

A critical realist account of a mentoring  
programme in the Faculty of Pharmacy at  
Rhodes University

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study originates from experiences I had as supervisor of the mentoring programme for first year students in the Faculty of Pharmacy, at Rhodes University. Our mentoring programme is a strategy for first year students – specifically those from previously disadvantaged backgrounds – to succeed at Rhodes University.

Using an ontological meta-theory - critical realism - as my analytical lens, discourse as my unit of analysis, and Invitational Learning Theory as a theoretical tool I developed a model of mentoring based on Bhaskar's transformational model (1993). This model illustrates the relationship between structure, culture and agency. Whilst developing this model I focussed on determining how mentors construct mentoring, and how mentoring facilitates access to a Community of Practice (CoP).

Mentoring involves providing a shared space that is safe, that the mentor and mentee feel comfortable in, and that supports and challenges both the mentor and the mentee. It is a reciprocal, developmental relationship for both the mentor and the mentee that deals with issues that the mentee deems as 'real'. Mentoring is a process, not an outcome.

The mentoring strategies that the mentors employed changed as the mentors mentored. Mentors help mentees by using structures and mechanisms that worked for them, and/or by helping mentees access these structures and mechanisms.

Mentoring facilitates access to a CoP by providing opportunities for engagement. This involves sharing of experiences and knowledge, and promoting discussion. The mentor helps the mentee move from being a peripheral member of the CoP to becoming a main member, i.e., becoming active, learning with and from others within the CoP.

CoPs develop social capital and knowledge management. My research suggests that the knowledge, skills and attitude developed by the mentors within this study may be transferable to other aspects in Pharmacy.

Key words:

Critical realism

Mentoring

Pharmacy

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my family and friends – who helped me believe in myself and encouraged me the whole way.

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Carmen Oltmann  
Grahamstown, South Africa  
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## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **1.1 Introduction**

Mentoring is not a new phenomenon. It can be traced back to Greek mythology – in Homer's *Odyssey*, Mentor was the teacher of Telemachus, the son of Odysseus (Homer, 1969). Mentor was asked to provide an education for Telemachus that covered “every facet of life – physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual, social, and administrative development” (Mullin, 1992, 67). Thus the word “mentor” (as a noun) means “wise and faithful teacher and counselor” (Welch, 1996, 3), and mentoring may include some or all aspects of physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual, social and/or administrative development.

There are many stories of eminent people who benefited from mentoring; e.g. in a letter from the novelist Thomas Wolfe to his mentor Maxwell Perkins, he wrote “you have done what I ceased to believe one person could do for another – you have created liberty and hope for me” (cited by Espinoza-Herold and Gonzalez, 2007).

Mentoring is about helping someone else develop and grow (Daloz, 1999). This may occur in a formal, structured environment, or it may be informal and/or spontaneous (Johnson, Geroy and Griego, 1999). Mentoring always involves a relationship. The person being mentored is usually referred to as the ‘protégé’ or ‘mentee’. The word ‘protégé’ comes from the French verb ‘protéger’ which means ‘to protect’ and is usually associated with mentoring within the workplace, i.e., “a person [is] guided and helped, especially in the furtherance of a career by another, more influential person” (Auster, 1984 as cited by Welch, 1996, 3). I prefer to use the word ‘mentee’ because it seems to be more generic, and applies to any person being mentored, not just in the workplace. The person mentoring the mentee is known as the mentor.

Mentoring can occur in almost any environment e.g. in the workplace, in schools, in communities, in churches, in higher education, or in Continuing Professional Development. The mentoring programme that forms the basis of



the research discussed in this thesis is located within the Faculty of Pharmacy, Rhodes University, South Africa.

The first chapter serves to locate the study within South Africa, specifically within the context of higher education and pharmacy. It begins with a brief discussion of some of the post-Apartheid changes in higher education, a discussion of the concept of disadvantage in South Africa, and the role of mentoring as a possible strategy for access to and success in tertiary education. This leads on to a contextualization of healthcare in South Africa, and locates Pharmacy within healthcare. Finally I position the Faculty of Pharmacy at Rhodes University within this context to illustrate the importance of mentoring as a strategic initiative within pharmacy education.

## **1.2 Changes in Higher Education in South Africa**

Many changes have occurred since South Africa became a democracy in 1994, especially in the education arena. In 1994 the new democratic government committed itself to transforming the apartheid social and economic structures, bringing in a new social order, and transforming higher education. However, it would be naïve to think that the profound effects of colonialism and apartheid could be rectified over-night.

The Council on Higher Education (CHE) published a document in 2004 that highlights some of the changes that have occurred in education. Its aim was to highlight “the relationship of higher education to the reconstruction and transformation agenda in South Africa” (Council on Higher Education, 2004, 2). South Africa still faces critical challenges (post 1994), for example:

- (1) “to achieve social equity, economic growth and development, building and consolidating democracy”, and
- (2) to enable “South Africa to participate in and engage with globalization”.  
(CHE, 2004, 2).

These are significant challenges that require commitment, time and resources. Higher education is seen as having “social and public value” that

can address the challenges of “social equity, development, effectiveness and efficiency” (CHE, 2004, 13, 15). Higher Education has had to transform itself by attempting to become non-racial, non-sexist, democratic, redressing the inequalities of the past, and becoming one united system (CHE, 2004). The Higher Education White Paper (1997) states that equity and redress is a fundamental principle:

The principle of equity requires fair opportunities both to enter higher education programmes and to succeed in them. (It) implies, on the one hand, a critical identification of existing inequalities which are the product of policies, structures and practices based on racial, gender, disability and other forms of discrimination or disadvantage, and on the other hand a programme of transformation with a view to redress. Such transformation involves not only abolishing all existing forms of unjust differentiation, but also measures of empowerment, including financial support to bring about equal opportunity for individuals (Higher Education White Paper, Department of Education, 1997, 18).

Because of the restricted nature of quality education during apartheid, education has always been prized in popular South African discourses as a means of achieving social mobility and success. Policy work since 1994 has therefore focused on identifying and addressing structural factors which impede the individual regardless of how much agency s/he tries to exert. Regardless of how much we may try to make of what we have, the history of South African higher education, evidenced in poor success and throughput rates (Scott *et al.*, 2007) shows that ‘given’ structural inequalities can hinder even the most determined individuals.

In South Africa the term “previously disadvantaged individual (PDI)” is often used when discussing equity and redress. It is defined legally as:

Persons who were previously disadvantaged by unfair discrimination and who, in terms of section 9 (2) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, (Act No. 108 of 1996) may be protected and advanced to

achieve equality and, for the purposes of these regulations, includes the following designated groups:

- (a) men of African, Asian or Coloured descent;
- (b) women, irrespective of descent; and
- (c) disabled persons, irrespective of descent

(Government Gazette, 2003, 5).

Between 1990 and 1994 there was symbolic policy making when the National Party un-banned liberation organisations and started negotiations with the African National Congress (ANC). In 1994 democratic elections were held and the ANC-led coalition obtained the power to implement policy. Between 1994 and 1998 policies and frameworks were developed for later implementation.

In higher education these policies included:

- (1) increasing the number of students – especially previously disadvantaged students – who graduate from tertiary institutions, and
- (2) expecting higher education institutions to engage with society and respond to the social challenges and changes in South Africa (CHE, 2004, 25).

The implementation of these policies precipitated several changes in universities and other higher education institutions (CHE, 2004). For example:

- (1) There were changes in size and shape - some institutions had to merge, and all institutions had to increase their intake, especially of previously disadvantaged students.
- (2) A new funding formula that was linked to national policy goals (including increased numbers of graduates - especially in science and technology) and performance (especially with regards research and teaching outputs) was negotiated and applied.
- (3) The Higher Education Act (No. 101 of 1997) was published and resulted in the formation of the Council on Higher Education (CHE) and its subcommittee - the Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) - which performs quality assurance and promotion roles, and also audits and accredits institutions.
- (4) The South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) was established to “create a single, coordinated higher education system, within the context of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)” (CHE, 2004, 35).

(5) An Outcomes-Based Education approach (OBE) was adopted that aims to produce qualified learners and aims to promote lifelong learning (CHE, 2004, 96). Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) is an important aspect of OBE.

