 2017). Moreover, despite the strain between teachers and government, there have been several teacher salary reviews. Overall, these initiatives and progressive reviews demonstrate the Kenyan government's commitment to providing superior education.

It was the government's responsibility to address inequalities and apparent tensions, for example using pedagogical spaces for communication across key players such as teachers, parents and the Ministry of Education, government and curriculum developers. The lack of communication has led to tensions and misunderstanding. For example, teachers noted that some parents misunderstood the extent of funding by the government for FPE. According to Akyeampong (2009), it was society's responsibility to address such inequalities, which have a crucial impact on education.

7.4 Local and global hegemonic influences

In this section, I discuss the specific power issues that have affected Kenyan classroom practice and the education system, and I show how global resemblances have emerged. Using the onion metaphor, the multi-layered phases identified in the analysis are discussed to demonstrate how both visible and invisible powers (Bernstein, 2003) have shaped the space for interaction. At the end of the section, I discuss ways to address some of the emerging issues and how to promote social cohesion and create room for progress.

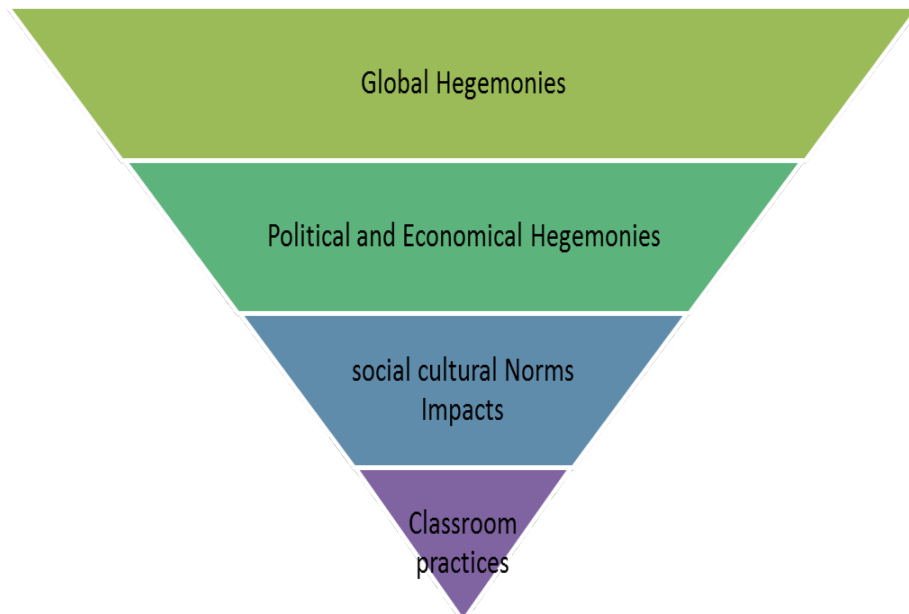


Figure 7-1 Local and global hegemonies chart

7.4.1 *Kenyan local hegemonies*

From my study, it was apparent that Kenyan classroom practice was impacted on by social, political, economic and global influences. Teachers' agency in their professional practice was strongly influenced by their social norms, their school's economic status and the political and global atmosphere. The complexity of these issues surrounding Kenyan classroom can be contextualised, however there are similarities with other global contexts, for example other African countries and even Western countries. From Foucault's perspective (1991), 'power is everywhere' and it affects the daily practice of both individuals and society (cited by Ball, 2013; Hannus and Simola, 2016).

From the study, there were recurring social and cultural tensions evident that appear to act as a barrier to the active involvement of students in their learning. One of the main issues is the hierarchical nature of society, which defines the roles of individuals. These roles were disseminated faithfully by the teachers, since the system is authoritarian. Nonetheless, these practices represent obvious barriers to progressive learning. In an authoritarian society, the subjects are expected to obey passively and not question authority. Although this is viewed as a way to keep order, it can hinder progress and cause resentment, and at times resistance. For instance, in Kenya the hierarchical position of players and order of how to do things seem to be dictated from above. For example, education policies are outlined by the Ministry of Education and teachers are expected to follow them without question. There is less

consultation on the ground, as noted before. Similarly, in the classroom, the teachers teach students who rarely dare to question their instructions. They are expected to follow instructions religiously. The lack of open dialogue hinders progress and is noticeable in Kenyan education. For years, despite the many changes in the system, the education standards have remained low (Ackers and Hardman, 2012; Uwezo, 2012). The lack of consultation with the teachers on the ground has created a gap that is projected onto classroom practice. Moreover, as the people at the top are not communicating freely with the teachers, they cannot assess accurately the needs of the classroom. Unfortunately, this kind of authoritative system in education is not apparent just in Kenya but also in other countries around the world (Mercer, 2010).

Due to Kenyan teachers' lack of a platform to voice their opinions on choices in pedagogic spaces, tensions were openly visible during recent country-wide strikes. Teachers felt unheard, were demoralised and were not motivated to put effort into their classroom. Moreover, when their personal and professional needs were not met, it disabled them to act accordingly. A good example was given by Mike in Extract 27 below. He voiced his frustration at the government for not listening to teachers' needs, creating the demotivation. Other issues that came up in the study were the lack of support by colleges and the Ministry of Education to upgrade pedagogies for teaching and learning, which has created the current vacuum in development (see Extract 16 in Chapter 5). Most of these issues remain unaddressed for lack of voice at grassroots level, such as from teachers, students and parents. Nevertheless, the local hegemonies' suppression of voice has an effect on the classroom, such as teachers' practice being demoralised when they feel undervalued, as noted in Extract 27 below. Clearly, teacher Mike seemed frustrated that there has been no progress in previous years on issues raised by teachers to the government, through their union.

Extract 27

Mike: last year and up to now we are in the month of May this year, nothing has been done. So we as teachers we are not listened to. Secondly, our leaders, our union leaders I think they are a threat to the government. They have become a threat to the government and now the government is trying to push them to the centre, over, under and they do not listen. (Interview 4)

The social inequalities within society form another area of tension in Kenya. Society is divided into several classes: the 'haves', which are the middle and upper class; and the 'have nots', the lower social class and traditional communities. Class background dictates the areas

where these groups live and the social amenities accessible to them. As a result, the children of the 'have nots' suffer deprivation. A good example is Baraka School, where the students are from the lower social class. Their access to resources is inadequate and their power to demand from the government low. Indeed, as Bernstein (2003) stated, the invisible and visible social rules play a major role. Class domination causes tension in society, where the poor and the weak feel unheard. This was evident when the teachers in interview saw themselves from a class point of view. One stated that graduate teachers from a well-to-do family background were able to negotiate avoiding work in poor schools (Extract 17, Chapter 6). They were able to influence their working conditions, while teachers from poorer socioeconomic backgrounds had no such negotiating power. Hence, some teachers were forced to work in schools that they had not chosen, which affected their morale. Additionally, as evident in Extract (28) below, Pius noted that headteachers were forced to be friendly with their seniors in the education department to recruit good teachers, which led to favouritism and inequality in the education system.

Extract 28

Pius: You want your school to perform well so have make yourself known to the seniors, so they will be posting all the good teachers to your school and others will be left without teachers. (.....) again, in a very rural school like this one, you find that people who are well up are never posted to this kind of schools. Because of accessing the place, it is very hard, especially when it is raining it is very hard to use a car you have to walk and the way you walk, sometimes you trek through bushes to access the place. (Interview 3)

Class domination has existed in Kenya since colonial rule and it is visible in many other global settings, including the United Kingdom (Gillborn, 2008). Teachers' agency to choose their teaching environment was highly influenced by their social class hierarchical order. This social order was also visible in the distribution of resources and the pedagogical practice in the classroom. For example, private schools were better resourced than public schools. It is noticeable that private schools are for the 'haves', and the reverse is obvious. In addition, private schools use superior pedagogies and their outcomes are better than those of government-funded schools (UWEZO, 2012; Akyeampong, 2009). This class issue recurred in interview, where the teachers had experienced the difference by working in both settings. They stated that private schools were well resourced and their students had been exposed to more experiences and had better academic language, which made using advanced

pedagogies easier (see Extract 7, Chapter 4). From Bourdieu's perspective, the social capital of these students and their environment enabled them to engage better.

Cultural tensions were apparent within the education system, as became evident in Baraka School. Indeed, some cultural practices seem to conflict with progressive children's rights. An example was the acceptance of corporal punishment for children in society yet the policy of discontinuing the practice in school, as discussed by teacher Kim in Extract 29 below. He argues that although the new policy is globally acceptable, children in Africa and especially in Kenya were left in a dilemma. Kim noted that when students were disciplined at home using corporal punishment but not in school, there was no consistency in practice. This created tension, which seemed to originate from global hegemonies through policies that conflicted with Kenya's cultural norms. Likewise, for the communities that practise female genital mutilation, the norms appear to contradict government-set laws and education policies, creating dilemmas for some individuals (Chapter 4, Extract 6). They are forced to choose between being part of their community or being part of the education structure. Some of these cultural tensions need to be addressed with sensitivity, since they are complex (Twum-Danso, 2013). If these issues are ignored or mishandled, they might leave some students, teachers or parents feeling victimised by the system. Therefore, there is a need to address these society issues carefully and seek cooperation of the parties involved through dialogue.

Extract 29

Kim: I do not quite agree on the corporal, but unfortunately the African and the Kenyan child has come from, because again we must look at the bigger picture because if it happening at home there has to be continuity in school, that's the way the discipline is going to be, it must be progressive. (...) it is cultural as we say, it quite cultural and therefore when you break it without adequate preparation, then you expect that there are going to be some mmmhhh, some problems. (Interview 1)

Another area of cultural tension was related to the identity of Kenyans. As earlier noted, the African multiple heritage has created confusion over the identity of Africans (Mazrui, 1986; Maathai, 2009). After being educated, most have disengaged from their traditions. However, recently there has been advocacy for Africans to embrace their tradition and heritage. The use of African languages in school learning can integrate African values into education positively (see section 6.4). Still, the intermarriage of Westernised education and African traditional authenticity could at times create tension. Moreover, these identities can conflict

with mainstream education policies, which are essentially globally defined, thus at times suppress these identities and create a cultural vacuum. This was evident regarding the learning of African languages in schools. Although they were important to students' heritage and identity, they are normally just studied in the early years. The lack of use of local languages in the upper years in education can limit students' competence and suppress their overall use. Indeed, you will find that most Kenyan students cannot read or write their own mother tongue. This, according to Thiong'o (1986), means that Africans have been colonised in their mindset, as the curricula promote foreign languages while disadvantaging local languages. Unfortunately, this is evident in the new Kenya curriculum, which promotes local languages only up to Year 4 (Matiang'i, 2017).

Sometimes, African identities, values and practices can conflict with mainstream education. According to Said (1995), formal education disseminates Western values and at times dominates other cultures. He posited that the use of Western languages is also a means of cultural domination. Clearly, most education policies do not contextualise African settings but emulate Western cultures and lifestyles, contradicting Nyerere's perspectives on cultural pedagogies, where education is able to meet the need of Africans in the classroom and outside of their school (Ibbott, 2014). The position for African culture and traditions is suppressed by imperialist Western education. Kenya, being an ex-colony, exhibits plenty of cultural conflicts within its own traditions and its ex-colonial systems. These conflicts need to be acknowledged and approached in a progressive way.

Overall, there is a need for social cohesion across groups and social classes to overcome some of these hierarchical tensions and barriers to advance education systems and practices. Indeed, if there are issues in society, they can affect the children. For example, class issues can disadvantage some students by inhibiting their participation, as discussed (Chapter 4, section 4.3.2). Moreover, inequalities in society can impact on the resourcing of learning materials, creating disparities in how teachers and students interact in their classroom. Therefore, teachers, pupils and society need to communicate to create an atmosphere that is cohesive and that stimulates progress as they overcome current inequalities. These social practices and norms require exploration in a productive manner.

In most cases, communications and directives appear to be top-down, and rarely bottom-up. These practices have affected how people perceive leadership and how society comprehends democracy. Nevertheless, as Steinberg and Kincheloe (2010) argue, democracy is not fully

democratic since in any field there are key players who influence issues, while the rest remain subjects. As indicated in the previous section, there are many government structures that influence policies and practices in Kenya. Some are part of the governance, such as the Ministry of Education, the curriculum department and the constituencies' funding department. These structures were highly influential on policies for education and the resources available in schools. As noted earlier, the majority of teachers played only a passive role in curriculum development and in influencing the resourcing of schools, unless they had political connections. The lack of participation from the micro-level, which was by the teachers, to the macro-level (governance level) created tensions and erected barriers to active classroom practice in some schools. This is evident in Baraka, where the school was not well resourced, limiting teachers' creativity, as they claimed (Extract 7, in Chapter 4). Moreover, their motivation was reduced by the lack of teacher engagement in matters affecting their schools, which were dictated from above. The authoritarian style demotivated the teachers and predisposed their classroom activities. For example, in the interview quoted in Extracts 22 and 26 earlier in the chapter, Kim noted that there were unfilled gaps in resources, left by government, that perpetuated issues in the classroom learning, as discussed earlier.

Using Bourdieu's (1977) perspective, habitus sets the rules to be played for anyone to be part of a field. As a result, an individual's agency is shaped by the habitus to fit into a specific social group and to play by the rules. Even so, this habitus becomes problematic because it creates social inequalities and promotes domination in society. For example, political affiliations interfere with the equal distribution of resources in Kenya. In poor areas where parents and teachers have no social capital to align them to political affiliations, schools can be excluded from funding. When these schools are under-resourced and the teachers are demotivated, classroom engagement is negatively affected.

7.4.2 Africa and global hegemonies

In Kenya, as in most African countries and other global settings, there is a class divide (Akyeampong, 2009; Gillborn, 2008). The upper and middle class seem to have better-resourced schools and political influence. The poor have only basic resources in their schools and no influence over resource distribution. To address these issues, there is a need for dialogue across all groups and classes to challenge the inequality of resources distribution. As Maathai (2009) notes, the challenge for Africa is good governance to help to end

inequality and achieve the fair distribution of resources. From this study, it has become apparent that there is a need for all citizens' needs to be met equally, without discrimination, also consultation prior to government education initiatives and policy changes on the African continent. It is important for all to be involved, including teachers, pupils and parents from all backgrounds. It is also important to have continual, substantive interaction in the spaces available to address the barriers that could jeopardise progress.