(6) A shift from Mode 1 knowledge production to Mode 2<sup>1</sup>, which is seen to be more relevant to solving “real world” problems, and lends itself to inter and trans- disciplinary research (CHE, 2004, 96) was introduced.

(7) The quality and leadership of institutions was investigated, and recommendations were made with the aim of improving “efficiency, effectiveness and accountability” at all institutions (CHE, 2004, 35).

Rhodes University is still dealing with issues of equity, access and redress. As Boughey notes:

During the apartheid era, the policy of ‘separate development’ not only ensured that the black majority were denied the sort of learning experiences which would prepare them for tertiary study but also that access to well resourced institutions of higher education was largely available only to white students. Election of a democratic government in 1994 has not resolved these problems; divisions in the higher education system created as a result of apartheid have proved hard to eradicate, and the school system continues to fail the majority of students in terms of the quality of learning experiences it makes available to them (Boughey, 2003, 65).

Like all other universities in South Africa, Rhodes University has been encouraged, through the application of the policy levers of quality assurance and funding, to increase not only its total number of students but more importantly the number of previously disadvantaged South African students. However, simply taking in more students without having the necessary systems in place to provide appropriate learning opportunities and facilitate the success of entrants could result in these entrants failing and exiting the

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<sup>1</sup> According to Gibbons *et al.* (1994) mode 1 knowledge production is usually initiated by the investigator and is discipline-based, whilst mode 2 knowledge production is usually problem-focused and lends itself to interdisciplinary cooperation and research.

university. This system of high intake and high failure rates is referred to as the revolving door syndrome (Badat, 2007a) and is socially irresponsible and penalized by the funding formula. There is a need to provide not only opportunities to students but also resources to use them.

### **1.2.1. The issue of disadvantage**

Although the definition of 'previously disadvantaged individual' (PDI) is a legal one, in higher education in South Africa the term is often used to describe a person who comes from a poor socio-economic background and has had poor schooling. The old Bantu Education system during Apartheid left a legacy where schools experienced a lack of resources and infrastructure, teaching was poor (often as a result of poorly qualified teachers), there were high rates of absenteeism, and violence.

Even though Bantu Education has been history since 1994, its legacy remains in the schools. When a learner from such a school enters a tertiary institution (like a university) they often struggle to adapt. Often the language of instruction and assessment is their second or even third additional language. Poor teaching and a lack of resources and opportunities at schools often contribute to gaps or misunderstandings in conceptual knowledge and skills necessary to cope academically. The dominant culture of the institution is often very different to what the student experienced at school, which may contribute to academic and social difficulties. Also, first time entrants, i.e., the first person in the family who attends a tertiary institution, often have unrealistic expectations of themselves and the institution.

In the mid-1980s the support that previously disadvantaged students received at Historically White Institutions (HWIs) and therefore the systems that were in place, tended to be based on helping the student mainly with "study skills" and language issues (Boughey, 2003, 66). The thinking at the time was that some students were not sufficiently prepared and had "deficiencies" that could be addressed by providing opportunities for students to fill these deficiencies –

often by extra lessons or tutorials (*ibid*). These institutions tended to have student support centers or programmes that provided additional, add-on opportunities for students. These programmes were often based on those in the United Kingdom, the USA and Australia, where they were developed to help foreign students. Starfield (1990) pointed out that the adaptability of foreign programmes to the South African context was questionable. The mainstream academics were not involved in the process because the thinking was that the problem lay with the students, who were deficient. Institutions blamed the poor schooling for the problem.

In Historically Black Institutions (HBIs) most students had similar socio-cultural and educational backgrounds, and there was not this stark contrast between the advantaged and the disadvantaged with regard to the deficiencies mentioned previously. Thus teaching and learning strategies at HBIs tended to be focused on the whole student population.

In the late 1980s the thinking changed, and the institutions started getting more involved. It was no longer acceptable to simply blame the disadvantaged student or the poor schooling. Instead, institutions had to question the way they were doing things, and started to examine their curricula, and their teaching and assessment methods (Boughey, 2003). Boughey wrote:

Responsibility for 'disadvantage' was thus shifted from individuals (deemed to carry this burden with them from their socio-cultural backgrounds in 'homeland' or township schools) to the institutions, which were seen to construct that disadvantage through a reliance on curricula, assessment practices and teaching methodologies that had their origins in northern, western, highly developed societies. In this discourse, therefore, the achievement of equity regarding access to higher education was an issue of institutional and systemic transformation rather than individual remediation (Boughey, 2003, 66).

One way of helping previously disadvantaged students cope academically was to run additional tutorials for them. These were usually add-on tutorials, i.e., not part of the mainstream, and the tutors were often senior students. For example, when I was working at the University of Zululand we implemented Supplemental Instruction (SI) tutorials in the Science Faculty in an effort to help students identify their own learning gaps. These tutorials took place outside formal teaching classes, mainly in the evenings. We trained senior students to be tutors to facilitate the tutorials. However, these add-on tutorials were inadequate because students perceived them to be remedial, and they had no direct influence (feedback) on mainstream teaching and learning.

In the 1990s the developments included an understanding of the discourse of disadvantage, i.e., disadvantage was seen in relation to social, economic and political factors, as well as power relations. There was also a realization that it was not a case of simply developing knowledge and skills but more a case of developing a new identity as students entered the university (Boughey, 2003). It was so much more complicated than simply teaching students what they needed to know. Students needed to be given the opportunity to develop the new identity. So, instead of having student support centers where the emphasis was on helping students develop skills, some institutions started developing their own academic staff to address issues involving curricula, teaching and learning, and assessment methods.

The new student has to come to terms with the culture and norms of the institution. This was particularly difficult for previously disadvantaged students at the Historically White Institutions (HWIs), where the norms and culture tended to be based on western norms and culture. Even more importantly, if the goal of transformation of the higher education system is to be achieved, the new student has to be empowered to identify and eventually challenge cultures and norms which impede access to success to all South Africans.

Some institutions recognized that they needed to do more than provide academic support. They recognized the need to help students adjust to their new environment and take on their new identity. One way of doing this was by

mentoring. Kitchin and Frame (1991, 302) defined how mentoring could be useful in tertiary institutions:

... a process whereby the student being mentored is integrated into the university and equipped to realize his/her potential as a successful and productive individual.

Mentoring will be discussed in greater detail in chapter 2.

### **1.3. Healthcare in South Africa**

Pharmacists are healthcare professionals. But what is healthcare? To address this issue one needs to understand health, which is more than just the absence of disease. In 1948 the World Health Organization (WHO) developed a definition that some still ascribe to: “health is a state of complete physical, psychological and social well-being” (World Health Organization, 1966). Since then they added “... and to lead a socially and economically productive life”. But this is typical of the Western approach. The other approaches, e.g., Eastern and African approaches are more about harmony and balance/equilibrium. In South Africa there are examples of approaches that link illness and misfortune, e.g., a claim found on a leaflet from a traditional healer that she can heal ‘one with bad luck’, or can ‘promote better pay’. Whichever approach one adopts there is also a functional aspect to health – a healthy person is better able to be functional in society. There are also numerous variations when it comes to understanding healthcare. For example as: “the prevention, treatment, and management of illness and the preservation of mental and physical well-being through the services offered by the medical and allied health professions” (Online Medical dictionary, 2006). This definition is rather limiting because it implies that these are services that only medical and allied health professionals are able to provide. It does not acknowledge that other people such as the family, the medical aid administrators, the transport operators etc are also involved, nor does it acknowledge the role of the client/patient.



According to Wenger, healthcare literally means caring for others' health:

In a fundamental way, healthcare is about learning. It is learning how to care for the sick. It is learning how to create an infrastructure to make care possible. It is also, more generally, learning how to live in a more healthy manner, as individuals, as communities, as organizations, as societies (Wenger, 1996, 1).

Thus, according to Wenger, healthcare is about sickness and health, and every person has a responsibility for his/her own health, and for the health of others.