From the interview in Extract 1 (in Chapter 4), according to Mike one of the strengths of the Kenyan education system is its use of English, which is widely spoken around the world. As a result, Kenyan students are able to engage beyond their countries and, as the teacher stated, 'spread their wings across the globe', which is realised more than in some other countries, according to the teacher. Kenya is not a country in isolation, and it has a wider scope of involvement in the global forum. At the same time, there is a more influence on Kenyan education from global involvement and association. Some of this participation is positive, as noted by Mike, while some are alleged to be detrimental. For instance, when Mike stated the advantages of using English over Kiswahili, the language hegemonies are apparent. Kiswahili seems inferior, despite being the national language and a medium of communication across several countries in East Africa.

An example of positive engagement is how Kenya has become one of the signatories of the UNCRC (1989) and African Charter (1990) in which children's rights are forwarded, such as promoting good health, safeguarding all children and providing FPE (Nyatuka, 2014). Some of Kenya's good policies that promote the welfare of children have been the result of global policies and engagement. Some non-governmental organisations from around the world have been part of the progress and have actively collaborated with government agencies, schools and communities. In most of these areas, there have been gigantic changes that have benefited children and their communities.

Moreover, with rapid globalisation through information technology, most Kenyan citizens are aware of world issues and ways of life. Some Kenyans have interactions with the rest of the world and can raise issues that affect them and learn ways to deal with them. Their children have access to the internet, and they engage with others around the world. This global participation has impacted on how Kenyans view themselves and their world. The use of internet resources was highly beneficial to this study, since it enabled me to gain easy

access to the Kenyan headteachers and to plan my study effectively, despite the distance. Therefore, access to global social media aids interaction across continents.

But, as Harber (2014) notes, global hegemonic issues are still influential in the economy, politics and education. Putting Africa into the ‘developing’ Global South category is problematic. First, any classification has a psychological impact on people, as noted by psychologists studying group attribution (Langdrige and Taylor, 2011). When people are negatively categorised, it affects how they perceive themselves and impacts on their behaviour and beliefs (Corrado and Robertson, 2019). As a result, categorising Africa as a ‘developing’, ‘poor’, ‘dark’ continent has repercussions on people (Diop, 2014; Poncian, 2015; Corrado and Robertson, 2019). A good example was evident as I interviewed the teachers, who were aware that I live in the United Kingdom. Some believed that teaching was better in the United Kingdom, because of its category. They felt that their own setting was not good enough. Unfortunately, their self-consciousness could be influenced by biased attributions of their continent, by being constantly told of their problems and not their strengths (Cohen, 1994), even though some of their classroom issues are similar to those in other countries. For example, Western systems also struggle to uphold dialogic pedagogies (Mercer, 2010). Thus, there is a need to recognise the power of negative attribution on the African identity, which is prevalent in both global and local circles.

The global categorisation has some supreme benefits for the dominant groups, which are the ‘developed’ countries, where their positioning is used to control others (Said, 1994; Maathai, 2009; Harber, 2014). Indeed, this is visible in global policies, where developed countries set the pace for global trade and global policies, with less engagement for the so-called ‘developing’ countries. Some of the global policies in these areas of trade, politics and education are set to suit the developed countries and disadvantage the developing countries (Said, 2004; Maathai, 2009; Diop, 2014; Harber, 2014), such as the classification of education standards across the globe, which have unequal status. Nonetheless, there is little acknowledgement of contextual factors. Some African countries and communities have fewer resources and others have traditional lifestyles, hence they cannot be rated against countries that are entirely dissimilar or when advocating for policy changes in global phenomena where the voices of the African countries like Kenya are rarely heard. This lack of African voice was evident when Kim, in Extracts 6 and 29, conceded that internationally agreed children’s rights conflict with Africans’ ways of life. Their issues should be listened to, instead of some non-government organisations and other outside bodies dictating policies

and terms to them without any in-depth contextual understanding. Otherwise, this may appear to be neo-colonialism, where Western countries still have domination over other countries (Said, 2004; Maathai, 2009; Harber, 2014).

Extract 32

Kim: It maybe not because the biggest thing, is what we call facilitation, there lacks facilitation and facilitation will include cost. Because even if we have laptops the next questions do, we have content? So, for us to have content we have to have an overview of the whole curriculum, we make it accessible and we do not use things that we do not have. Otherwise, we are culturally rich, we could use what we have but as we are saying again there is a race against time. So even if we have those facilities it's the content, is the content really applicable. Because I believe the laptops and the computers will come in handy, but what is it that you are teaching using those gadgets, coz it has to be learner-friendly and learner-centred.(...)

Gathenya: to bring them close to you that way is impossible.

Pius: Again we also have about the language we use, (...) for this, they might not be able to understand the term used in that computer. And maybe the laptop, to understand that language. (...)

Gathenya: there is also the question of how many teachers can be able to use the laptop so that they can get the content and be able to share it with the pupils. But with time, maybe it will work. (Focus Group)

In my study, Kenyan teachers felt that the government initiative for laptops was good, although most teachers did not have the appropriate skills, as noted in the focus group by Kim, Gathenya and Pius in Extract 32 above. They sensed that there may have been better ways to run these projects to save the funds to meet more pressing classroom needs. However, without the voice of the teachers in the initiative, some of these immediate needs perhaps will not be met: only the government and global policies will be met, posing inequalities. Moreover, the money to purchase these laptops will essentially benefit developed countries, since they sell the laptops, while the sustainability of these projects remains feeble. As Maathai (2009) argues, African countries like Kenya have been forced to borrow money from Western countries to fund initiatives drawn from global policies, such as buying laptops. However, the loans need interest payments, and all the income from the country's production is used to pay the debt, leaving no funds for the government to meet the needs of its citizens, even though some of these policies may not benefit those on the ground. As noted by Nyatuka (2014), Kenya is an agricultural country, so most of its population depends on the land, therefore the setting cannot be compared to countries such as the United States or the

United Kingdom, whose settings are not agriculturally based but use technology. Nyerere (Ibbott, 2014) advocates for an education that meets students' immediate needs and relates to their world.

Overall, some of the global policies might not relate, for example, to fact that the introduction of information technology disadvantages those African countries that cannot afford them. Even countries like Kenya, which have tried to meet these global requirements, have had to borrow money and thus be forced to ignore other local needs. They have prioritised keeping up with global phenomena, which are customarily promoted by a Western lifestyle and not African countries' immediate needs. Generally, even on education projects proposed and supported by global non-government organisations, they need to consult and work with the people on the ground, which includes teachers, pupil and parents. Otherwise, as noted by Tabulawa (2013), some of the policies advocated and promoted by non-government organisations might not work in an African setting.

Engagement by all parties is significant, especially when African governments are making new initiatives and policies. It has been noted that in the past governments use advice from global advocates and heads of ministries yet not from teachers and parents. The authoritarian approach becomes a barrier to education progress, whether it is classroom engagement, curriculum change or motivating teachers. However, the current global phenomena need democracy for the success of policies and the fight against inequality. When the majority of local people are involved in the process of policy-making, they feel valued and are motivated to partake in the changes so their needs can be met (Njoya, 2017). However, when they are overlooked, they are not enticed to engage. This has been seen with Kenyan teachers, who feel undervalued by their community and by the government. To promote their activity, they need to be engaged at most levels, and this has an impact on their classroom practice and professional status (see Figure 3-2 in Chapter 3). Even at the global level, it is important for them to be consulted before directing global policies. They should also globally engage in dialogue about their practice and their students' needs. They should be able to give their experiences and accounts to avoid misrepresentation. They should also be a part of education research and implement of findings. Indeed, through participation, they would feel valued and understood, both locally and in the global arena.

According to Guilherme (2016) and Said (1995), education largely promotes Western values and markets Western economic capital. Largely, there are issues of social-cultural economic

and political hegemonic power in global education, such as the use of Western languages to educate, for instance English, French and Spanish, likewise equipment such as computers that is marketed by Western countries, benefiting them economically while the poor countries are incapacitated. Indeed, this was manifested in teachers' interviews (see Extract 32), whose preference was for more teaching aids and other classroom resources rather than using all the government funds to purchase laptops. Indeed, these laptops were acquired outside the African continent. Most of the global policies on education, such as progressive pedagogies (Guthrie, 2011; Tabulawa, 2013) and children's rights (UNCRC, 1989) mostly reflect and benefit Western cultures (Said, 2003; Maathai, 2009). As noted earlier, African values and needs are usually snubbed at global forums, while Western ones are endorsed. These hegemonic inequalities have persisted over the years but could be addressed through fair use of pedagogical spaces, where all parties are equally represented and their voices listened to. According to Harvey (2003), the new imperialism has led to uneven geographic development, where Western countries benefit in terms of capital accumulation and control over other countries. Unfortunately, poor countries are forced to yield to the wishes of the stronger economies, continuing the global economic and cultural tension (Said, 2003; Maathai, 2009). However, perhaps when pedagogic spaces are engaged, some of these hegemonic powers can be confronted.

7.5 Using pedagogical spaces for emancipation, cohesion and progress

As I summarised in this chapter, it is important to note that there have been several cultural, political and global tensions and hegemonic power issues that have impacted on Kenyan classroom practice. Although, at times, these appeared to have no direct connection to practice, they were like the layers that make up the whole. Each layer on its own has limited strength, but the whole has more power. Therefore, it is vital to address areas of tensions across the board with the aim of perpetuating cohesion, both locally and globally, thereafter to design progressive strategies for the future.

In the space for interactions, it is important to have dialogue and to cultivate platforms for continuous communication across various groups in Kenya, as agreed by the teachers in this study (Extract 19). These group discussions should include teachers, parents, the Ministry of Education, government and pupils. These dialogues may help to air issues that have been overlooked. They would also provide a forum for 'silent groups' such as teachers, pupil and parents from poor backgrounds. The government and the Ministry of Education may be able to discuss their policies and initiatives in advance, which could ease tensions and endorse

consultations. Additionally, issues of inequality in funding could be addressed when all key groups participate, since they would all feel valued and included. Generally, if the Kenyan government and the Ministry of Education perpetuate the possibility of dialogue across various forums for all groups to engage in, at the local and country level, some of the tensions would be addressed. This will be a trajectory for democracy in the education system and governance. Moreover, the union created in the country would mould strength and unanimity while confronting other local issues in politics, the economy and healthcare. Furthermore, teachers, parents, students and all other key players would participate in the global arena and challenge any domineering hegemonies.

With evidence from the study on cultural spaces, the social, cultural and political status impacts on education systems. Overall, teachers' practice was invisibly informed through cultural understandings and interactions with social phenomena. The Baraka schoolteachers understood the cultural background of their students, thus could relate to them well. For example, they could speak the local ethnic languages to emphasise certain points in their teaching. At times, however, the teachers' knowledge of their students' social background could encourage or hinder their interactions. Even so, this is apparent not just in Kenya: it has been observed in other countries where invisible and visible rules guide teachers' practice (Bernstein, 2003; Gillborn, 2008).

There were major invisible and visible power issues across the many layers of analysis that shape Kenyan classroom practice. Bourdieu's social perspectives and Foucault's perspectives on social power (Hannus and Simola, 2016) were evident across the education system, influencing Kenyan teaching and learning. The local tensions permeated through the social-cultural roles and perceptions, for example how teachers and pupils related in their classroom, where there were authoritarian styles. Similar to the education system, the practice was evident in how the Ministry of Education and the government communicated with teachers. For example, it was obviously top-down and rarely the other way around.

In policy space, there were issues of hierarchical order in the education system and in the Kenyan government, which are predominantly authoritarian. For example, the changes in policies such as on corporal punishment (Extract 29) conflicted with social norms, nonetheless appeared to have been made without much consultation. This style of governance gave minimal room for communication and dialogue across the groups, overall creating tensions and disadvantaging classroom practice. As a result, there is an urgent need

for neutral platforms for dialogue communication to address tensions and emancipate the disadvantaged groups. Moreover, it would help to promote social cohesion and create a platform for dialogue and for progress in Kenyan education. In areas that warrant development, such as pedagogical reforms, policy changes and curriculum. It would also help the Kenyan government and other interested parties (local and global) to outline their goals and then align them to the contextual needs. This would address global hegemonies and give a strong base for all key groups to participate, locally and universally, eventually overcoming domination, promoting dignity and autonomy for all.

For African countries like Kenya, it is important to discuss dominance, from the local to the global level. Guilherme (2016) posits that education is not fully democratic when universal hegemonic powers are being exercised every day. Therefore, it is important to promote freedom in education. As Mandela (1994) argued, education is a weapon for change. This change can start from the base, by teachers using diverse pedagogies and pedagogical spaces to improve their systems. As a result, they would raise their concerns on inequalities in their education system, in society and on the global platform. By continuous involvement in dialogue, there might be social cohesion across all groups and progressive plans would be inevitable.

In this chapter, it was evident that a social-cultural understanding of the context is imperative when developing and reviewing initiatives, policies and practice in education systems. This should be done by providing a platform for all key players to communicate in various spaces. For emancipation and social empowerment in education, it is necessary to discuss issues of social inequalities and dictatorship within society and in governments and global agencies. My stance is that dialogue across key groups within the spaces available is the best way to overcome these concerns. Thereafter, societies can create operational structures for development and further implement feasible pedagogical advancements.

Chapter 8. Research recommendations

8.1 Introduction

This study has revealed that the Kenyan education system has great strengths yet is faced with challenges that need to be addressed. Some of the setbacks apparent in the study are essential for Kenya to put right, not only to make learning relevant for its students but to meet its Vision 2030 goals in relation to the provision of high-quality education (Republic of Kenya, 2015). Therefore, in this chapter, I reconceptualise a theoretical and practical approach that could use dialogic pedagogy in education spaces to progress learning experiences for Kenyan students. Some of the recommended concepts in the approach can be applied to other contexts, across Africa and around the globe.

This recommended approach was derived from this study and will be developed further, since it is proposed as a sensitising concept (Blumer, 1954; Bowen, 2006). As Blumer (1954) argued, such concepts are taken from grounded research yet can be improved upon and refined over time. I propose the ‘Harambee’ approach, a term adopted from Kenyan discourse, meaning collectiveness. It is rooted deeply in social and cultural lifestyles to promote togetherness and development (Were and Wilson, 1968). The concept is equally valuable in education, since it can address domination and inequalities through effective use of dialogic engagement to advance education practice. The Harambee approach aims for resolution of the overwhelming barriers that have been identified as a hindrance to advancing pedagogies in Kenya. The proposed pedagogy includes strategies that the Kenyan teachers sought to promote in their practice. The concept proposal is one of the key contributions of my research.

8.2 The proposed ‘Harambee: Collective teaching and learning’

‘Harambee’ is a Kiswahili term with a distinctive meaning in East Africa, especially in Kenya. It was officially used by the first Kenyan Prime Minister, Jomo Kenyatta, in 1963, who later became the first President of the Republic. Harambee discourse aimed to unite all Kenyans as they self-governed and built their nation (Were and Wilson, 1968). As noted, the term captures Africans’ historical spirit of togetherness in social, political and economic areas. As a result, the term resonates with Kenyan roots, making the concept comprehensible and acceptable.

Since Independence, Harambee discourse has been used in various settings where Kenyan communities come together to support each other. Good examples where communities in the past have applied the Harambee approach are when building schools, churches and hospitals. Kenyans also use Harambee to fundraise and support poor citizens to access higher education or to pay costly healthcare bills in challenging circumstances. Harambee was a disposition from African traditions prior to colonial regimes, where communities came together to build houses and help each other to cultivate land, look after cattle or care for children (Kenyatta, 1965). These practices have changed over time, as formal education and looking for ‘white-collar’ jobs have made Kenyan society much more individualistic. Then again, the historical spirit of togetherness remains evident in Kenyans’ social lives, for example in wedding and even in funeral planning. Certainly, people still come together to help each other out, both in monetary terms and practical terms. To Kenyans, being part of a Harambee is being sovereign, by being grounded in the cultural roots of their community.

Harambee spirit has also been upheld in the education sector, where communities have built schools and collected money to educate disadvantaged students, as mentioned earlier. The aim is to help disadvantaged families and communities to access education to overcome social inequalities. In the 1980s, when the 8-4-4 system of education was begun, Harambee secondary schools were introduced to provide access to education for those students who did not pass their KCPE (Kenya Certificate of Primary Education exam) very well or who could not afford to pay the high costs of boarding school. Generally, the system of Harambee penetrates through most areas of Kenyans’ lives. Most have been part of Harambee both as givers and as recipients of money, or of facilities built through collective practices. According to the global index on the most generous countries, Kenya is in twelfth place, globally (Charity Aid Foundation, 2018; *Telegraph*, 2017). Kenyans’ generosity is greater than that of people in many richer countries, because people are available to help each other in whatever terms they can, for example in ‘terms of giving money to charity courses, volunteering and helping strangers’ (CAF. 2017). This is due to the virtue accorded by Harambee spirit.

The legacy of Harambee spirit is not without limits. Occasionally, some individuals have taken advantage of the system to extort money from others. Others have mishandled the funds collected, which has demoralised the spirit of Harambee. But here I argue that Harambee continues to weave through the Kenyan social-cultural and political and even economic fabric, and it is also alive in education practice. It can be seen as one of the Kenyan

values that should be upheld while working towards promoting the strengths of Kenyans, rather than falling into the trap of concentrating on the negatives (Cohen, 1994; Diop, 2014).

By applying the onion metaphor (mentioned in Chapter 3), Harambee can be seen in the multiple layers of experiences and pedagogy that have been shown to be influential to classroom practice in Kenya. This study analysis indicates that there is a need for collective engagement in all levels, such as at the classroom level, society level, government level and in the global arena (Chapter 3, section 3.5, Figure 3-2 – layers of analysis). Kenya seems to really need collective learning across the groups for emancipation, social cohesion and collaboration. The collective learning can be interwoven in pedagogical practices that culturally relate to them, which would possibly promote participation. The subsequent Harambee choice is to be applied to pedagogical space since it reflects African collective practices that are both authentic and relevant to the people in this context. At the same time, it captures the post-colonial independence of having a pedagogical practice that facilitates African people but does not streamline them into subservient roles as recipients of ‘outsider’ pedagogical prescriptions.

As distinguished earlier, the introduction of formal education during colonial rule in Kenya was to control students’ mindsets and career outcomes (Njoya, 2017), with no space for dialogue, questioning or creativity. Unfortunately, from my findings there seems to be a continuation of such pedagogical practice, where students cannot participate independently and autonomously. The colonial system still haunts education practice in schools like Baraka, so there is a need for reform. Exams alone should not be used to measure students’ capability, and there should be diversified ways to test students’ talents, interests and skills. Moreover, universal theories of learning, such as constructivist theory, childhood theories and dialogic theory, have not built in African children’s experiences and contextual needs, which this concept proposes to capture. It draws on multiple facets of African people, which include their pre-colonial traditions, their experiences in colonial and post-colonial eras, and their future ambitions.

Therefore, in this recommendation, I propose an education that validates the Harambee fundamentals of collectivism. The approach encapsulates the kind of practice that Kenyan teachers identified would benefit their classrooms. At the same time, it is an attempt to address some of the key limitations by using pedagogical space in Kenyan classrooms for advanced engagement between teachers and students. Even so, there is a need to engage with

key players prior to its development and throughout its application to monitor its progress. For a sustainable improvement in pedagogic development, the Kenyan education system can learn from outside yet should also consult key people at a local level. Therefore, it recommends that silenced groups, such as teachers, students and parents who might have been overlooked in the past, are engaged as well. Below is a view of collective learning, and the subsequent sections demonstrate how the Harambee approach would work (Figure 8-1 below).

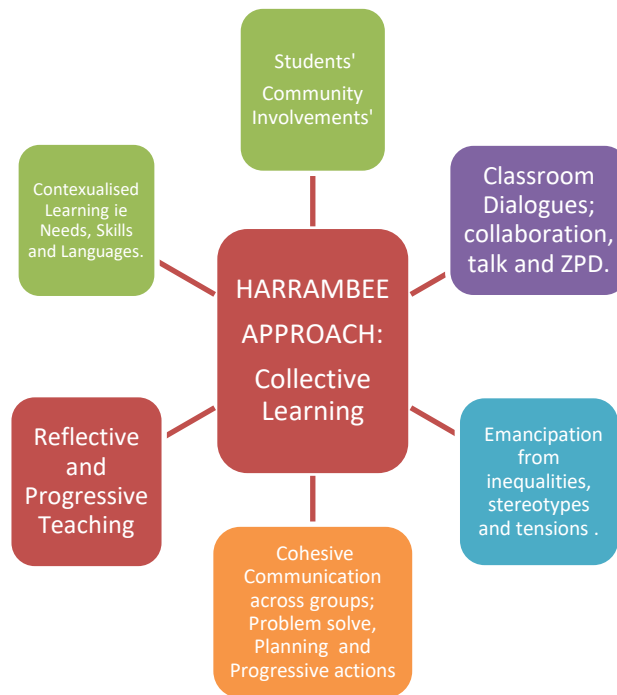


Figure 8-1 Harambee approach

8.2.1 *Harambee as a pedagogical approach: Collective learning*

In this section, I start to explain the proposed pedagogical approach for Harambee, detailing how both students and teachers can be dynamically involved in learning. The approach includes contextualising learning to benefit the learners and to help them to emancipate themselves as they apply dialogue in their practice. I advise a comprehensive curriculum that includes the most notable demands for Kenyan classrooms, such as practical subjects and multiple languages.

a. Contextualised learning

Following the agreements of the UNCRC (1989) and African Charter (1990), all signatory countries (including Kenya) agreed to provide free education as a right for all. Since then,

Kenya has overwhelmingly tried to meet the goals by making education accessible for all its citizens. Teachers have been trained to meet the demand in schools. The government has taken the responsibility further, aiming to provide all schools with adequate resources and upgrade the infrastructures to promote learning. As a result, most schools in the country have seen massive improvements to their classrooms, but they are still faced with contextual issues that have not yet been addressed. A good example is Baraka School, where over a few months there was an infrastructure upgrade, as seen in Photos 26 and 27 below.



Photo 26: Baraka classrooms, May 2016 Photo 27: Refurbished Baraka classrooms, April 2017

Despite the universal approach for signatories of UNCRC (1989) and African Charter (1990), there is a need for substantive education goals that are practical in specific contexts. In Kenya, like many other African countries, the education demands are crucial, but the specified needs of students are largely not met during the macro-synopsis, which snubs micro-needs. To meet these micro-needs, there is a need for contextualised education. This was one of the main issues identified by this study, where universal hegemonies suppress the local autonomies, impacting on classroom practice. The identified concerns in Kenyan schools can be resolved through the use of pedagogies that encapsulate their necessities, hence this proposal.

The Harambee approach would validate a cultural understanding by capturing Kenyan values and lifestyle. Possibly, it would help to reduce the misconstructions that have previously posed a barrier when introducing new pedagogies in many African contexts (Guthrie, 2011; Tabulawa, 2013), especially because Kenyan people can identify with the pedagogy since it would encapsulate their values and practice, for example the spirit of collectiveness and the use of local languages. Similarly, Kenyans would be able to understand the meaning of Harambee pedagogy as collective learning, where all are involved. Moreover, the issues of lifestyle that at times hinder some students in accessing education

might be addressed. The current education system seems to value the dominant way of living (Said, 1993, 2003) discouraging the engagement of students whose values differ. From this research, it was evident that some communities' access to learning is limited by their social-cultural lifestyles and economic background (Chapter 6, Extract 17). Students from nomadic communities at times find it hard to access full-time learning due to their lifestyle, which is not considered comprehensively by the system. Their customs and traditions, such as female genital mutilation, conflict with current education policies, forcing these students to make the difficult choice between their education or their community values, as noted in this study. These issues can be addressed by the Harambee approach when key players have discussions on fair concessions to serve all students. These issues are specific to some regions and need to be addressed sensitively.

Overall, through Harambee, collective contextualised learning would include the specific needs recognised by Kenyan teachers, for example practical subjects (section 6.5, Extract 20). Subjects such as home science, art and craft, music and business education would be made available in the curriculum and taught in school. At the moment, although some of these subjects are available, they are not a priority because they are not examined. The system is exam-based, so teachers and pupils concentrate on passing exams. Still, the same teachers identified that students who are not academic may have other talents that could be supported by these subjects, yet these are ignored. To overcome this issue, there should be a platform for these subjects to be included and promoted. Moreover, the learning of all subjects should be not only theory based but include practical learning. The Kenyan teachers noted that when practical work is involved in learning, the students are actively engaged and learn more. They are also able to bring their outside experiences into classroom learning, and vice versa (Freire, 1993; Nyerere, cited by Ibbott, 2014). Most of the teachers interviewed in this study admitted that science subjects need experiments. They recognised that most other subjects can have practical exercises, which teachers have to plan purposefully. One of the English teachers noted that they can have debates, use their dictionaries or do word searches, where students are more involved and also learn a great deal. Indeed, most of these practical uses involve plenty of dialogue and discussion. They can overcome the classrooms' formal setting and break down the barriers identified earlier in this thesis.

Extract 34

Pius: ... because of most of them are still using mother tongue so when they come to school, English become like a foreign language to them.
(Interview 3)

The promotion of local languages in the curriculum would help students to learn positively in languages that they are confident to speak. From the teachers' statements, as in Extract (34) above, it was evident that most children from rural areas are not confident in English, hence are limited in their classroom engagement. Nonetheless, these children can converse with their teachers in local languages. Thus, it is important to use these languages in learning. The application of local languages also helps to create a cultural understanding and can promote classroom dialogue, since students are using a language that they are confident in. Moreover, the exclusion of African languages from the curriculum promotes the universal view that African culture, values and learning tools are backward and non-academic. This may affect students' confidence and self-esteem. However, through inclusion, a reversal might be projected to uphold students' confidence to engage actively. When they learn in their local languages, they may be inspired to learn other languages. The inclusion may also help with identity emancipation for Kenyan students. Moreover, currently Kenyan local languages are marketable for careers such as journalism and broadcasting, which some students might choose as a career. Therefore, the incorporation of local languages even in upper-primary education will challenge stereotypes and promote local languages enlightenment.

It was prominent in this thesis that most students in Kenya have varied experiences acquired outside their classroom learning. Indeed, most of the students in their time outside of school help their parents in home management and are involved practically in the community. In my investigations, I observed some students at Baraka School planting trees as a conservation exercise (Chapter 4, Photo 20). I saw them engage in athletics training for a competition against neighbouring schools. Additionally, in the community church, I observed children involved in Bible readings, conducting church services and singing in collaboration with their teachers and parents. This kind of participation outside the classroom develops valuable skills and knowledge that should be included in classroom learning. Students should be able to discuss and reflect on these activities. As proposed by Nyerere (Ibbott, 2014), students should relate their learning to their environment and be able to bring

their outside skills and experiences into the classroom. Moreover, when they use their classroom learning in practical ways to meet their life requirements, this is good education.

b. Use of dialogue in classroom learning

Extract 34

Gathenya: I think when you involve the students, for example I am also a mathematics teacher, I was thinking sometime back the reason I know so many things and I remember them it is because I went beyond that. For example, a certain concept, it is because I had seen it myself, that is why I can remember even today. When you just teach on the blackboard and then go out and do not do something else the child will not remember it again, but the minute you involve that child to do something, maybe you have another lesson in the week and they do questions, questions and answers maybe like a group competition, they will ask one another. (Interview 5)

From the above Extract (34), teacher Gathenya acknowledged that teaching only on the blackboard did not help students to understand. All the teachers interviewed in Baraka seemed to agree that by going into discussion or demonstrating with learning aids, students are involved in diverse ways in their space for interactions, and learning is advanced. They also stipulated that dialogue can be beneficial to their practice; for example, their students become more confident and have better comprehension. Wilkinson et al. (2016) assert that the use of dialogue helps students to make sense of their world and to problem-solve issues intellectually, making it vital in learning.

The proposed Harambee pedagogy would help to perpetuate the trajectory needed in Kenyan classrooms by engaging both teachers and students in active dialogue on their classroom learning. This kind of practices would encourage the use of both local and foreign languages in classroom learning. It would include practical exercises in lessons and the incorporation of outside experiences. Indeed, the use of a pedagogy that encapsulates these would help to promote productive learning for students, since they are actively involved, and the learning captures their lives and prepares them for their future. By using dialogue in the classroom, some of the Kenyan Curriculum 2017 goals would be met (Matiang'i, 2017). Indeed, when the students apply Harambee pedagogy in their classroom dialogue, they will have discussions and practical engagement, enabling them to develop problem-solving and critical thinking skills, reflections skills, collaboration skills and self-expression. These skills would equip students cognitively, socially and psychologically.