### **1.3.1. The evolution of healthcare**

Rene Descartes, who lived from 1596 to 1650, was a prominent thinker who argued that the mind was spiritual and the body physical (van Niekerk and Prins, 2001). Despite this, healing was considered to be linked to the spiritual, and the sick tended to be cared for by religious people (Banyard, 1996).

After the industrial revolution aspects of the natural sciences evolved into the medical sciences, which led to the belief that illness was biochemical in nature, and thus the biomedical model evolved (Bishop, 1994). This forms the basis for the Western approach to medicine, health and illness. Criticism of this biomedical model includes that (1) it emphasizes illness as opposed to health, i.e., fighting/curing illness rather than preventing and promoting health; (2) it is based on reductionism, i.e., diagnosis tends to be based on the analysis of chemical, cellular and biochemical abnormalities and malfunctions; (3) psychological and social factors are not deemed important, and (4) the model ignores behavioural aspects (Banyard, 1996).

The biopsychosocial theory was developed in the 1980s in an attempt to move away from the reductionism of the biomedical approach (van Niekerk and Prins, 2001). Diagnoses are not simply based on the chemical, cellular or

biochemical changes (referred to as the micro level) but also include psychological, social, and cultural issues (referred to as the macro level). The biopsychosocial model moves away from separating body and mind, and the emphasis of health is as important as that of illness.

The biopsychosocial model was criticized for ignoring the spiritual aspects. And thus the biopsychosocial/spiritual model evolved (Winiarski, 1997). This model claims that people are both social and spiritual, and that the spiritual aspects of life are also important.

Thus to be holistic in our approach, healthcare should be based on the biopsychosocial/spiritual model, and should take all aspects into account. Similarly healthcare should not just address issues of illness - it should also promote health.

### **1.3.2. Changes in healthcare in South Africa**

Before 1994 healthcare in South Africa – like education - was divided along racial lines. The healthcare system was fragmented and there were huge inequalities in healthcare resources, access and quality (South African Health Review, 2007). Since South Africa became a democracy, the Department of Health has tried to follow its mandate, as outlined by the South African Constitution, which states that: “everyone has the right to access to:

- (a) healthcare services, including reproductive healthcare;
- (b) sufficient food and water; and
- (c) social security, including, if they are unable to support themselves and their dependants, appropriate social assistance”

(South African Constitution, 1996).

Healthcare in South Africa is still divided but now it is mainly along economic lines - into a public and private healthcare sector. In 2006 less than 20% of South Africa’s population could afford to access the private sector. However, the private sector accounted for about 56% of the total healthcare expenditure

of the country (South African Health Review, 2007). The public sector provides health to the majority of people in South Africa, and has been perceived as “the provider of healthcare to the poor” (Havemann and van der Berg, 2002). One of the main objectives of the Department of Health (DoH) has been to try and shift resources towards the public sector.

Since 1994 the DoH has realized that there also needed to be a distinction between primary medical care, which provides services for chronic and acute illnesses, and Primary Health Care (PHC), which focuses on promoting health, preventing disease, providing culturally sensitive services, and addressing the needs of communities and society at large (Department of Health, 2000). This meant building and staffing PHC clinics all over South Africa, especially in the rural areas in order to improve access to healthcare in the public sector. The move to PHC also outlined the need to focus on disease prevention and health promotion, and to involve individuals and communities, in the public sector. This was a fundamental shift from the status quo for the past 50 years, where healthcare had become more and more specialized, technology driven, based at institutions, which had increased the costs of healthcare. PHC was an attempt to provide generalized care to all South Africans, to use non-technological approaches, and to do this in a more cost-effective manner. This meant that Pharmacy students - and other health care professionals - had to be trained in PHC.

In South Africa, traditional healers and traditional medicines play an enormous part in healthcare. Our previous Minister of Health was quoted as saying:

The important role of traditional medicines in strengthening the capacity of our healthcare systems to effectively respond to the health needs of our people cannot be overemphasized. It is clear that natural medicines have a great potential to contribute significantly to our response to major health conditions affecting our society

(Tshabalala Msimang, 2007).

She affirmed the government's standpoint on traditional medicines further by saying:

.....traditional medicine has sustained the health of our people for hundreds of years and this government will ensure that it is developed and awarded the recognition it deserves (Tshabalala Msimang, 2007).

It is common knowledge that the majority of people in South Africa visit a traditional healer before seeing a doctor. The WHO estimates that about 80% of people in Africa use traditional medicines to meet their needs (South African Health Review, 2007). In South Africa this has led to the Traditional Health Practitioners Act (No. 22 of 2007), which was published for general information in January 2008. This Act provides for the establishment of the Traditional Health Practitioners Council of South Africa, which will assist with the development of Regulations to ensure the regulation of traditional medicines and care services.

Traditional healers, like medical doctors, prescribe and dispense medicines - traditional medicines are also medicines. Many people are taking traditional medicines as well as orthodox medicines, and this is often where problems arise. Orthodox medicines go through rigorous testing, and have to be registered with the Medicines Control Council (MCC) before being marketed and sold. This is in accordance with the Medicines and Related Substances Act (No. 101 of 1965) as amended, and its Regulations. The MCC checks for quality, safety and efficacy and so the person taking the medicine can be relatively confident that the medicine they are taking is indeed of good quality, safe and efficacious.

Traditional medicines – like all complementary and alternative medicines (CAMs) – are not tested for quality, safety or efficacy by the MCC or any other legal body. In 2003 the Department of Health launched a virtual reference centre for traditional medicines (in Cape Town) with the aim of boosting scientific research into the validity of their therapeutic claims. But this reference centre does not regulate or check the traditional medicines for

safety, quality or efficacy. The Traditional Health Practitioners Act (No. 22 of 2007) will provide for a regulatory framework to ensure that this process starts.

The MCC controls the claims that people and companies may make about orthodox medicines, but there is no control for CAMs. As a result there are many examples of spurious claims and advertising of CAMs. There are also many examples of “exploitation by charlatans who sell unproven remedies under the guise of ‘traditional’ practice” (Gray, 2007).

### **1.3.3. Pharmacy and healthcare**

Pharmacy and healthcare are intricately linked: for centuries mankind has used medicines<sup>2</sup> to prevent, treat or manage illness or disease, and to promote health.

For the sake of this thesis I will refer to Turner’s (1987, 2) definitions, where ‘disease’ is the biomedical term used to describe the biological and physiological abnormalities or mal-functions, ‘illness’ is subjective and depends on the individual’s experience and feelings, and ‘sickness’ is the way society designates roles depending on the disorder. For example a child with measles has the measles virus (the disease is caused by the virus), feels ill because of all the symptoms (like fever, rash, conjunctivitis) and society stipulates that they should take on the ‘sick role’, e.g., they should stay at home. This classification is simple and open to discussion. Williams (2005) presents an excellent description of the different perspectives, complexities and debates regarding disease, illness and sickness in his PhD thesis.

There seems to be a rift between the healthcare provided in developed countries and that in developing countries (World Health Organization, 2007).

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<sup>2</sup> Here I use the word ‘medicine’ in its broadest sense, i.e., as any product that prevents, treats, or manages illness or disease, or promotes health. I have not discriminated between orthodox, allopathic, complementary or alternative medicines.

Typically, healthcare in developed countries tends to focus on chronic illnesses such as diabetes mellitus and hypertension, whilst healthcare in the developing world is still dealing with acute diseases such as TB, malaria, and HIV and AIDS. In South Africa healthcare – and Pharmacy – has to deal with an increase in both chronic illnesses and acute disease.

The introduction of Primary Health Care (PHC) in South Africa led to a transformation in systems. Healthcare became a three tier structure consisting of primary, secondary and tertiary healthcare and institutions - where tertiary healthcare and institutions include specialized care and the use of the most advanced technology. The PHC clinics are mostly run by nursing sisters, and most often there is no doctor or pharmacist at the clinic. The Nursing Act (No. 33 of 2005) as amended, entitles registered nursing sisters who are in the employ of either a local authority, an organization rendering a health service, or the DoH to examine, diagnose and prescribe medicines if they have permission from the Director General, the head of the provincial DoH, the health officer at the municipality, or the practitioner in charge of an organisation to do so. In 1996 the Standard Treatment Guidelines (STGs) and Essential Medicines Lists (EML)<sup>3</sup> were published and forced upon prescribers and dispensers in the public sector. Initially this led to an outcry from doctors claiming that it infringed upon their professional autonomy because it limited their treatment decisions. However, the government insisted and doctors and prescribing nursing sisters in the public sector learned to work with the STGs and EML.