The use of Harambee pedagogy would help to break through students' socioeconomic barriers to participation. Overall, dialogue in the classroom should promote collaboration, both asymmetrical and symmetrical (Freire, 1993; Mercer, 2000), breaking down the barriers between students and teachers and also between students. Consequently, the use of dialogue in classroom learning would help with emancipation (Freire, 1993). Indeed, through classroom discussion, as students start tackling issues they will ask questions that relate to their lives in the classroom and beyond. They might start to discuss inequality issues in their settings and start to challenge local and global hegemonies. Furthermore, the current incorporation of information technology and the high use of mobile phones in Kenya make most students more aware of global issues. As a result, they have started to participate in social media discussions and may continue to engage further, even in their interaction space. I observed some teachers using their mobile phones to download music and incorporate it in their teaching. Similarly, the IT education can make interaction space both contextualised and globally engaged. The students will be able to ask and answer questions at their local level and also be involved in global debates. They will be able to contest injustices (Freire, 1993; hooks, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1995). They can also illuminate their views, work and contexts, using these platforms to voice their concerns and raise awareness.

Conversely, when dialogue is employed in classroom learning, students and teachers come up with new knowledge and discuss subjects that relate to them and their world. When students are engaged in this kind of interesting learning, they are able to exercise their imagination and creativity. The students can use their classroom knowledge to come up with new solutions for life issues and advanced learning. This practice, according to Robinson (1999, 2001) should be the main goal of education. Indeed, an education that promotes creativity and advancement is needed in any setting, although especially in Kenya. From previous research (Ackers and Hardman, 2012) as well as from this study's observations, Kenyan students are mainly passive learners who do not apply their imagination or creativity. Their space for interactions is limited, hence some of the students' strengths are not harnessed. Thus, to maximise the potential of all students, it is important to engage them in active classroom dialogue.

c. Harambee curriculum

Table 8-1 below indicates what the Harambee curriculum is proposed to incorporate for vigorous teaching and learning, as earlier discussed. First, dialogue should be included in

learning, wherever feasible, for the active engagement of both teachers and students. The key is capturing areas where all students' potential could be explored, leaving no one feeling left out. The curriculum has diverse academic subjects, where languages and practical skills and experience will be integrated. This would help to stop classroom learning in Kenya being just about attaining good marks in exams and become more about students exploring knowledge, imagination and creativity. The teachers would enjoy using their creativity to aid active learning. There would be platforms for outside classroom engagement and for practical knowledge. The Harambee curriculum will help to address some of the inequalities in Kenyan schools and society. Still, it should be planned in a way that is not cumbersome for children, as was the earlier 8-4-4 system (Republic of Kenya, 2008). There should be a balance, so that students are able to study fewer subjects yet follow their interests to explore their potential. The strengths of the current system of education should not be lost, but integrated.

Table 8-1 Harambee curriculum content

Examinable subjects	Mathematics, Science, English, Kiswahili, Social studies, Religious education.
Practical subjects	Home science, Business studies, Art and craft, Music, Physical education, ICT, Agriculture.
Local and foreign languages	Gikuyu, Kamba, Kalenjin, Meru, Luo, Luhya, German, Arabic, Chinese, French, etc.
Community work experiences	Farm work, housework, business assistance, fundraising, church leadership, community work, Organising and engaging in community events such as choirs, weddings, educational tours & visits, etc.
Active class engagement	Dialogue, debates, experiments, class competitions, groups presentations, question and answer, etc.

Although it is beneficial to focus on all subjects, it is important for pathways to be streamlined to avoid the curriculum becoming burdensome. Indeed, some subjects were introduced into the Kenyan curriculum in 1985 at the start of the 8-4-4 initiative yet were removed due to the students becoming overloaded, evident in Mike's comment in Extract 20 in section 6.5, where he said, 'There was a time we used to have art and craft, music (...) and

nowadays they are not there'. Hence, there is need for consultation to address how students can focus on subjects of interest but avoid being overloaded. There is a need for future ground-level consultations in line with this study, aiming for participation from all key players. At the same time, there are threats that could prevent the curriculum from being effective, for example a failure to change the mindset of teachers and all other groups: this needs further discussion with the groups. There is also a need for more resources and further training for teachers. Thus, this proposal would be subject to change to suit the context. However, its outline captures the crucial areas that need to be implemented in Kenyan learning.

8.2.2 Harambee teaching approach: Reflective and progressive practice

Capturing teachers' needs to promote superior teaching and learning practices was vital to this study. It was evident that Kenyan teachers enjoyed their work and inspired the best in their students. All the participants interviewed were college trained and had long experience of teaching in various setting across the country (see Chapter 5, Extracts 8 and 9). These teachers stated that they were happy to do their job and support their students' learning to the best of their ability. However, they noted that there were limitations that impacted on their classroom practice that they were willing to voice, but they felt restricted to the existing platforms. They stated that they were limited to those of the Ministry of Education when raising their concerns, but felt that their voices were not always heard (see Chapter 5, section 5.2.3). The system appeared to be top-down, rather than bottom-up. At the time of this study, there was much tension between the government and the KNUT, which made the teachers feel overlooked. At the same time, the teachers noted that only a few of them were involved in curriculum development, and that the majority were left out by KICD. Moreover, many of their settings had various issues over resources and infrastructure distribution. Indeed, they were limited in terms of influence over the allocation of these resources. There were issues mainly over lack of consultation and poor relations with the governing bodies, which enhanced an atmosphere of authoritarian communication.

Even so, the teachers at Baraka School identified a need for advanced pedagogies in their practice. They unanimously agreed that although they predominantly used monologic pedagogies, there was a need for new pedagogies. They noted that there was no communication between them and the training colleges and mostly there was little consultation by the Ministry of Education or education researchers. Some of these key issues

demoralised teachers and limited their classroom activity, restricting pedagogical development. As a result, there is a need for innovative pedagogy that involves teachers' views being listened to help to capture their needs. Even so, one cannot ignore the conflicted mindset of teachers: since their background is authoritarian, some felt that their authority should not be compromised. Thus, there is need to engage with teachers reflectively as they learn new pedagogies in order to deal with issues that might impair their progress. Other research has shown that teachers' mindsets and previous experiences can limit changes in interaction space (Gillborn, 2008; Alexander, 2010; Wilkinson et al., 2016). In this Harambee approach, it would be vital for teachers to have a platform from which they can reflect on their practice and, in addition, plan for progressive teaching. Moreover, the teachers in Kenya appeared keen to work with other key groups in order for their settings to devise superior teaching and learning. Therefore, the entire approach should use spaces for interaction to engage all key players, including parents, the Ministry of Education, the government, training colleges and education researchers.

From this study, there was an emerging consensus that professional development is needed in Kenyan schools, such as post-teacher training for the advancement of teaching and learning practices (see Chapter 5, Extract 16). This should be continuous, post-graduation, since research and progressive classroom practices. The teachers in Baraka School appeared willing to be trained in pedagogies that relate to their context. During the study, I was able to capture most of the needs of the context and, hence, this Harambee pedagogical approach. As previously specified, it should promote a space for self-reflection in professional practice. Through discussions and reflections, they will be able to advance their practice. After this study's interviews, it was evident from my observations that teachers were engaging students more in their teaching. The teachers appeared to have used their interviews as a platform for dialogue, enabling them to reflect on their practice. They were also able to be creative within their setting with the resources available. Indeed, in one of the classes observed after the interviews, the teacher organised a group competition where students asked each other questions. The set-up was in two circles, and the students appeared to actively engage (Photo 28 below), more than previously observed. This active involvement in their learning recurred in other classes that I observed after the interviews. Therefore, it was possible that the teachers had time to reflect during that time and modified their subsequent space for interaction.



Photo 28: Group competition

When teachers feel supported by the government and society and are equipped with skills for superior pedagogies, their autonomy will increase. One of the main issues identified was the low self-esteem of the teachers. They felt that their practices were not good enough for all their students and they felt unsupported. However, they were still able to teach, and the students learned what was expected. Nevertheless, some of the challenges of inequalities, marginalisation and politics in their profession are not experienced just in Kenya but in other settings around the world (Bernstein, 2003; Gillborn, 2009). Therefore, these Kenyan teachers need to know that these challenges are not limited to their context. They should be supported by their schools and the Ministry of Education to address them. Teachers should be equipped to practise autonomy in their classroom to increase their creativity and activity.

Teachers should also be willing to unlearn practices that are counterproductive (Cochran-Smith, 2009; McWilliam, 2008), which researchers have argued is significant if they are unproductive. According to Mike, Kenyan teachers are aware of several methods of teaching, however they use only same familiar style. Although most teachers did not want to admit it, my observations supported this view. The teachers predominantly used teacher-centred methods. In Mike's admission, 'they fall back on known territories'. According to research, even in the United Kingdom, most teachers go back to the lecture method because it familiar (Mercer, 2000), yet the use of old methods of teaching does not encourage students' active engagement, and it obstructs the benefits that come from active engagement, such as imagination and creativity. According to Cochran-Smith and Lytle (2009), teachers need to unlearn some practices in order to embrace new ones. Hence, in training teachers on new

pedagogies, it is important to identify how the unproductive methods can be dealt with, to avoid relapse.

Even so, despite this proposal, in order to overcome the key barriers to development of pedagogies it is vital to discuss this proposal with teachers and all other key players in the Kenyan education system. This would help them to voice their needs and make sure that they are met with respect to the specific context.

8.2.3 Collective key player strategy for pedagogical development

Overall, it is important for the Kenyan education system to address local and global hegemonic issues that impact on classroom practice. Although some of the influences are beneficial, others hinder uniformity in education practice, thus creating inequalities across the country's education system. From this study, it became apparent that to overcome some of these barriers there was a need for cohesion. This would only be achieved when there is dialogue across groups about specific issues. Below is a table indicating the major areas of concern and the groups that need to be involved in their resolution through the use of dialogic interaction.

Table 8-2 Dialogic key groups and focuses

Group	Pedagogy/ Training	Funding	Hegemony	Curriculum	Salary
Teachers & KNUT	x	x	x	x	x
MOE (KICD)	x	x	x	x	x
Government	-	x	x	x	x
Global institutions	x	-	x	-	-
Parents	-	x	x	x	-
Students	x	x	x	x	-
Society	-	x	x	x	-
Researchers	x	x	x	x	x

Conversely, from my study it emerged that consultation at ground level seemed to be absent from most areas, as mentioned earlier. Most teachers felt left out of curriculum development and the allocation of funding for their school. Similarly, teachers felt excluded when the Ministry of Education was identifying and upgrading their training needs. They felt that their representative bodies (KNUT and KUPPET) were suppressed by the government and their

voices overlooked (see Extract 35 below). Moreover, it was apparent that some global advocates for Kenyan teacher training were consulted by government then dictated what should be done in teachers' schools to them, with very little use of teachers' input. Consequently, the decisions were made by others yet they impacted on Kenyan classroom teaching and learning, even though the voices of pupils and teachers were absent. In Extract 35 below, Kuria explained how they give suggestions to their headteachers, but these are not passed on due to the authoritarian nature of the education system.

Extract 35

Kuria: No. teachers do not talk, we only talk in the staff meeting the problems you have, when you tell the headteacher, I think he doesn't have another area, because when they go to the meetings with the DEO (district education officer), they talk about teaching, professional documents, but not about money and the office think the money they are given is enough, so a teacher has no voice there.(...)

Kuria: it is only the funding of FPE? Yeah (...) yes, but they only talk about when the economy improves. (Interview 2)

Subsequently, these needs were unmet and the teachers felt overlooked, creating tensions. The tensions in this study appeared to recur across other groups, as outlined in the layers of analysis (Chapter 3, Figure 3-2). For example, this happens at society level between teachers and the parents, when parents from lower socioeconomic backgrounds are asked to aid funding to fill resource gaps. Likewise, there are tensions between teachers, the Ministry of Education and the government in relation to remuneration, training needs, school funding and curriculum development, and at the global level, when the government seems to undertake directives from global organisations on policy issues and these actions generate social, economic and historical tensions (Said, 1995; Maathai, 2009). As a result, there is a need for liberation of all the 'silenced groups' in order to problem-solve these tensions for better working relations. Thus, there is a need for communication within and across the groups, initially to challenge hegemonies and address tensions, thereafter to endorse positive plans. From my research analysis, reflecting on poor communication was a major theme that recurred in the interviews.

Ideally, the communication across the groups should be dialogic, where all participatory bodies are heard. Indeed, when groups have dialogue on the topics indicated in Table 8-2, they will be able to forge cohesive working relationships. They can produce a moral lens with a better understanding of circumstances and aid emancipation too (Steinberg and

Kincheloe, 2010). Together, these groups can identify areas of concern and problems-solve them. Also, in unison, they can plan sustainable goals that are effective in Kenyan schools. For instance, parents would be able to understand how government funding works and if there are areas that they need to support. The teachers and the Ministry of Education would be able to plan and promote good education practices, such as pedagogies to meet students' needs. The government and Ministry of Education would be able to include teachers in matters of funding, curriculum development and all other areas that relate to their profession. The move might boost teachers' morale. Moreover, specific resource provision and support for advanced teaching practice could be offered, where open communication is fostered. Eventually, teachers' and students' practice will improve interaction, since they will be funded adequately and their teachers will be motivated and resourced for advanced practice. Possibly, the inequalities in schools and society can be addressed, after effective use of pedagogical spaces.

So, through cooperation and collaboration among the key players in pedagogical spaces, progressive goals can be achieved regarding classroom practice and beyond. Indeed, a rigorous curriculum, advanced training and practice would be identified and applied. Furthermore, since education is fundamental to Kenyan society, this progress would influence the rest of society and government bodies in terms of using effective dialogue and planning sustainable development. This supports Nelson Mandela's famous quote, that education is the key to changing society and the world.

Indeed, through Harambee, when all players are equally engaged in progress, the approach could help to bridge the social, economic, political and global differences that impact on Kenyan education and society. At the same time, the key groups would be able to identify their own strengths and promote them through dialogue in spaces or interaction. Moreover, they can confront the negative perceptions and identities that unjustly impact on their autonomy. This would encourage the use of creativity and independence by the key groups in education and in Kenyan society. As a result, the 'invisible' marginalised groups (such as teachers, poorer parents and students) could use pedagogical spaces to explore their agency, creativity and participation. Furthermore, Kenyan groups (students, teachers and society) can utilise these spaces to challenge local and global domination through the use of dialogue for emancipation. They could transform negative misrepresentations through constructive involvement, where they can project their own authenticity. Critical engagement could uphold social cohesion and efficiency, moreover overcome the embedded negative

ideologies, dominant cultural norms and aggressive stereotypes that impact on Kenyan society and educational practice. Thus, it is critical for all key Kenyan groups mentioned in this section to work together cohesively and effectively towards their ‘possible selves’. According to Markus and Nurius (1986), ‘possible selves’ are achieved when people are able to relate to their past and present effectively and, furthermore, to forge what they want to be in future and identify what they do not want to be. So, Kenyans can reach their possible selves when all key groups are cohesively and dialogically involved through discussion and action, as detailed above.

8.3 Linking the Kenyan context to global phenomena

From this study, there was evidence that education issues in Kenya are similar those in other countries in Africa and beyond. Therefore, it is important to appraise lessons from this study that could be valuable and transferable to other countries. Even so, there is a need to contextualise the lessons prior to the adoption.

8.3.1 Harambee aspects in the global phenomena

Embracing dialogic pedagogies has been problematic in various settings across the world, including the United Kingdom, Australia and the United States (Alexander, 2000; Mercer, 2000). Previous research has indicated ongoing challenges to the incorporation of progressive pedagogies in developing countries, Africa and Asia (Said, 1995; Guthrie, 2011; Tabulawa, 2013). Therefore, some of the solutions proposed in this research may be informative. Most curricula across continents are still have exam-based systems, despite the practice being questioned. It appears that there is a need to unlearn old practices by facing both the invisible and visible influences that limit change and progress (Bernstein, 2003). Possibly, the change in practice needs to be fully discussed by various parties in order to outline a substantial way forward.

Universally, the teaching profession has been highly influenced by socioeconomic and political circumstances. Indeed, teachers’ social attitudes regarding professional identity have changed over time. A good example is in the United Kingdom, where teachers feel that politics influences their work. The political agenda of the government in office keeps changing teachers’ working practices, with very few consultations at ground level. These changes seem to suit the political agenda, but the teachers and students’ voices are mostly suppressed (Cunningham, 2012). At the same time, politicians advocate how and what the curriculum should include and exclude, and how it should be taught. There are many

practical changes to the subjects taught, to exams and also to pedagogic practice, and little time spent on consulting teachers and students. These changes have little consideration for teachers' and students' opinions, creating frustration, misunderstandings and tensions. Thus, there is a need for dialogic platforms on which teachers and students can outline their needs. Otherwise, the continual suppression of their voice will continue to impact on their classroom practice negatively. Nevertheless, the use of dialogue across various parties might help to find answers to most global countries' education systems.

Another key issue that links Kenya to global education systems is the status of the working environment (school), since this is mostly classified by socioeconomic and political background. Indeed, some state schools' funding is influenced by their parents and society, through socioeconomic power, and they are mostly politically driven. The teachers' mindset seems to be highly influenced by their background (Gillborn, 2008). In Bourdieu's theory, social capital and habitus influence the schooling environment and classroom practice.

In addition, the social capital of students from rich backgrounds is stronger than that of students from poor backgrounds (Gillborn, 2008; Hannus and Simola, 2016). These social capitals give purchasing power to educational settings. As a result, there are discrepancies in practice between richer schools and those in poorer communities. These economic differences have a great influence on the pedagogies applied in these schools. Thus, to solve some of these social class issues across schools in other countries, they might need to use some of the described Harambee approach strategies. For example, to address the inequalities issues, all key groups in education systems need to face up to them. This will include parents, governments, schools and teachers, working dialogically and collaboratively together. For emancipation, the hierarchical order needs to be discussed so that all citizens' education needs are met, according to the UNCRC guidelines (1989). The predominant hegemonies need to be challenged so that all students across all schools in all countries can access a similar quality of education, both in developed and developing countries across the globe.

Multilingualism is an area that this study identified as having been overlooked by pedagogical studies, for example by the dialogic research by Alexander (2008) and Mercer and Dawes (2010). However, exploring how students from bilingual and multilingual backgrounds can be empowered in pedagogical space through the inclusion of their languages is critical. This is relevant to many contexts around the world, including African

countries and also Europe. In the United Kingdom, a Department of Education (2015) report reveals that many students are from bilingual and multilingual backgrounds. Therefore, pedagogical development should aim to value and include the use of these languages to enhance students' participation and comprehension, as detailed earlier in Chapter 6 (section 6.4).

8.3.2 Harambee aspects for the African countries

In African schools in countries such as Ghana (Akyeampong, 2009), private schools have higher social status than public schools. Hence, they are well funded and have resources that teachers and students can use in their classroom. These practices are akin to Kenyan schools, as was evident in discussion. Nonetheless, all students require a high-quality education where superior practice is upheld, regardless of social, economic and political status. Each African country needs a platform for dialogue, for the identification of contextual needs and so the underlying inequality issues can be addressed. Correspondingly, in countries that borrow policies from other countries with little consultation on the ground, students' needs remain overlooked. Thus, similar to Kenya where dialogue can be applied, there are opportunities in other African countries to formulate practices that are advantageous at the local level and can also compete globally. Moreover, education systems need to work and benefit the people, and they need to be culturally relevant. Therefore, addressing both micro- and macro-issues is essential, through engaging all key players from all levels of the education systems (Harber, 2014). Moreover, education in Africa should prepare students with skills to meet both short-term and long-term goals, from personal, to local and to global levels, starting with their classroom interaction space, when they have equipped their physical space and engaged actively in their interaction space. Furthermore, their cultural and policy spaces should support relevant and advanced education practices that promote learning.

On the other hand, African countries like Kenya should start to find solutions at their own local level and break their dependency on developed countries, which has disenabled them (Harber, 2014). Indeed, if African countries could break the yoke of control from developed countries and global organisations such as the World Bank and IMF, they could be liberated. These global hegemonies have dominated Africans economically, culturally and politically for many years, limiting their autonomy and progress (Said, 1994; Maathai, 2009; Schweisfurth, 2013; Harber, 2014). So, there is a need for liberation through developing

education systems that help students to engage actively, creatively and autonomously. African countries need to formulate education systems that are specific to their context, to address local issues and to meet students' needs. Effective dialogues can contest global domination and achieve emancipation for these countries and their citizens to negotiate fair, global participation. The trajectories may be initiated through improvements to classroom practice. Then, the confidence and self-esteem of students and citizens might increase to facilitate participation, both locally and eventually globally.

Consequently, African countries can individually and collectively work on improving their teaching and learning practices. The aspects of Harambee through use of pedagogical spaces by key groups (government, teachers, parents, society and pupils) could help them to address hegemonies and further draw up progressive resolutions. Discussing hegemonies and utilising pedagogical spaces through the inclusion of the 'silenced groups' is the way forward for all countries, especially in Africa. Without effective and collaborative communication, such inequalities will persist, influencing classroom practice negatively. Thus, the proposed Harambee approach might be a solution not just for Kenya, but for other African countries.

Chapter 9. Conclusion

9.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I use my research findings to draw to a conclusion my contributions to policy, methodology, theory and practice. These conclusions are the response to my research questions.

9.2 Contributions to policy

Whilst an objective of the study was not first and foremost a critical evaluation of policy, the fieldwork data did valuably shed light on a number of issues in both the policy formulation process and the policy implementation process. Since 2003, the Kenyan government and the Ministry of Education policies have aimed to ensure that all children have access to Free Primary Education. There have been several changes in policy which impact classroom teaching and learning, but implementation of policy has at times raised some tensions which will be summarised in this section.

From my research, it became evident that the government has taken strides towards upholding children's rights, firstly by being a signatory to both the UNCRC (1989) and the African Charter (1990), and secondly by implementing policies to support children's rights. As a result, in 2003 the FPE policy was enacted, and the government promised to fund all education needs by providing infrastructure and resources. Additionally, there was evidence of children's rights implementations in Kenyan law and in education policies. For example, the teachers in my study noted that students were made aware of their rights in their social studies lessons. The government is also trying to make sure these rights are not violated, and there is evidence of this through changes to education policies and practice. Other examples are in relation to corporal punishment and female genital mutilation, where laws and policies have changed. All these policy initiatives by government are progressive and have impacted positively on education practice.

However, teachers distinguished that some of the changes in policy were contested by cultural values and practices. In areas such as upholding discipline in the classroom without using corporal punishment, teachers noted that the policy conflicts with social practices. Another contradictory area is where traditional practices conflict with government policies, marginalised some students. In these contested spaces there are tensions but, at the same

time, these could act as opportunities for dialogic engagement. From my interviews with the teachers, it became evident that there is a need for dialogue between policy-makers and other key players in education to address these tensions. As Ladson-Billings (1995) and hooks (1995) argue, through dialogue, difficult issues can be addressed. Thus, cultural tension could be addressed through dialogue between policy-makers, teachers and parents, where all can agree on culturally acceptable policy and where all feel included and respected, particularly rural schoolteachers, who are often invisible.

From the study it became evident that the policy implementation faced several challenges, for example the launch of the FPE initiative led to demands for more resources due to high enrolment in schools. As a result, there were unmet needs at classroom level, such as high teacher-pupil ratios, the lack of books and inadequate infrastructure (in some schools), which impacted on practice. The teachers at Baraka School commented that the increment in enrolment led to larger classrooms, which led to unmet classroom needs in most schools. At the same time, the changes in curriculum in 2017 revealed a continuing top down practice where there is lack of consultation with key players such as teachers and parents during policy making process. The top-down practice seems to hinder policy implementation, because some of the requirements are not met at the grassroots such as training, resources provision and addressing areas of tension through dialogue.

In this study, Harambee concept has been formulated as a way to bridge the gap in policy and practice. By embracing Harambee approach, the Kenyan education system could move towards taking off the shackles of authoritarian and hegemonic practices and addressing policy issues. This would help connect the education policies and practices to the cultural context as the policies and practices work towards becoming more independent. Harambee approach would allow all key players in the Kenyan education system to be actively involved in pedagogical spaces (cultural, policy, interaction and physical), both freely and productively. This should include consultation with teachers, parents and communities when formulating new policies. Currently, the practice in Kenyan education appears to be top-down, however if more consultation is conducted through a bottom-up approach perhaps the contested policies could be addressed, as proposed in the Harambee concept recommendation. In this approach, I suggest that all key players should be dialogically involved in the four pedagogical spaces to ease the apparent cultural and practical tensions in policy. The approach would promote inclusion of a culturally acceptable policy, which would help to diminish the disengagement.

9.3 Contributions to practice

The data showed that what teachers wanted from policy was an approach that encouraged collaboration, dialogue, attention to cultural context and the development of students' critical thinking. Teachers showed an awareness of their predominant use of teacher-centred methods that were not beneficial to all their students, indicating a willingness to accommodate new pedagogies in their practice.

Some Baraka teachers revealed that collaborative methods could be facilitated through the use of experiments in their science classes, debates in their language lessons and having student-initiated activities like group competitions, allowing students to take the lead. The five teachers were aware that their students needed to participate more in their classroom learning. They blamed this on a lack of resources to support more dialogic engagement and also the need to complete the syllabus quickly to prepare for exams. These teachers seem to reinforce the assertions of Piaget (1936), Robinson (2001) and Mercer (2008) that classroom resources need to encourage students to participate autonomously to foster imagination, creativity and confidence.

Additionally, this study has found that most teachers are willing to embrace dialogue in their classrooms, yet some have reservations. They feel that if the barriers between teachers and students (due to authoritarian practice) were broken down, the students would ask questions and participate more in their learning. This validates Alexander's (2008) and Mercer's (2008) assertions. Nonetheless, the anxiety of applying dialogic pedagogies noted by Kessler-Singh and Robertson (2015) is obvious in the discussions, particularly when some teachers argue that dialogue is informal and that school learning should be formal. Some teachers appear resistant to demolishing the authoritarian hierarchies in the classroom, perhaps in fear of losing control or igniting political discussion during dialogic learning. This reflects the assertions of Kessler-Singh and Robertson (2015). Nevertheless, teachers are seeking change to the hierarchical order in the education system, although they are reluctant to use dialogic practice in their classrooms without the support of other key players in the areas of resource funding and pedagogical training.

From teachers' assertions, there is a need to embrace learning that is relevant to students' backgrounds. This study suggests the inclusion of cultural and critical learning. Teachers noted that non-academic students are disadvantaged by current systems and need to be supported by having practical subjects and pedagogies that include their interests and their

backgrounds to maximise their potential. From my participant observations, it was evident that the current learning excluded from classroom learning the very cultural tools that make learning more interesting, such as the use of local languages and speaking of informal experiences and skills. Subsequently, the teachers noted that some students from rural areas are disadvantaged by classroom learning since they are not confident in using English. In retrospect, I noted that these students have local language skills and experiences that could be utilised in the space for interaction to let them learn easily and, further, make learning relevant to them. Therefore, applying cultural and critical learning could benefit Kenyan students whose needs are currently overlooked in the exam-based system (Thiong'o, 1986; Nyerere, cited by Ibbott, 2014; Ngugi, 2018). Use of local languages would help students to relate to their education, as the language is relevant to their background. The incorporation of language, as Said (1993) argued, is not just the use of words, but is cultural and philosophical. Thus, if Kenyan local languages and culture are included in students' learning, they are able to relate their outside lives to classroom knowledge.

Teachers at Baraka School noted the need for pedagogical development. They highlighted the necessity for training colleges and researchers to work continuously with teachers, both for teachers' career development and for improvements to the pedagogical practice, although there were platforms for teachers to upgrade their practice through workshops where colleagues from better-performing schools shared their experiences. The teachers at Baraka School distinguished the value of liaising with other key players in education, especially training colleges. Additionally, it became apparent during the interviews that teachers required a platform for reflection. Reflection on practice can help teachers to improve their work (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 2009), and this became noticeable after my interviews, since the teachers appeared to engage more with the students in the classroom.