The introduction of PHC also affected the referral system, which affected patient autonomy. Patients were instructed to attend PHC clinics for most of their needs, and were only referred to secondary or tertiary hospitals if necessary. This helped the secondary and tertiary institutions enormously because it reduced the number of patients who required PHC and freed up time and resources for those who required it (South African Health Review, 2007).

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<sup>3</sup> Until recently these were called Essential Drug Lists (EDLs)

The advent of PHC in South Africa also affected the practice of Pharmacy in South Africa. In 1995 the South African Pharmacy Council provided opportunities for community pharmacists to train and become registered as Primary Care Drug Therapy (PCDT) pharmacists. These pharmacists were legally permitted to diagnose, prescribe and dispense (Regulations relating to the Practice of Pharmacy, 2000). This was withdrawn in 2003 and now pharmacists in South Africa may only legally prescribe up to S2 medicines<sup>4</sup>. There have been many 'turf battles' over the authority and responsibility for proper medicine use. One view is that pharmacists are an important filter between the prescriber and the patient. Others see pharmacists as 'medicine experts' and thus qualified to prescribe. In my opinion pharmacists should stop trying to fight these battles and should rather join the team of healthcare professionals and work together with them to ensure favourable therapeutic outcomes for the patients. Pharmacists should be involved in the process of initiating, implementing, monitoring, modifying and even stopping pharmacotherapy. It should be about collaboration and using one's professional strengths to achieve desired outcomes.

#### **1.4. Changes in Pharmacy Education in South Africa**

The changes in healthcare discussed in the previous section (and others not mentioned in this chapter) have necessitated changes in the education of all members of the healthcare team. I have chosen three aspects of pharmacy to illustrate how pharmacy and pharmacy education in South Africa have had to change. First I briefly discuss the changing role of pharmacists since this has had a direct impact on Pharmacy education and the graduate produced. Secondly, I highlight the need for pharmacists in South Africa who are culturally competent. Lastly, I briefly describe the regulation of medicine prices in South Africa since this has had a negative impact on community pharmacy, and has reduced the enrollment numbers of South African pharmacy students.

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<sup>4</sup> Referred to as Pharmacist Initiated Therapy (PIT)

### **1.4.1. The changing role of pharmacists**

The World Health Organisation (WHO) and the International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP) acknowledge that pharmacists are important in the healthcare team, and that their role has changed - it is much more than simply supplying medicines. The WHO and FIP (2006) developed the 'seven star' concept, which described the skills and attitudes that pharmacists require in order to be an integral part of the healthcare team. These skills and attitudes are, to be: caregiver, decision-maker, communicator, manager, life-long-learner, teacher, and leader. They have since added 'researcher' to this list, so in essence it has become the 'eight star' concept. Pharmacy educators have to ensure that graduates are 'eight star' graduates and that they are competent to complete an internship - which is followed by one year of community service. Only when the community service year has been completed successfully are they considered to be 'fully qualified'.

Traditionally pharmacists were involved in the manufacturing and supply of medicines. However, nowadays very few pharmacists manufacture medicines – except those in the pharmaceutical industry. Certainly most pharmacists are still involved in the supply of medicines – either directly to the patient/client, or to pharmacies. Pharmaceutical Supply Management (PSM) has become a specialized field in pharmacy, and is an important component of the undergraduate curriculum. It is also recognized that the distribution of medicines is a fundamental pharmaceutical care service.

The pharmacy profession has evolved from being predominantly product or service oriented to adopting Pharmaceutical Care as our main paradigm:

Pharmaceutical Care (PC) is the responsible provision of pharmacotherapy for the purpose of achieving definite outcomes that improve or maintain a patient's quality of life. It is a collaborative process that aims to prevent or identify and solve medicinal product and health related problems (International Pharmaceutical Federation (FIP), 1998, 2)



Pharmaceutical Care (PC) thus implies caring 'about' and 'for' clients/patients and involves commitment, concern and responsibility for outcomes. Although there is much published research about the clinical, economic and humanistic viability of pharmaceutical care (Berenguer *et al.*, 2004), not all pharmacists in South Africa practice it. The challenge to Pharmacy Education is to graduate sufficient competent pharmacists who will practice according to the Pharmaceutical Care paradigm and to get those who are not familiar with it up to speed.

#### **1.4.2. Cultural diversity**

South Africa is a diverse country with eleven official languages, and many different cultures. Hardly surprising then that 'cultural competence' is the buzz word at the moment. But what does it mean?

The philosophy of Pharmaceutical Care (PC) emphasizes the client/patient over the product. Pharmacists who practice according to the PC paradigm do so with the well-being of the client/patient as their primary focus. Being culturally competent means that the pharmacist understands - and is sensitive to - different cultures, and is able to communicate effectively with people of different cultures. Futter (2007a, 53) defines cultural competence as:

...the ability of individuals and systems to work or respond effectively across cultures in a way that acknowledges and respects the culture of the person or organization being served.

Futter highlights the need to understand what is called the cultural framework, which "shapes beliefs, creates expectations and values, reinforces assumptions and attitudes, and prescribes norms" (Futter, 2007a, 53). In relation to health and illness, this means people from different cultures have different beliefs about health and illness, e.g., some people believe that illness occurs as a result of being cursed. As Futter (2007a) explains, people may have different expectations about traditional healers and health professionals,

as well as from orthodox and traditional medicines. Their values may also be different, e.g., they may find it difficult to discuss a sensitive issue with a person of the opposite gender. In South Africa many people believe that illness can be caused by their ancestors. This will affect their assumptions and attitude about when to seek help, and what help to seek.

Futter (2007b, 46) asks some important questions about the extent to which cultural differences influence the following:

- “the quality of care and the quality of life of patients,
- the organization that employs pharmacists,
- the efficiency and effectiveness of the health system, and
- pharmacists and their professional status”.

There is a need for consistent standards of caring irrespective of cultural origin.

Pharmacists need to not only be sensitive to and understand cultural differences; they need to be able to communicate effectively with people from other cultures. This is a challenge for pharmacists in South Africa, and a reason why we need to graduate pharmacists who are culturally competent. Mentoring could be one way in which we do this, both at university level, and in the working environment. Mentors could facilitate multi-cultural mentoring sessions where mentees learn with and from each other.

#### **1.4.3. Regulation of medicine prices**

In 1996 the South African Department of Health published the National Drug Policy (NDP) (Department of Health, 1996). The main objectives of the NDP include:

- ... ensuring availability and accessibility of essential medicines to all citizens of South Africa, lowering the cost of medicines in both public

and private sectors, promoting the cost-effective and rational use of medicines, establishing a complementary partnership between government bodies and private providers in the pharmaceutical sector, and optimizing the use of scarce resources through cooperation with international and regional agencies

(South African Health Review, 2007, 20).

One of the ways in which the government is trying to reduce the cost of medicines is by the introduction of a pricing system. In 2004 the Regulations relating to a transparent pricing system for medicines and scheduled substances were published (Department of Health, 2004), and a Pricing Committee was established to develop a pricing structure and to monitor and regulate the price of medicines. This structure is based on two entities: (1) a Single Exit Price (SEP) that applies for each product throughout the supply chain, and (2) a dispensing fee (South African Review, 2007). Both the SEP and the dispensing fee are hotly contested issues at the moment. In February 2007 guidelines were published that identified the services for which pharmacists will be permitted to levy a fee (Government Gazette, 2007). However, the monetary value of the fee is still being researched and debated.

These pricing regulations have been reported to have affected pharmacy negatively – especially community pharmacy. The Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa (PSSA) and the Health Policy Unit of the Free Market Foundation of Southern Africa (2005) commented on the far reaching effects that the pricing regulations and the benchmarking have on the healthcare sector, the pharmaceutical industry, and therefore on the consumer. Recent discussions with representatives of the Department of Health indicate that these strategies are not going to go away.