Harambee is Kenyan term commonly used in East Africa. Harambee refers to the collaborative involvements of communities with the aim to self-govern and build up themselves and their nations (Kenyatta, 1965; Were and Wilson, 1968). The proposed Harambee approach sets a path for progressive teaching and learning practices that can help to involve Kenyan students actively in their learning to equip them with valuable skills for life. In my recommendation, the Harambee approach starts to redress the power dynamics by using terms that relate to the key players in the Kenyan education system with the purpose of counteracting the predominant top-down, authoritarian structures. Previous pedagogical critics and change advocates have come from global organisations and the Kenyan

government, representing hegemonies. However, the Harambee approach streamlines students' and teachers' needs and values and summarises how these can be met. Overall, the Harambee proposition conceptualises the lessons from this study, which have been frameworked into five major aspects (Chapter 8, Figure 8-1). The concept comprises the inclusion of dialogue in the classroom, with the aim of engaging students and teachers actively to advance learning and equip students with social, cognitive and practical skills (Alexander, 2008; Mercer, 2008). In order to foster sustainable classroom practice, there is a need for dialogue between the key players in the education system. Harambee advocates a contextualised education that is relevant to the teachers and students and uses cultural tools (Thiong'o, 1986; Garton, 2004; Maathai, 2009; Ibbott, 2014). In addition, Harambee underpins the need to uphold reflective practice for teachers (Claxton, 1999) and to emancipate silenced groups by addressing inequalities (Freire, 1993; Said, 1994; Maathai, 2009). At the same time, the concept outlines how students' community experiences need to be accommodated in the interaction space for social cultural and economic relevance, as stipulated by Nyerere (Kassam, 1995; Tabulawa, 2013; Ibbott, 2014). The Harambee approach concept encapsulates inclusion of a variety of pedagogies, such as collaborative pedagogies, student-led pedagogies and dialogic pedagogies, to support all students to learn effectively and acquire knowledge and skills relevant to their lives. It also supports teachers in developing good practice as they cohesively work together with other key players in education.

Other education systems can reform their interaction spaces through the inclusion of dialogic pedagogies to support their students to be active and creative (Alexander, 2008; Mercer, 2008). Additionally, in pedagogical reviews, it is important for the context to use all four pedagogical spaces (physical, policy, interaction and cultural space). It is also vital to involve key players in education in the four pedagogical spaces. A good example is the inclusion of relevant key players (such as teachers, government, parents and policy-makers) prior to changing and implementing any new education policies. Good communication across various groups in policy spaces would eradicate the tensions, promote cohesiveness and set the pace for sustainable progress. Another key aspect of Harambee that is relevant to other education systems is the need for continual reflective practice among teachers (Claxton, 1999). Practitioners will improve their work and unlearn unhelpful practices (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 2009; McWilliam, 2008). They will also be able to identify areas that require development and then seek training or resources. So, from this study, it seems important for

Baraka teachers to have reflective platforms to voice their needs and discuss what is helpful and unhelpful to their practice.

Furthermore, all students need to benefit equally from learning through the use of quality interaction in classroom learning, where students learn actively. Students' social status will stop determining their access to good pedagogical practice. As Akyeampong (2009) and Gillborn (2008) note, inequalities also occur in countries such as Ghana and the United Kingdom. However, teachers can freely use their autonomy in their classroom to allow their students to actively participate through the use of diverse pedagogies, such as dialogic pedagogies, student-led pedagogies and collaborative methods, and cultural and critical pedagogies. If teachers in Kenya have the chance to include practices such as the use of exploratory talk, experiments, classroom debates and multiple languages in their space of interaction to advance learning, then all students' learning needs would be met, despite their geographical location or social habitus, which Gillborn (2008) and Alenan et al. (2015) advocate in any education context. Still, it would be helpful if each setting contextualised the lessons to suit, as Tabulawa (2013) suggests. The sensitised Harambee approach is in its early stages, so is yet to be discussed with key players in the Kenyan education system for contextualisation and application.

Change of practice is a process, and it cannot happen overnight. So, Kenya should not discard its familiar methods (Guthrie, 2011) but slowly incorporate new ways. Teachers and students should give themselves time to unlearn unhelpful methods and accommodate new ones (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 2009). To sum up, dialogic practice alone is not viable in Kenyan classrooms, but needs to coexist alongside other methods identified by the teachers. My overall view is that primary school learning is the basis for social learning, thus if dialogic changes are necessary then it would be a starting point. In interviews, some teachers noted that if dialogue was applied, students would interact more freely in the classroom. Moreover, teachers recognised that they were society changers, so if they were to pioneer dialogic practice in their classrooms, they could influence other key areas in their education system and their society.

The lessons from this Kenyan study can guide other global education systems to inform policies and practice. Based on my previous argument in Chapter 2 (section 2.4.3), the boundaries within cultural spaces are not fixed but blurred. The same is true about geographical situations. Although education boundaries need to be contextualised, they can

also relate to other education systems across the globe. For example, the preference for teacher-centred methods is found in countries like the United Kingdom (Alexander, 2001). An example similar to Kenya's history is ex-colonial countries, where post-colonial education is still haunted by the old ways that alienated African values and practices (Guthrie, 2011; Ackers and Hardman, 2012; Tabulawa, 2013). In these countries, there is a need to review pedagogic practice. Possibly, some of these countries can incorporate some Harambee aspects into their practice with the aim of contextualising them to suit their circumstances. For instance, where cultural learning has been overlooked, the incorporation of cultural pedagogies through the inclusion of their local languages and daily life experiences in interaction spaces would be valuable for their students.

9.4 Contributions to methodology

The choice of methodology in this study offered the option of conducting the research through an ethnographic study using a bottom-up approach. The bottom-up approach provided the teachers with a platform to reflect on their practice, as this gave fresh insights into their pedagogical development. The choice of methodology helped me, as a researcher, to focus on the micro-issues, which could also relate and inform the macro-issues.

The study illuminated teachers' professional identity through their reflections. As teachers reflected on their practice (Claxton, 1999; Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 2009), they made sense of their roles in their classroom as well as in the education system and society. This study appeared to be a platform for teachers' voices to be heard with respect to dialogic pedagogies. The application of a mixed methods ethnographic approach gave the teachers the opportunity to socially construct their experiences and their practice. From teachers' perspectives, the social attitudes towards the profession have changed over time, which worried the teachers that they were not respected or valued as they had been in the past. As a result, there is a need to engage them in pedagogical spaces so that they feel valued and supported by both society and the education system. All the teachers interviewed were professionally trained in college, as it is the case for most Kenyan teachers. The majority chose teaching as their career path and had diverse experiences of working in settings across the country. However, their choices of career seemed marred by various challenges, including society's perceptions.

For Kenya and other ex-colonies to move away from colonial practices and be able to meet the immediate needs of their students and teachers, there is a need for more education research through the use of a mix of methods with an ethnographic framework. In this study,

I was able to draw on the perspectives of teachers via a bottom-up approach in which daily contexts, practices and experiences are listened to and valued. The choice of methodology for this study provided unique data that perhaps have been overlooked by most studies such as the reality of African (Kenyan) children and their social cultural involvements in the community, the use of Kenyan languages in education and how dialogic pedagogies could be applied in Kenyan schools such as Baraka. Through this study, I have reconceptualised a Harambee approach that resonates with the context. The call by Tabulawa (2013) to contextualise pedagogical reforms in Africa can only be achieved through ethnographic studies, where people at all levels are involved, including parents, teachers and students.

My use of the bottom-up approach in my research on the Kenyan context reminds other researchers of the importance of giving participants a platform to air their concerns. Past studies have used a top-down approach, which has hampered the success of their research recommendations (Tabulawa, 2013). However, in this study the participants were actively engaged and they kept in contact with me informally, providing me with updates on their context and practice. They also showed a willingness to change practice. Corrado (2019) has argued that the use of the ethnocentric approach in conducting dialogue with participants is vital so that they feel valued. In this study, I could communicate in local languages, discussing issues informally in a culturally acceptable manner, and was open to listening to the participants. I practised reflexivity throughout the collection and analysis of data to overcome any personal bias.

The choice of a mixture of methods on an ethnographic framework illuminated the reality and complexity of the context. It helped to challenge the predominant preconceived bias of the majority of researchers, who project Kenya and various African settings as poor and disorganised, with little progress. The data collected through interviews, photographs and recorded field notes show the reality. It is evident that although Kenya is not perfect, there are progressive steps in policy and practice and, at the same time, the children are taken care of. Still, there are various gaps that need to be addressed, as there are everywhere in the world.

9.5 Contributions to theory

The study has contributed to theory first by providing a cultural outlook on dialogic pedagogies. At the same time, the study has illuminated the need to embrace African values and experiences in education theory, research and practice for balanced inclusion and also

for education to relate to African students. As a result, the study has provided insights into Kenyan childhoods and their cultural values and experiences, which is starting to challenge the globally dominant negative views in relation to these childhoods (Corrado and Robertson, 2019; Corrado, 2019).

The use of dialogic pedagogies is critical to better learning (Alexander, 2008; Mercer, 2008), which some teachers in Baraka agreed with. However, in the Kenyan context, there is a need to foster appropriate mindsets and environment for it to flourish. However, there is a chance for further exchanges with teachers to fully define the kind of dialogue that they prefer. To do so successfully would allow additional interaction in pedagogical spaces, for instance through dialogue in interaction space on these mindsets to find a progressive way forward. In these spaces, teachers could reflect and describe what is important to their practice, and maybe they can unlearn (Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 2009; McWilliam, 2008) practices that hinder pedagogical development, at the same time being inclusive of other key players who need to be involved in these developments.

Similarly, the exclusion of cultural and socioeconomic relevance in African education is disadvantageous to students' learning (Ibbott, 2014; Njoya, 2017) and hinders students' activity in local and global spheres (Corrado, 2019). However, if Kenyan children engage actively in their learning and the educational content is relevant to their cultural values and daily experiences, they will be equipped with social and cognitive skills for participation in their world. If they use dialogic learning, they will gain further confidence to participate actively. Additionally, they can start addressing issues as they project their authenticity and creativity. The incorporation of cultural tools, for example the use of local languages in their learning, could be significant in addressing the inequality in the system, where students from lower social backgrounds are disadvantaged in classroom participation. When schools allow the use of local languages in classroom learning, it will elevate students' learning (UNESCO, 2015), since they will find the learning relevant to them and their cultural background.

Furthermore, in terms of cultural inclusion through the inclusion of languages in education, as emphasised by Thiong'o (1986, cited by Ngugi, 2018), this study highlights that in local and global studies there is a need to value bilingualism and multilingualism, since most students across the globe use multiple languages yet some are not included in the learning space, despite their benefits (UNESCO, 2015). Indeed, it is apparent even in dialogic pedagogy studies by Alexander (2008) and Mercer (2008) that diverse cultural aspects such

as language have not been considered. I argue that in order to promote the participation of all students, education should be relevant to their daily lives (Kassam, 1995; Ibbott, 2014; Njoya, 2017) and should include their cultural tools, such as language. This development would also help to contextualise practice, as advocated by Tabulawa (2013).

In physical space, the provision of FPE and affordable secondary education access is a positive government initiative that has impacted on Kenyan students' position (UNCRC, 1989; Republic of Kenya 2008; Wanjohi, 2011; Wainaina, Arnot and Chege, 2011). The government has also tried to provide learning resources and upgrade infrastructures to support superior learning. A good example is seen in Baraka School, where the government has helped with the refurbishment of classrooms. The government has also aimed to provide learning resources such as books, and to equip all primary schools with electricity and laptops. Even so, there have been some challenges, such as the inequality in resource distribution and corruption issues in society, which have all affected the education system. For example, Tooley and Dixon (2005) claim that FPE has led to increasing numbers of private schools, as wealthy parents preferred to send their children to better-equipped schools since government schools had higher enrolment, leading to inadequate resources. This issue was apparent during my discussions with the teachers at Baraka School. Nonetheless, there are visible efforts by the government to meet most students' needs in terms of the physical, policy and interaction spaces.

This study looked at African (Kenyan) children as learners with the potential to learn actively when they use the opportunities within their reach. For example, African children can draw on their social-cultural experiences and use cultural tools such as their local languages while engaging in learning in their classroom. The study responded to the call by James et al. (2002) to investigate childhoods using ethnographic approaches, moving away from pre-constructed ideas of what childhood is. Previous research on education studies and on African childhoods have had preconceived negative views, such as that childhoods in deprived conditions have minimal potential to be active or creative, while other studies have totally overlooked African children (Cohen, 1994; Harber, 2002, 2014). However, this study aims to understand African childhoods from a more balanced viewpoint. From my participant observations, it is evident that students have rich experiences in the community and in schools. They also have cultural know-how, such as local languages. Most studies seem to focus on the negatives, but this study goes further to provide photos as supporting

evidence of these rich experiences of students, which should be included in childhood theories and studies for a balanced perspective, as James et al. (2002) advocate.

This research explores dialogic pedagogies in the African context, which no other study has yet looked at. Thus, the findings and recommendations could be useful in similar African contexts. The study provides fresh perspectives on their classroom practices. The teachers at Baraka School provided insights into how pedagogical spaces can be used effectively to frame pedagogical development in Kenya, which is relevant to other contexts. Furthermore, my study brings cultural elements into dialogic pedagogies, which Alexander (2008) and Mercer (2008) have not looked at, despite their work being situated in multicultural societies such as the United Kingdom and other European countries. The lessons from my findings could be applicable to contexts across the globe.

From the study, it is evident that pedagogical training is essential during initial teacher training and in-service training. In discussion with teachers at Baraka School, they showed a keen interest in being trained on dialogical practice, which, they argued, could help their students to engage more. Moreover, it was apparent that teachers in rural schools want to be involved in the development of pedagogies to address specific needs in their context. This would help teachers in rural areas to feel valued, too, as they contribute to the progress of their pedagogical practice. Additionally, teachers could use their involvement on these platforms to reflect on their practice and to inform researchers about issues that may have been overlooked.

Previous research, while looking at Kenya and other post-colonial countries in Africa, has explored these contexts from a top-down approach. This small-scale study, however, used a bottom-up approach by engaging Kenyan students' experiences and teachers' perspectives. In addition, while looking at the Kenyan context, I took a post-colonial stance by reconceptualising a Harambee approach with the aim of demonstrating how teaching and learning practices can move away from colonial mindsets and practices. I argue that the Harambee approach can help to develop effective pedagogies. Tabulawa (2013) maintains that pedagogical development can advance only when people in the context are included in the development. The Harambee pedagogical approach addresses the issue of contextualisation and bases its theory on Nyerere's advocacy for an education that relates to the people (Kassam, 1995; Ibbott, 2014).

Finally, this research will help international researchers and educators to reflect on their work through publications that have originated from this study such as Corrado and Robertson (2019) and Corrado (2019). They can move towards a balanced approach to representing global education, taking into account diverse social-cultural aspects, for example by including African voices. Perhaps global researchers can start to engage with the African context from a positive and constructive standpoint, a trajectory that this study has started.

9.6 Future research

This study provided insights into areas where future research needs to be considered. For instance, due to the nature of the research timeline, I spent only five weeks in the area. Even though I was able to conduct an informative study, I would advocate that future research engages longer in the field. Extended timelines are essential to disseminate findings and conduct further consultation on the recommended Harambee approach.

It is important to note that in my study I have variously referred to my participants as Kenyan teachers, even though I engaged closely with only five male teachers. I had given all teachers at Baraka School the opportunity to participate, but only male teachers responded, perhaps since they were younger than their female colleagues. I had wanted to hear an array of Kenyan teachers' voices, but missed the women's and older teachers' voices. It may be because the headteacher was male, and male participants responded better to him. In future studies, it would be valuable to include teachers of both genders at various types of school (rural, marginalised, city, public and private schools) in diverse parts of the country. It would be interesting to focus on schools with female headteachers. Including a larger sample population, for example people from diverse communities and regions, would help to meet specific needs that go unattended when Kenyan education issues are addressed as a whole. As emphasised in this study, contextualisation is vital to the success of any planned development in African education (Tabulawa, 2013), and it is also an efficient means of eradicating inequality. Therefore, future studies should not only address geographical spaces but social-cultural and economic disparities. Additionally, all key players in Kenyan education should be involved, such as students, policy-makers, parents and government officials.

Although in this study I chose to use four pedagogical spaces, it is apparent from my data that there may be other influential areas that could be used to explore the application of

dialogic pedagogies, such as gender, economy, and multilingualism. Although these key areas have been discussed in my four pedagogical spaces, possibly in future studies I may use these as key spaces to explore dialogic practice.

My conclusion is that most of the gaps in Kenyan education practice can be addressed through application of the Harambee approach. However, the approach recommendations need to be discussed with the key players in Kenyan education, which will necessitate further exploration in future research. Moreover, when the Harambee approach is streamlined and implemented, its progress needs to be monitored and reviewed over time. Then, its success could be shared with other contexts, for information. All these stages require further research and consultation. The strength of this research as a small-scale study was the ability to engage with teachers in rural schools whose voices are sometimes overlooked, even though they have great expertise concerning their specific context. Thus, these insights from teachers could help to inform the development of pedagogies in their local school and help inform a wider context when the findings are disseminated.

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APPENDIX I: Information sheet

PhD RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET

RESEACHER'S NAME: **Evelyn W Corrado**. Email: E.Corrado@mdx.ac.uk Tel (+44)07799831622.

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STUDY: EXPLORING PEDAGOGIES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING: IS THERE A SPACE FOR DIALOGIC PEDAGOGIES IN KENYAN CLASSROOMS?

INTRODUCTION:

In Kenya, the government and education bodies have been calling for a dynamic change in education approaches to enhance learning that is student-centred and globally competitive (Ackers and Hardman, 2012; Uwezo, 2010). This study is conducted with the proposition that significant change in education can only be realised through focusing on teaching and learning pedagogies which are in harmony with the current global environment which has advanced at a great rate. While most countries have made efforts to incorporate contemporary pedagogies (Manolli and Staarman, 2011; Alexander, 2010), perhaps less has been done Kenya. This study will give teachers a platform to reflect on their practice and to voice areas that need development.

KEY OBJECTIVES:

- A) To investigate the teaching and learning pedagogies in one case study in a primary school in Kenya.
- B) To explore the kind of pedagogies Kenyan teachers want to develop in their practice.
- C) To explore how students can be actively involved in their learning in the Kenyan primary schools.

D) To ascertain factors that contribute to, or may impede incorporation of dialogic pedagogies into Kenya primary schools.

E) To identify practices Kenyan education systems can learn from this study.

PROCEDURE

Observations and interviews with teachers in Kenya.

1) Non-Participant observations- I will first conduct classroom observations while taking field notes, highlighting the teachers' methods of teaching and their engagement with the students. I will use fieldnotes, short video clips (5 mins) to collect my data in both contexts and a few photos of Kenyan schools will be taken.

2) Semi-structured interviews with observed teacher which will be audio recorded. The teachers will be able to reflect on their teaching and further give thoughts on how to adopt the pedagogies and also identify factors that may impede or even favour the incorporation.

Focus groups in Kenya

3) I will conduct a focus group in a Kenyan school will be audio recorded. The focus group will have about 5-8 teachers. The teachers will voice their pedagogy practices and explore how to implement dialogic pedagogies in Kenya primary schools. They will give thoughts on factors that may impede or even favour the incorporation.

ETHICS INFORMATION

- The headteacher will sign informal consent first, to allow the study to take place in the school. Four teachers in a Kenyan school will be observed and interviewed within a month and a focus groups with teachers will be conducted.

- After reading and understanding this information sheet, informal consent will be given to all teacher participants to sign, which they will agree to participate in the study.

- In the classrooms observed in both contexts, all students will be asked if they want the researcher to observe their class and their teacher as a responsible adult will sign an informal consent. There will a 5 minutes video record of classroom interaction between students and teachers.

- Where necessary, parents of the students participating (in the classes observed) will sign informal consents prior the study to allow their children to participate. For any students unwilling to participate, they will be allocated to other classrooms.
- Briefing at the start of each session will be done and debriefing at the end.
- Participation is voluntary with no incentives and the participants have freedom to withdraw at any time.
- The information recorded will be securely kept and will only be accessible to the researcher.
- The names of participants will remain anonymous; they will be using pseudonyms. No personal information will be recorded.
- Confidentiality will be maintained at all times, as any information obtained can only be shared with the project supervisors and data collected will only be used for this study. Video recorded clips and photos will not be shared online.
- Participating in the study will cause no harm to the individuals taking part. The study will be conducted within the school premises.
- For any queries and complaints from the teacher participants, student participants or their parents, they should raise them with the researcher. If not satisfied, they can further raise their concerns with the headteachers or the project supervisor named above.
- Audio recording of semi-structured interviews with the teachers observed will be conducted (45 minutes each).
- There will be dialogues on methods of teaching and learning practiced and how to adopt dialogic pedagogies, both in the interviews and in the focus group.
- Two copies of consent forms will be signed by teachers and by students' parents (if necessary); One will be returned to the researcher for safe keeping and the other copy will remain with the teachers or with students and parents, alongside with this information sheet.

Thank you for your participation.

Yours kindly: Evelyn W. Corrado, E.Corrado@mdx.ac.uk,

PhD Candidate, Middlesex University, London, UK.

APPENDIX II: Teacher consent

PhD RESEARCH CONSENT FORMS

RESEACHER'S NAME: **Evelyn W Corrado**. Email: E.Corrado@mdx.ac.uk Tel (+44)07799831622

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STUDY: EXPLORING PEDAGOGIES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING: IS THERE A SPACE FOR DIALOGIC PEDAGOGIES IN KENYAN CLASSROOMS?

OBJECTIVES:

- A) To investigate the teaching and learning pedagogies in one case study in a primary school in Kenya.
- B) To explore the kind of pedagogies Kenyan teachers, want to develop in their practice.
- C) To explore how students can be actively involved in their learning in the Kenyan primary schools.
- D) To ascertain factors that contributes to and may impede incorporation of dialogic pedagogies into the Kenya primary schools.
- E) To identify practices Kenya education systems can learn from the study.

PARTICIPANT INFORMATION:

I have read the **information sheets** which clearly explain the aims and objectives of the study and the procedures to be taken. I have also been informed the following;

- The headteacher will sign an **informal consent** to allow the study to take place in the school.
- After reading and understanding the information sheet, this informal consent will be given to me as a participant to sign, to show that agree to participate in the study.

- In the classrooms observed, all students will be asked verbally if they want the researcher to observe their class engagement and their teacher (responsible adult) will sign an informal consent form prior to observations. The parents of the students participating can sign the informal consents forms. For the students unwilling to participate, they will be allocated to other classrooms.

-Audio recorded semi-structured interviews (45 minutes each) will be conducted with the observed teachers.

-**Briefing** at the start of each session will be carried out by the researcher and **debriefing** at the end of the sessions.

-Participation is voluntary with **no incentives** and the participants have **freedom to withdraw** at any time.

-The information recorded in this data collection will be **securely kept**, only accessible by the researcher.

-Participants names will remain **anonymous**, using pseudonyms throughout the study. No personal information will be recorded during this study.

-**Confidentiality** will be maintained at all times as any information collected can only be shared with the project supervisors.

-Participating in the study will cause **no harm** to individuals taking part. The study will be carried out within the school compound, in safe classrooms.

-Any **queries** from the teachers, or students' participants, or their parents should be raised to the researcher. If one is dissatisfied, they can further raise them with the headteacher, or with the project supervisor named above.

-Two copies of consent forms will be signed by the teachers participating or by the students' parents where necessary. One copy will be handed back to the researcher for record keeping and the other will remain with the participants alongside with the information sheet.

-Participating teachers in class observation and interviews will assist the researcher in obtaining their students and parental consents if needed.

I hereby agree to participate in the above research study.

Name: Role: SIGN:

Class: Number of students:

School:

Country: Date:

Researcher: Evelyn W Corrado SIGN : Date:

APPENDIX IV: Interview & focus group questions

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Some of the semi-structured interview questions asked are as follow;

1. Describe your own educational journey and how you came to be qualified as a teacher. (You might also want to probe (if necessary) to get length of experience and more specific details about qualifications.)
2. What do you think are the strengths of Kenyan Primary education?
3. What do you think are the areas (short and long term) that require improvement in Kenyan classroom teaching and learning?
4. How might this be achieved? (e.g. schools, teachers, parents, governors, training colleges).
5. Describe what kind of teacher you are.
6. What do you find challenging in your teaching?
7. What would you like to improve about your teaching and how might you do this?
8. Tell me about your interactions with pupils in your lessons.
9. What do you think about the role of talk in learning?
10. How do students engage in your classroom?
11. How do you think students engage in their learning in the school? How are they empowered to do this?

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

Some of the key topic aspects explored are as follows:

1. What do you think are the strengths of Kenyan Primary education?
2. What do you think are the areas (short and long term) that require improvement in Kenyan classroom teaching and learning?
3. How might this be achieved? (e.g. schools, teachers, parents, governors, training colleges)
4. What do you find challenging in your teaching?
5. What would you like to improve about your teaching and how might you do this?
6. Tell me about your interactions with pupils in your lessons.
7. What methods of teaching are used in your school and why?
8. Is there space for dialogue in Kenyan primary schools? Is it practical and why?
9. What can help support dialogue in the classroom?
10. What could hinder the use of active dialogue in Kenyan classrooms?
11. What training on classroom engagement /pedagogy did you undertake? Which is pedagogies are actively used in classrooms and why?
12. Can dialogic pedagogies be applicable in Kenya and how should this be addressed?

APPENDIX V: Participant observations form samples

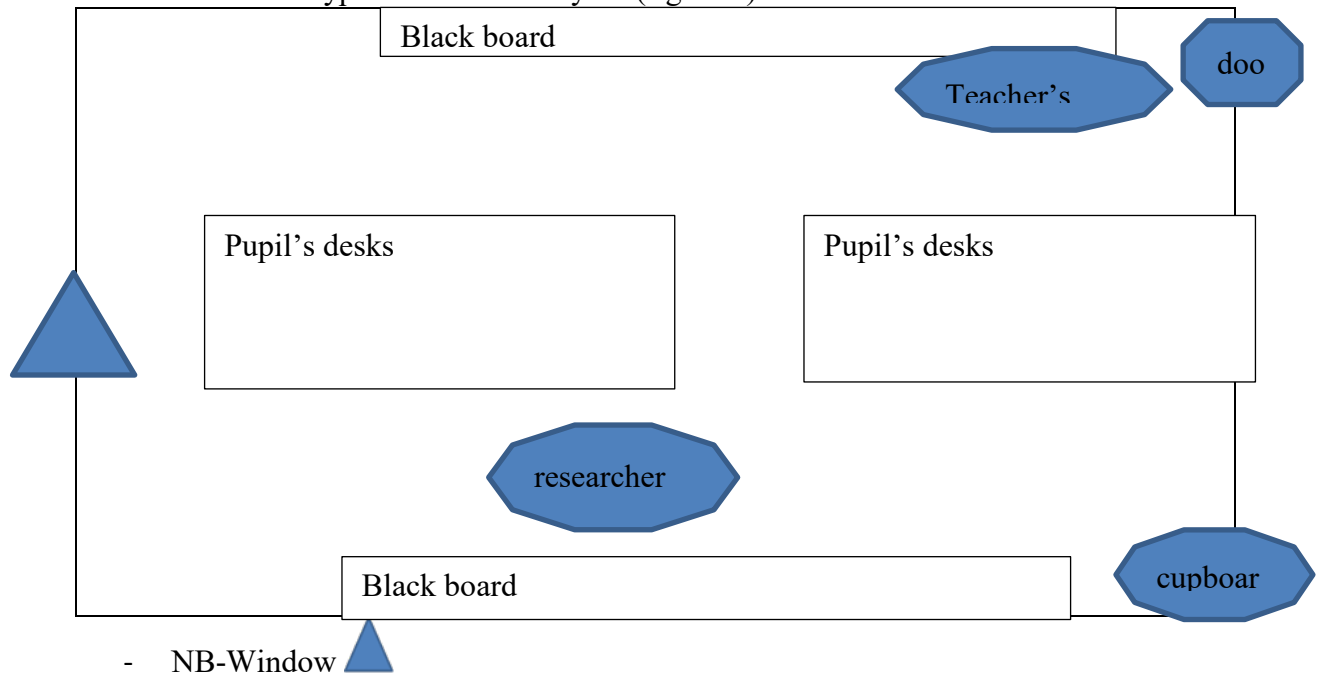
Observation Sample A.