We, in Pharmacy education, are concerned that these strategies have had a negative impact on the image of pharmacy and have resulted in a reduced intake of South African students to study pharmacy. Pharmacy education in South Africa is facing a number of challenges. It is required to: (1) graduate competent students who meet the entry level competencies, i.e., the

outcomes of the curriculum are dictated by professional/statutory organizations; (2) graduate more previously disadvantaged South African students in order to address equity and redress (a statutory requirement); (3) graduate entry-level pharmacists who embrace and actively practice Pharmaceutical Care (an international and national professional paradigm); and (4) graduate life long learners who will practice Continuing Professional Development (CPD). There are eight Pharmacy faculties or schools in South Africa, who graduate between 400 and 500 entry level pharmacists each year. We need more pharmacists in South Africa (and Africa), and thus need to increase the number of pharmacy graduates.

### **1.5. The Faculty of Pharmacy at Rhodes University**

The Faculty of Pharmacy at Rhodes University has the following additional challenges: (1) to increase the number of previously disadvantaged South African graduates, (2) to increase the number of postgraduate students, (3) to fill vacancies left by retiring academic staff, and (4) to increase the faculty's research output (Kanfer and Walker, 2007).

The number and the demographics of undergraduate students in our Faculty has fluctuated over the years e.g. in 2001 there were 266 undergraduates, in 2007 we had 345. When the Faculty started in 1957 students were mainly white men. Gradually the number of women, Indian, Coloured and African students has increased. Table I illustrates the demographics of the 2007 cohort of undergraduate students:

Table I: Racial and gender demographics of undergraduate students in the Faculty of Pharmacy in 2007 (Kanfer and Walker, 2007)

<b>Indian</b>		<b>African</b>		<b>Coloured</b>		<b>White</b>		<b>Total</b>
<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	
39	66	83	126	2	5	3	21	345

These demographic changes are in line with the CHE's post-1994 mandate of ensuring that higher education is transformed and becomes non-racial, non-sexist, democratic, and redresses the inequalities of the past (CHE, 2004). Although Table I depicts a majority of African undergraduate students, this number includes a significant number of non-South African students from other African countries. Table II depicts the number of South African and foreign students in our undergraduate cohort. The majority of foreign students are from the rest of Africa, especially Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe, and Mauritius.

Table II: South African and Foreign undergraduate numbers for 2007 (Kanfer and Walker, 2007).

<b>Undergraduate</b>	<b>South African</b>				<b>Foreign</b>			<b>Total</b>
	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Subtotal</b>	
BPharm 1	27	27	54	59	16	21	37	91
BPharm 2	17	28	45	48	18	31	49	93
BPharm 3	5	19	24	30	24	31	55	79
BPharm 4	9	27	36	44	11	34	45	81
Total	58	101	159	46	69	117	186	345

Some of the previously disadvantaged students struggle when they come to Rhodes University to study pharmacy. In an effort to help them succeed our Faculty decided to start the mentoring programme which is the topic of this thesis. It should be noted that not all under-prepared and disadvantaged students are black, and that not all black South Africans are under-prepared or disadvantaged. This is why the mentoring programme is open to all first year students, i.e., not limited to black students only.

Our Faculty had ambitions to start an Extended Studies Programme<sup>5</sup> in order to “attempt to recruit specifically South African students from the Eastern

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<sup>5</sup> Extended Studies Programmes are a national initiative that extend the time needed to complete a degree by an additional year and provide additional developmental tuition. They are aimed at black South African students who do not meet the University's entrance requirements for 'mainstream' programmes.

Cape who do not meet the relevant entry requirements to pursue the BPharm Degree” (Kanfer and Walker, 2007). However, due to financial and human resource constraints this is not likely to happen in the near future. Instead we have been mandated to be creative in our endeavours to recruit and support Eastern Cape students. The mentoring programme is one such endeavour.

As outlined in the Rhodes University Calendar (2007, 95), in our Faculty of Pharmacy (and in most pharmacy faculties/schools in South Africa) students were normally accepted to study pharmacy if they:

- (1) passed the Matriculation examination of the Joint Matriculation Board with exemption (NQF level 4)<sup>6</sup>, or equivalent;
- (2) obtained at least a “D” for Mathematics on Higher Grade, or equivalent;
- (3) obtained at least a “D” for both Higher Grade Science and Biology, or equivalent<sup>7</sup>.

The Dean has the authority to accept any student who does not meet these requirements but shows potential, or has practical experience that may be recognized as prior learning. This is known as “being accepted at the Dean’s discretion”, e.g., the Dean has in the past accepted students who did not meet the academic entry requirements but who had potential or had experience working as pharmacist assistants. Many of these students are ‘disadvantaged’, as described in section 1.2.1.

The Faculty of Pharmacy at Rhodes University is committed to graduating lifelong learners who are capable of practicing Pharmaceutical Care (PC) and thus caring ‘about’ and ‘for’ clients. Our mission statement includes: “The mission of the Faculty is to promote pharmaceutical care through education, research, scholarship, creative endeavour and service” (Rhodes University

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<sup>6</sup> This is changing in 2009 because the schooling system has changed, and the first cohort of students with a National Senior Certificate (NSC) instead of a ‘matric exemption’ will be coming to university. Students must have passed seven subjects at school in order to qualify for the NSC: two languages, Life Orientation, either Mathematics or Mathematical Literacy, and three other subjects chosen by the student and offered at their school.

<sup>7</sup> To be accepted to study Pharmacy in 2009 they must have a score of 4 or more for English, Mathematics (or Mathematical Literacy at a score of 6 or greater), Life Sciences and Physical Sciences, Life Orientation and one other.

Calendar, 2007, 95). One of the faculty's main priorities is to: "prepare its students for entry into the practice of pharmacy as informed, caring, ethical and enlightened citizens and professionals" (Rhodes University Calendar, 2007, 95).

The BPharm degree is an NQF level 7 qualification<sup>8</sup> and one of our specific exit level outcomes reads as follows: "The primary aim of pharmacy education is to train life long learners who can provide a professional service to the community using their knowledge, skills, professional thinking, behaviour and attitudes in all avenues of pharmacy practice, as caring healthcare providers and managers of healthcare resources" (Rhodes University Calendar, 2007, 216).

In our Calendar entry we also spell out the "attitudinal and behavioural outcomes" that our students are expected to achieve during their undergraduate programme. These include:

- "... respect for patients and colleagues, without judgment or prejudice with regard to race, culture, gender amongst others,
- recognition of human and patients' rights,
- a positive approach to self directed life long learning,
- a positive approach towards primary health care,
- an awareness of moral and ethical responsibilities,
- a desire to ensure patient care of the highest possible quality,
- an awareness of personal limitations and a willingness to seek help when necessary, and
- a positive attitude towards the advancement of medical knowledge"

(Rhodes University Calendar, 2007, 216). Again the concept of 'caring' is central to their development to become competent.

In the second year of the Pharmacy degree we ask our students why they want to become a pharmacist. Some answer "to make money", or "to make medicines", but the majority of answers are "because we want to help others".

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<sup>8</sup> In South Africa all degrees, diplomas and certificate courses have to be registered with the South African Qualifications Authority (SAQA) based on the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

Our findings are similar to those of Droege and Assa-Eley (2005), who concluded that the pharmacy students in their study perceived themselves to be care-givers and that they possessed the caring attributes required. Just as well, since being a care-giver is one of the skills and attitudes required of an 'eight star' pharmacist.

Much of the formal teaching and learning that occurs in the Faculty of Pharmacy at Rhodes University is based on what Fuller (2007) refers to as 'focussing on knowledge production'. This typically involves a hierarchical process where complex knowledge and ideas are built on simpler ones - much like an inverted pyramid. This kind of knowledge production is usually transmitted from an expert to a novice. Mentoring, however, is not like this. Mentoring is about acquiring knowledge by participation. Lave and Wenger (1991) suggest that the acquisition of knowledge is about participating in a Community of Practice (CoP). This involves belonging to a group, and learning with and from the members of the group by participating in the group. CoP is a major theoretical construct that I will be using, and will be discussed later in this thesis.

## **1.6. Research questions**

We, in the Faculty of Pharmacy, initiated a mentoring programme for first year pharmacy students in 2003. I volunteered to design, implement, facilitate, supervise, monitor and evaluate it. The mentoring programme was initially designed to help first year students – especially previously disadvantaged individuals - adapt to Rhodes University, so that they could succeed. It was a strategy to address both the success of our first year students, and to address access of previously disadvantaged students.

Since 2003 the programme has developed and grown. The number of first year students participating in the mentoring programme has steadily grown



from 16 in 2003, to 49 in 2007<sup>9</sup>. Annual formal and informal evaluation of the programme has led to changes being made that have benefitted all participants.

The main underlying research question is: 'How does mentoring facilitate access to a Community of Practice (CoP)'? I assume that CoPs exist because to prove it would require a whole (new) thesis. Given that Wenger (1991) and others have identified CoPs in certain circumstances I have assumed that they exist in pharmacy.

Since mentors are key to the process of mentoring, a sub question: 'How do mentors construct mentoring?' was also developed. Whilst trying to find answers to these two questions I developed a model of mentoring applicable to the context described in this thesis.

## **1.7. The structure of the thesis**

The thesis has the following structure:

Chapter 2 is my literature review of mentoring in higher education and in the business world, where mentoring is often encountered. This is followed by a review of models of mentoring, a description of mentoring at Rhodes University, specifically in the Faculty of Pharmacy.

Chapter 3 locates and describes the ontological framework used in this thesis. Critical realism (mainly from an ontological perspective) is the meta-theory which underpins this research.

A discussion of critical realism and its relevance is followed in chapter 4 by an overview of substantive theories of learning - leading on to a description of Invitational Learning Theory (ILT), and Communities of Practice (CoPs).

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<sup>9</sup> In 2008 there were 65 first year students actively participating in the mentoring programme

Critical realism is not a methodology but a meta-theory, which is why I use diverse theories to analyse my data and to make sense of structures and mechanisms.

Chapter 5 discusses the methodology used in this research with specific emphasis on discourse analysis.

Chapter 6 is a discussion of how mentors construct mentoring. I start off by describing what it is like to be a first year student at Rhodes University, and then use discourse analysis to find different discourses in order to determine how mentors construct mentoring - with critical realism as my meta-theory.

Chapter 7 is a discussion of my main research question namely: how does mentoring facilitate access to a Community of Practice (CoP)? Whilst doing this I develop a model of mentoring applicable to the context reported in this thesis. I start off by describing the mentoring programme as a form of Invitational Learning and in doing so show how mentoring facilitates access to Communities of Practice.

Chapter 8, the concluding chapter, draws together my findings and conclusions, and comments on future practices.

## **Chapter 2: Mentoring**

### **2.1. Introduction**

Assuming responsibility for the role of mentor may well be the highest calling within our professional ranks. It might well be described as a 'habit of the heart' – a calling that demands an enormous amount of time, self-denial, and altruism. Nurturing the growth and self-actualization of a health professional who will ultimately contribute to the health and well-being of society-at-large is one of the greatest contributions that any of us can make to humanity (Pierpaoli, 1992, 2175)

"Mentoring" has become the buzzword in higher education and in the workplace, and an apparent answer to many problems. In my endeavour to understand mentoring, I have had to challenge my preconceptions and assumptions. Initially I thought mentoring meant providing support and help for those who needed it, i.e., when a mentee teams up with a mentor, the mentor then takes care of the mentee. Although this approach may have a place in some programmes, mentoring can be so much more.

Research has helped me understand the complexity and the potential of mentoring, in different environments. There is no standard definition of the mentoring relationship in the literature. Jacobi (1991, 506) writes "the results of this definitional vagueness is a continued lack of clarity about the antecedents, outcomes, characteristics, and mediators of mentoring relationships despite a growing body of empirical research". Each programme has to be developed and adapted to meet the needs of the mentees, acknowledge the environment, and allow both the mentee and the mentor to benefit. Hillman (2005) emphasizes the importance of a reciprocal relationship, i.e., that both the mentor and the mentee gain from the mentoring relationship. It is important not to take on too much, too soon - the development of mentoring programmes is an evolutionary process, i.e., it evolves with time. Mentoring programmes have to develop with time, they have to adapt as they progress.

Some people use the terms 'mentor', 'tutor' and 'coach' interchangeably. Allow me to clarify my understanding of the terms. A *mentor* is a personal *facilitator* who listens, encourages, challenges and questions in such a way that the other person - the mentee - is empowered to achieve certain goals. A *tutor* is a private teacher who *teaches* either in a one-on-one relationship or in a small group. A *coach* helps in a structured two-way process in which individuals develop *skills* and achieve defined competencies through assessment, guided practical experience and regular feedback (Archer, 2002).

There is the argument that tutoring is a form of 'academic mentoring'. In my opinion the difference between tutoring and 'academic mentoring' is not necessarily in the process or the outcome, but in the instigation or reason for it occurring. A tutor will have a defined outcome in mind, which is usually determined by the department, faculty, institution or organization. For example, a tutor will be told to teach this student something specific and pre-determined. Academic mentoring, on the other hand, occurs as a result of the mentee deciding what academic help they require. The mentee determines and instigates the process.

Similarly, coaching may be perceived to be a form of developing skills during the mentoring programme. Again I argue that the difference is in the instigation, the reasons for it occurring. If a department, faculty, institution or organization decides students need a specific skill, they might instigate coaching sessions. However, if a mentee decides that they require certain skills, then skills can be developed during the mentoring programme. There is a potential problem if too much coaching occurs in a mentoring programme, because "drills may actually kill skills" (Austin, 2005) - too much repetition may negatively affect creativity.

One of the most important concepts I had to come to terms with was that mentoring is a process, not an outcome (Archer, 2002). First a relationship must be established, then the mentor and mentee must work within such a relationship, and at regular intervals the relationship needs to be evaluated. It

is a partnership that deals with issues that the mentee deems as 'real'. Understanding this differentiates mentoring from tutoring, coaching and leadership, and is critical to the mentoring process.

Mentoring is about developing people. It is a strategy that can be used in many different situations, e.g., in schools, tertiary institutions, churches, and in the workplace (Haines, 2003). At the Life Long Learning in Pharmacy conference (2005) in Canada, Zubin Austin, one of the invited speakers, said: "We cannot create empowered, motivated, engaged people. They become that." (Austin, 2005). Mentoring is a way of empowering, motivating and engaging people to thrive, strive and succeed. The mentees become empowered when the mentor guides, helps and advises them. Similarly, the mentors become empowered as a result of guiding, helping, advising and empowering the mentees.

An important concept in mentoring is that mentors don't always have the answers. Mentoring is about giving the mentee the opportunities to solve problems by guiding them through the process. Pierpaoli (1992, 2178) describes mentoring as a form of "stewardship", the careful and responsible management of others. According to Lipman (2003) the most important role of the mentor is to help the mentee engage in reflective thinking. Dewey (1933, 12) defines reflective thinking as follows:

Reflective thinking, in distinction from other operations to which we apply the name of thought, involves (1) a state of doubt, hesitation, perplexity, mental difficulty, in which thinking originates, and (2) an act of searching, hunting, inquiring, to find material that will resolve the doubt, settle and dispose of the perplexity.

Mentors can help the mentee search for answers to questions, problems and issues so that the mentee becomes autonomous and a self-directed lifelong learner (Clegg, 2007). Pierpaoli (1992, 2176) recognizes that effective mentors have "learned that success begins with knowledge of self". This

concept will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4, in section 4.6. which deals with Invitational Learning Theory.

Effective mentoring is “an intentional activity requiring conscious effort” (Haines, 2003, 1). However, mentoring may be: formal or informal; spontaneous or planned; can have specific time lines or last a lifetime; can involve one-on-one mentoring or in groups; and may be across gender and cultural barriers - or not. According to Johnson (2002, 89) mentoring in the business arena works best when it is informal, i.e., mentor and mentee find each other and a relationship begins based on “shared assumptions and expectations”. That does not mean that all mentoring that occurs in the business world is informal. In fact, the two most common areas of formal mentoring are in the business world and in higher education (Brown and Hanson, 2003); hence a brief discussion of each follows below.