6 MAY 2016 - PARTICIPANT OBSERVATIONS (@1400HRS)

Actions

- This week students are engaging in doing exams and teachers are supervising the exercise.
- The headteacher welcomed me into the school and informed me that all students were doing their final exams in their classes. He signed the consent form to allow me formally to go into the classes and also to engage with the teacher participants in the school (Baraka Primary).
- He then took me to the class I was to observe.

Below is a typical classroom layout (figure 1)



- NB-Window

Observing Class Exams... students 16.

The teacher sat at the front of the class as he supervises the exams. I was asked to seat at the back of the class where I observed from. The students had commenced doing the exams when I joined their class. 2- 3 students shared a desk and they all sat facing the front.

-A few movements were heard and I thought' hope they are not try to cheat?' Some other curious students keep looking at me at the back of the class.

-The teacher supervising the exam is busy marking some papers which I presume is past exams, while the students precede with their exams.

-The teacher is observed referencing from his mobile phone.

-@1450hrs- the teacher announces to the students that they have only 30 minutes remaining to end of the exams. They just continue with their individual work- tackling the exams.

-I had the opportunity to give the teacher the consent form for him to sign.

- At 1510hrs the students are alerted that they were remaining 12minutes. Most pupils appear relaxed like they had finished the exams, but they are sitting quietly in their seats. After five minutes, the teacher walked around the classroom checking if the pupils have written their names correctly on the answer sheets and on the question paper. Students respond positively to any promptings.

-When time was up, the teacher went around the class collecting answer papers and then later exam papers while students sat quietly.

Atmosphere

-It had been raining for the last 24 hours which makes the road to the school hard to access. Most of the teachers commute to school as well as the students. The school is very quiet when I arrived at 1400hours.

-The class I first observed which is a typical class is stone walls, roofed in iron sheets and cemented floors with a few rough patched. The floor is dusty, and the building seems not well kempt. There is electricity available, glass windows with a few broken panes. The class has two backboards which the teachers use one at the front wall, the second at the back wall (*layout like figure 1*). At the back of the class there are a few jerry cans of water for the students to use.

-Outside the class appears bright but a bit windy. The school compound is very quiet. The surroundings of the school are farms and trees like bananas, cypress and eucalyptus a I saw them through the class windows.

@1450- I think some classes appear to have completed exams early with noises being heard from the outside.

Reflections

-While chatting with the headteacher about the school performance, he was worried the effect of the community politics. *'The neighbours prefer bigger established schools, to avoid lots of financial support to the school'* he said.

-Head teacher felt that parents should support their kids(pupils) more and they should feel more positive.

-I feel more supported in my participant observations and the teachers seem to respond positively.

-The classes are conducive for learning, however upgrading the infrastructure can help ie floors, wall refurbishing, better desks and use of electricity.

-Teachers use English or Kiswahili while addressing the pupils.

-Three teachers who were in the staffroom signed the consent forms.

-I also planned the timetable for observations:-

1. Tuesdays' – English and Kiswahili observations.

2. Thursdays' - Mathematics and Science observations.

-I had time for debriefing the week.

All teachers went home except for the headteacher and the students who remained in their classes. I also left soon after the teachers.

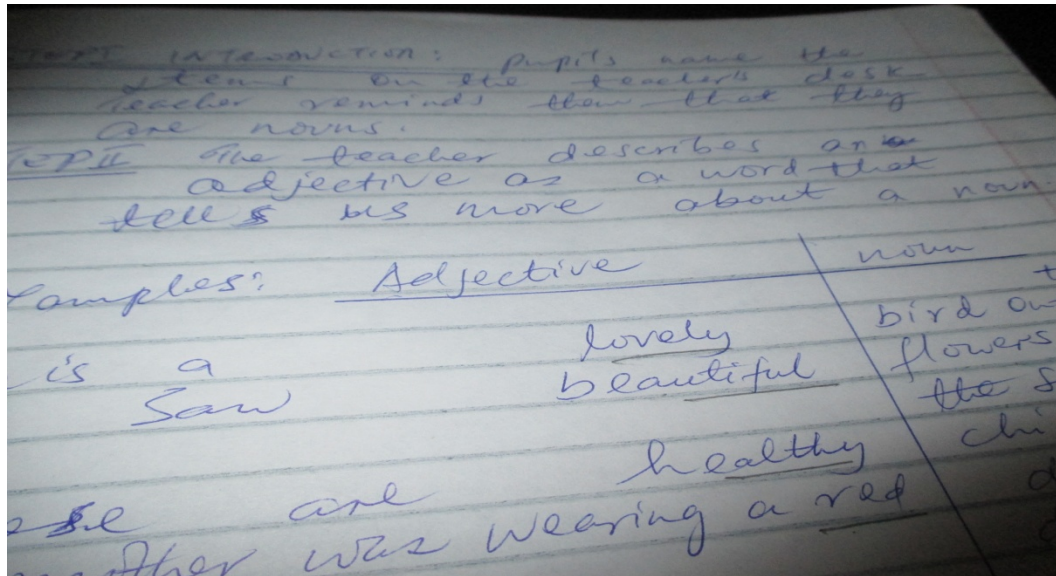
PARTICIPANT Observation Sample B (colour coded).

24TH MAY 2016 CLASS 6 ENGLISH DOUBLE LESSONS (80MINUTES)

TEACHER- KURIA NUMBER OF STUDENTS-18

ACTIONS

-0950HRS is when the lesson commenced. The teacher and students welcomed me into their classroom. Then the teacher gave me the lesson plan (Photo 1 below) and started teaching.



(Photo 1)

'Good morning , you are welcome' The students said. In English AID textbook, open page 42' the teacher directed. Then the students start to get their book from their bags.

-Kuria asks them to find nouns in the sentences, he goes on to define adjectives and writes on the black board, the students answers. his questions;

Examples;

Teacher- adjectives are placed before the nouns and tells us about the nouns ie colour, height, character.

-I am using a blue pen.

-The teacher has a long neck.

-Kuria asks the students to identify adjectives in the sentences written on the board and he underlines the adjectives when they spot them correctly. For the students to identify the adjectives they raise their hands and read out the words.

-He then, asks them to go page 42 of their textbook and complete the exercise. They commence on the task. He also writes additional questions on the black board.

-' If you raise your hand I will come check your work' Kuria tells the students as he goes round the classroom marking their work and giving feedback.

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Atmosphere

-It was cold outside.

-The class was dark and they had electricity but did not put the lights on.

- Students were enthusiastic to answer questions. They had only 5 text books to share which were not enough as four students shared each book.

Reflections

-The teacher appears to have a polite quiet demeanour. He is very enthusiastic in his teaching.

-Students appear to engage appropriately and attentively.

- There were very few text books to share among the students , the teacher had to give his book to the students. The double lesson was helpful for completing a lot of teaching on adjectives.

-The class targets were written on the blackboard at the back of the class. The target for overall students were between 300-200 marks out of 500.

-I felt the students were more active to impress me as their visitor as they kept looking at me as they raised their hand to answer questions (Photo below L).



APPENDIX VI: Interviews & focus group transcript samples

Evelyn Corrado: Focus Group Transcript

Participants; M- Mike, G- Gathenya, P- Pius, K- Kuria, KM- Kim, R- Researcher

Handed five pictures of different classroom settings in different part of the world as an ice breaker and gave participants time to go through them.

R-So, thank you and welcome to this focus group, I feel privileged to have this opportunity to discuss with you, it has been very nice to be with you in the school , I have interviewed you individually and now I feel it is a chance to discuss more, so some questions might be the same one we discussed but I believe that after the discussion you might have hard time to think, reflect and you can add more information on, or to each other. Okay, so feel free to discuss whatever you feel free to discuss here.

So, ehh with the pictures I have given you what comes in your mind, or what do you think?

Which methods do you use and which can be applicable?

M- I think us as teachers we tend to forget the most appropriate methods to trail the point home, but we normally take the easiest, the shortest that will normally help finish the syllabus quickly. And most of us use teacher-centred method which are actually not usually good. Described as teacher-centred methods, well, well, like this one of pupils raising their hands, I think this is the method we normally use but we never use this collaborative learning or involving pupils learning or in teaching, so we don't. Normally teachers stand there, asks questions, pupils answer, if they do not answer we forget about it and we move on. That is the kind of teaching that is normally done in our primary schools.

R- Any other experiences?

K- Sometimes we use teaching aids, where the lesson requires especially in sciences, you may give them materials and then you lead them to draw conclusions, and then you record. But some subjects you may not get real teaching aids, and then you end up lecturing. Yeah like English. Yeah languages not all of them, we are not able to get teaching aid for all of them. But we try to.

M- but I think as he puts it, science subjects are experimental, they use a lot of teaching aids. But with languages, actually science demands that you use teaching aid but those others but for languages (giggles), use short cuts, very few.

R- What do you say on this side (pointing at teachers on the right side-trying to engage all).

P- What we do, in science subjects we use improvised materials, we may not have all the materials we try to use locally available materials. We are trying to make it work with what we have.

R- Okay, okay.

G- most of the time, I believe we go for the question and answer method, and sometimes you make yourself lecturing because you want to fight with time to complete the syllabus, but when you look at these pictures, the groupwork and having the materials is the very best methods. If they can be applied, the lesson will be interesting. And also there is the set-up of the class, the way the chairs have been set, the pupils are very close to the teacher. And you can see they are seriously listening to see what the teacher is telling them. So they are the very best methods.

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A. Evelyn Corrado: Transcript for Interview 3

R- researcher Interviewer- Pius: P

.....

P- so the children are fluent in English and they can do a lot even from the lower classes. Even class one and two you can explain something in English and they can understand. But when I joined here, it is a big challenge.

R-yeah

P- because of most of them are still using mother tongue so when they come to school, English become like a foreign language to them.

R- yeah, that is your experience and you are trying to transition

P- the transition from private to public is a challenge.

R- and so you think there is a way you can use your experience, promote you like the use of languages

P- yeah, but that one I think it can be if we do it as a team. The whole school, because I understand some public school do it, but in urban areas like in towns. The children there are used to parents using English in their houses , so they get used to that.

R-okay

P- but if you come to the rural areas like here the parents are not learned enough to use it. So the children do not see the need of using it.

R- okay,

P- you try to force it in public to use it, but they see like you are bothering them. They don't want to do it.

R- so, what do you think are the strengths of wholesome Kenyan primary education, now that you have gone to different schools?

P-mmh, one thing it is not a very bad system because most of them when they are joining the school they know nothing. They have the languages where they are able to express themselves in English being a national language so they use it, an international language sorry they are able to express themselves by the time they are in class 8, class 7 there they are able to do it fluently. Then, they also do it in Kiswahili, that is another language and it is a good one, because it spreading to other African countries.

R- okay

P- so they can be able to express themselves in Kiswahili. Again they are able to get to media houses, where some of them become journalist and so on and so on. So it is good one, so we also have mathematics, I see them doing good work in mathematics, you cannot handle money measures without it, even those people who do skilled labour like mechanics , they have to use mathematics somewhere

R- Everyone handles maths..

P-and so they are well prepared and I would say it is good thing

R- okay

P- Likewise in science they also do it, then we have social studies and CRE (Christian religious education). So in social studies they learn about the environment, and about the history. So the history of Kenya and the physical features- it is like geography. They do geographical things, so when they go to high school they separate it.

R- okay

P- in primary school they call it social studies in high school it is geography and history, they separate.

R- okay and what do you think are the areas that require improvement in Kenyan education?

P- for me, first thing I would think it is the use of English in all areas, because now that the world is becoming like a global village, the access of computers and all that, we need to embrace this language- the English. Like now the government is bringing laptops to class one,

R-yes,

P- they have already started but in towns and cities. So if they bring them here today, these children do not know, because the laptop will come with the language. So they will not be able to use them

R- that's a shock

P- so I would wish that they would embrace the use of English in all areas including the rural areas, it would be better. So that they will be able to communicate and to interact with all the others.

R- so how do you think that can be improved, like here in this school?

P- mmh like here, with the headteacher being the head of the school, he should be the first one to do it. One thing, we try to make the student understand it is not a punishment using it, because that is the biggest challenge. They think that it is a punishment when you tell them to use it, when they are made to understand that it is not a punishment, then I guess, they can try it. No matter how many mistakes they make, they can use the broken one at the beginning.

APPENDIX VII: Coding table

MAIN CODES

1	Welcome/introductions	10	Atmosphere: weather, interactions, mood	19	Cultural and social issues
2	Infrastructures(roads/buildings)	11	Resources-books, materials, pens, teachers	20	Government involvement/investment
3	Classes; structure, furniture, etc	12	Teaching methods/skills/training/dialogue	21	Parental involvement
4	Finances	13	Lessons plans/notes/guides	22	Students attitudes/Esteem/support
5	Languages (Kiswahili/ English/ mother tongue)	14	Teachers' marking/supervision/feedback	23	Children's rights; FPE, FGM, corporal punishment,
6	Subjects	15	Transport	24	Top-down structures
7	Attitudes (positive-relaxed, humble, polite)	16	Communication	25	Curriculum & syllabus
8	Response to instructions	17	Teachers' motivation/support/reflections/ perspectives		
9	Engagements: students & teachers	18	My reflections		

APPENDIX VIII: Focus group icebreaker photos

FOCUS GROUP ICEBREAKER PHOTOS: DIVERSE CLASSROOM SET-UP

CHINA



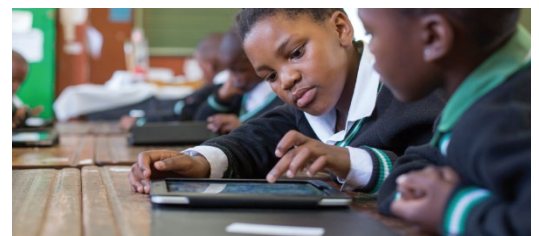
UK



ETHIOPIA



FINLAND



INDIVIDUAL & GROUPWORK LEARNING SET-UP

DIGITAL CLASSROOM IN SOUTH AFRICA

APPENDIX IX: Map of Kenya