## **2.2. Mentoring in the business world**

Traditionally the business model of mentoring has been: “an older person mentoring a younger person” (Van Slyke and Van Slyke, 1998, 14). Age is no longer a necessary criterion and with the advent of succession planning the emphasis has shifted from the organization to the individual, who now has to gain the necessary skills, plan and be accountable for their own career. Mentoring still plays a role in individuals gaining the necessary skills in the work place (Hall and Mirvis, 1996).

Sometimes the words ‘mentoring’ and ‘leadership’ are used interchangeably in the business arena. Yukl’s (1998, 14) definition of leadership is: “a social influence process whereby intentional influence is exerted by one person over other people in an attempt to structure the activities and relationships in a group or organization”. Leadership and management are closely linked in the business world, but one should not think of mentoring simply as something that is managed. There is much more to mentoring, which is why Johnson, Geroy and Griego (1999, 390) developed their “choice based” mentoring

model, which is not limited to educational or business environments. Their model is relevant wherever there is social interaction. In 1966, Brim was already describing mentoring as a form of socialization when he wrote: “persons acquire the knowledge, skills and dispositions that make them more or less able members of their society” (Brim, 1966, 6). Today we speak about socialization within Communities of Practice (this will be discussed in greater detail in section 4.7.).

In South Africa the Employment Equity Act (No. 55 of 1998) as amended, and its Regulations requires companies to set goals, devise plans and provide appropriate training to address equity. It is supported by the Skills Development Act (No. 97 of 1998) ,as amended, and its Regulations, which requires companies to commit to training. Mentoring is one of the initiatives recommended by the South African government, as indicated in the Employment Equity Act’s Code of Good Practice: preparation, implementation and monitoring of employment equity plans (No. 55 of 1998).

### **2.3. Mentoring in Higher Education**

Mentoring in higher education in South Africa is alive and well, as demonstrated by the papers, posters and workshops presented at a conference on mentoring in Johannesburg in 2005 (FOTIM/GAELIC conference, 2005). Papers ranged from descriptions of mentoring programmes; mentoring relationships; dealing with different disciplines; issues of diversity; cross-cultural issues; and mentoring in the workplace. I presented a paper on the adaptability of mentoring programmes at this conference because I was supervising both the programme for first-year students (subject of this thesis) and the programme for second-years (also in our faculty) which consists mainly of academic mentoring. One of the main outcomes from this conference was the realization that although there were many commonalities in the way mentoring programmes were designed and structured, there were differences in the outcomes, processes and procedures followed.

Olga Welch examined issues relating to mentoring of graduate students in the USA (Welch, 1996). She concludes that, although mentoring in the academic environment was seen to have a positive influence on the participants in her study, more research needed to focus on (amongst others) the roles of mentors, the selection of mentees by the mentors, and the effectiveness of formal mentoring programmes (Welch, 1996). According to Haines (2003) there is recognition that as higher education and the workplace become more complex there is an increasing need for formal mentoring programmes.

Mentoring is not limited to students. It may also occur for academics and other faculty members. In South Africa the academic environment involves teaching, research, administration, professional involvement and community engagement. Mentoring could be useful in any or all these categories. For example, Cosgrove (1986, cited in Espinoza-Herold and Gonzalez, 314, 2007) argues that mentoring had a positive effect for the career development of junior faculty members in the field of education. Senior faculty members mentored junior faculty and helped them become established and successful. Research done by Cronan-Hillix *et al.* (1986) indicates that women members of faculty and junior faculty who had been mentored had a higher rate of research productivity and publications than those who were not. Daloz (1999, 21) explains that mentoring is an added role for the member of faculty:

Mentors generally have a wider role than do conventional faculty advisors. They may or may not teach classes, but they are inevitably engaged in one-to-one instruction and are consequently more concerned than regular teachers with the individual learning needs and styles of their students.

Mentoring is not the same as instruction. It is about promoting the development of someone else whilst growing and developing an identity as a mentor (Witte and Wolf, 2003). Evidence suggests that the issue of reciprocity is important because both the mentee and mentor benefit from the relationship (Zeind *et al.*, 2005, and Hillman, 2005). Mullin (1992) suggests that the identity of both the mentee and the mentor is transformed. The



mentor aims to enhance the mentee's identity in the environment (which may or may not be academic): the mentor helps the mentee become competent and "separate but equal" to the mentor (Zeind *et al.*, 2005, 1). According to Harris and Daley (2006) both mentee and mentor tend to experience personal growth, both tend to develop communication and interpersonal skills, and both learn by collaboration. Thus both the mentor and mentee learn with and from each other and from the experience - and grow or transform.

## **2.4. Review of mentoring models**

There are several classifications of mentoring models. One obvious classification is into formal and informal mentoring – as discussed previously. Popper (2004) classified mentoring models as follows: (a) didactic model, i.e., "listen to me", (b) apprenticeship model, i.e., "follow me", (c) collegial model, i.e., "be my junior colleague", and (d) friendship model, i.e., "be my friend". I will use examples to illustrate the different models.

(a) The didactic model: many faculties and departments have implemented mentoring programmes to help their students come to terms with didactic material. For example, Tashakkori, Wilkes and Pekarek (2005) described their model in the Computer Science department at the Appalachian State University as a systemic mentoring model, i.e., there is "coupling between quality teaching and quality learning on one hand, and between quality teaching and quality research on the other" (Tashakkori, Wilkes and Pekarek, 2005, 371). This mentoring model is found within the department – not as an add-on extra programme, but embedded within the curriculum. Its main aim is to ensure better performance by those being mentored, which helps lower the failure rate.

Many health profession schools (including Pharmacy schools) in the USA are using peer tutoring in an effort to maintain quality of education as resources and staff are reduced (Santee and Garavalia, 2006). Although this is tutoring and not mentoring, it is interesting to note that universities are going this

route, acknowledging that peers tend to better understand the difficulties the students have because they can relate better. In our faculty we have an academic mentoring programme for our second year pharmacy students. Unpublished evidence suggests that the mentees in this programme find the academic mentoring by peers very useful.

(b) The apprenticeship model: usually relates to work-based mentoring where the mentee is in a pre-service situation (Maynard and Furlong, 1995). The apprentice usually spends time observing others, and the mentor then helps the apprentice reflect and learn from the observations. The idea of an apprenticeship is that the apprentice learns on-the-job and with the help of the mentor, and gradually takes on more responsibility. This way the 'sink or swim' experience is minimized. In South Africa all pharmacy graduates have to undergo a year of internship, which is a form of apprenticeship.

(c) The collegial model: Butler University College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences developed a mentoring programme in 1999, where the mentees were students enrolled in the Freshman Health Sciences seminar course, and the mentors were first-, second- or third-year pharmacy students (Brown and Hanson, 2003). Their programme was designed to help the freshmen understand the pharmacy programme, to help the mentors become role models, and to encourage professional development. The end result was more involvement by all students, and a programme that was successful and self-perpetuating.

A more common example of collegial mentoring is the mentoring of faculty, which has been acknowledged to be a significant contributor to the development and retention of faculty (Zeind *et al.*, 2005). Wutoh *et al.* (2000) surveyed pharmacy schools and colleges in the USA to determine the prevalence of faculty mentoring. In their study they had a response rate of 77%, of which 18% had a formal faculty mentoring programme, and 53% an informal programme.

(d) The friendship model: the main outcome in this model is that the mentor and mentee become friends. One of the most famous examples of such a relationship in a formal setting is the 'Big Brother Big Sister' American non-profit organization, which was started in 1902 (initially it was only the Big Brother programme) by a man who worked as a clerk in a New York juvenile court (Evans and Ave, 2000). It exists to "inspire, influence and encourage children to become confident and caring individuals by matching them with volunteers who believe in them" (Big Brother Big Sister, 2007). Children aged 6 to 18 are carefully matched with volunteer mentors – who are carefully screened - in a one-to-one relationship, either in community-based or school-based programmes. The Arizona-based programme claims that those children who were matched with Big Brother Big Sister mentors had significantly lower incidences of alcohol and drug abuse, violence, and truancy (Big Brother Big Sister, 2007).

Mentoring has become popular as a strategy for helping troubled adolescents – especially those considered to be 'at risk'. In New Zealand there has been increasing awareness that mentoring can be used "as a strategy for social change" (Evans and Ave, 2000, 1), with mentoring programmes being developed in educational and welfare organizations. Mentoring is seen as relatively inexpensive because mentors are usually volunteers.

Mentoring via the internet is a mode of mentoring that has become popular. For example the University of the Pacific (Stockton, California) has a mentoring programme where mentees enter the programme as first-year students and mentors are practicing pharmacists in a variety of settings across the country (Fung *et al.*, 1997). Mentoring occurs via the internet. The main aim is to promote professionalism of pharmacy students during their pharmacy education.

Buell (2004) has a slightly different classification of models of mentoring, namely: cloning, nurturing, friendship and apprenticeship. The cloning model involves "trying to produce a duplicate copy" of someone, usually "from a top-down position" (*ibid*, 64).

As the name suggests, the nurturing model involves a relationship where the mentor fulfils the functions of a parent figure. Buell (2004, 65) refers to it as “empathetic guidance” i.e. the mentor is still acknowledged as being the more knowledgeable.

Trust and caring are essential ingredients for all models, especially for the friendship model. The friendship model is based on collaboration and the mentor and mentee think of themselves as peers, i.e., there is no hierarchy (White, 2005). Buell’s fourth model is the apprenticeship model, which is similar to Popper’s (2004) apprenticeship model.

Brookes and Sikes (1997) describe mentoring as a stepped process, i.e., initially mentoring may follow the apprenticeship model, but as the mentee learns by doing and becomes more confident, so the relationship between the mentor and mentee may become one of equal enquiry (White, 2005).

In Chipping and Morse (2006, 2) Mullen and Lick describe mentoring as a “synergized learning process”, i.e., learning to work together to produce a better result than if working on their own. They, together with Fletcher (2000), stress the need for honesty, openness and trust in the mentoring relationship – regardless which model is followed.

Irrespective of the model of mentoring, each mentoring relationship goes through stages. Johnson, Geroy and Griego (1999) describe these stages in their model, which places the mentor and the mentee in the centre, and shows the three different dimensions of influences on them as being (a) “the construct of socialization”, (b) “task development” and (c) “lifespan development” (*ibid*, 386). A brief explanation of each follows.

(a) The construct of socialization:

Socialization is “a learning process in which an individual learns the rules of behaviour specific to his/her culture”, and is influenced by many environments, e.g. home, school, media, religious communities and others (Johnson, Geroy and Griego, 1999, 386). Both the mentor and the mentee

exist within their own web of socializations. There are phases of socialization, namely pre-formative, formative, and post-formative. Someone entering a new environment - such as a university – arrives with their own identity but is in the pre-formative phase, trying to adjust to their new environment. The process of adjusting and forming their own identity within the organization is known as the formative phase. After successfully adjusting and forming their own identity, this person will hopefully enter the post-formative phase, where they can make their own decisions successfully and perhaps help others.

Mentoring is a strategic initiative to help people progress from the pre-formative to the formative phase. By the time they have moved into the post-formative phase they could become a mentor.

(b) Task development:

According to Hall (1987) our lives revolve around work and family, and we are constantly developing skills in each area. Our development in the work environment seems to be cyclical, and involves “exploration, trial, establishment and mastery” (Johnson, Geroy and Griego, 1999, 387). In the family environment, one learns techniques to: “cope with change, resolving personal conflict, handling stress, flexibility, communication, and balancing work and family life” (*ibid*). Cultural differences exist in both work and family environments, and vary in values, norms, attitudes and beliefs.

(c) Lifespan development:

Rutter and Rutter (1992, 64) define lifespan as:

systematic, organized, intra-individual change that is clearly associated with generally expectable age-related progressions and which is carried forward in some way that has implications for a person's pattern or level of functioning at some later time.

Theorists such as Freud, Erickson, Piaget and Kegan have put lifespan development into categories and stages. Sometimes these are based on physiological milestones; sometimes they are psychological or social in nature. A mentor may be in a different developmental stage from the mentee,

and this may affect their relationship. (Please refer to sections 4.3. and 4.5. for further discussion).

Socialization, task and lifespan development all influence the relationship between the mentor and mentee. The outcome may be positive or negative, and the relationship may be successful or not. The success or failure of the mentoring relationship is based on many factors, including an acceptance of differences in age, gender, cultures, ability and interests, as well as a clear understanding of the outcomes of the mentoring relationship. If expectations are unrealistic then the relationship is bound to fail.

Mentoring is an evolutionary process and typically the relationship evolves from:

- (1) Initiation: when the whole process starts, the roles are defined, mutual interests are identified and the relationship starts developing. Usually it is a relatively task-driven relationship at this stage.
- (2) Cultivation: frequent interactions allow for both mentor and mentee to gain confidence, they both learn skills, their professional and personal relationships develop, and there is mutual growth.
- (3) Separation: the mentoring process ends and it may be an emotional time for either or both, sometimes there is conflict, and there may be feelings of resentment or abandonment.
- (4) Redefinition (also known as transformation): either the relationship ends completely or it changes (is redefined). For example, it may become a peer-like relationship (Johnson, Geroy and Griego 1999, Haines 2003).

A common form of mentoring is one-on-one mentoring, where there is one mentor for each mentee. However, one-on-one mentoring is not always possible or appropriate. Multiple mentoring includes peer group mentoring, team mentoring, and mentoring circles (Ambrose, 2003). In peer group mentoring there may or may not be a formal mentor. In team mentoring there is usually a mentor but both the mentor and the mentees work together, to achieve certain pre-determined outcomes for the team. The emphasis in team mentoring is on the collective team, and not so much on the individual. A

mentoring circle consists of a mentor who focuses the group of mentees, and provides guidance for each individual as well as for the group. The emphasis is thus both on the individual as well as on the group.

The mentoring programme described in this study included both one-on-one mentoring and group mentoring, i.e., a mentoring circle. Mentoring circles are effective where there are more mentees than mentors. One benefit of mentoring circles is that they generate many different perspectives.

## **2.5. Helping and mentoring**

The mentoring literature suggests that the most effective mentors are caring, empathic, patient, encouraging, ethical and helpful (Blackburn, Cameron and Chapman, 1981; Cronan-Hillix *et al.*, 1986, Johnson, 2002). Positive psychology suggests that there are two main goals of helping: (1) helping people manage their problems, and (2) helping people become better at helping themselves (Eagan, 1994, 7 – 8). In my opinion these goals apply to mentoring.

## **2.6. Mentoring at Rhodes University**

School and university are two settings with obvious differences, but with equally obvious similarities. One of these similarities is that they are both institutions, and so in both cases it is important to know how to live within them and how to deal with the institution. By the time a learner leaves school they have to (to some extent at least) come to terms with certain aspects of the school, have figured out how to deal with it as an institution and have developed an identity there. They leave school as the most senior scholars, only to enter an entirely different institution with different expectations and requirements, as the most junior members – and once again have to take on an identity, a very different identity. It is almost like being at the top of a

pecking order at school, and then entering another pecking order at the bottom.

A first-year student has to figure out how the university works, what is required of them, and what their identity within the institution can and will be. According to Wenger (1994, 2) there are two important assumptions about institutional identities:

- (1) “institutional identities are not just functions, but they are the enactment of an understanding of institutional practices, and thus imply ways of being in and seeing the world.
- (2) ...they are not just labels or titles, but are constructed in the day-to-day practice of learning to live within an institution”.

At Rhodes University we acknowledge that students have to develop their own identity as well as come to terms with their new environment, and succeed. The Trojan<sup>10</sup> Academic Initiative Mentoring Programme (also known as the TAI programme) was initiated to help previously disadvantaged students succeed, and to help them develop their own identity at Rhodes University (Rhodes University Trojan Academic Initiative Student Peer Mentoring Programme, 2004). This TAI programme started in the Commerce, Humanities and Pharmacy<sup>11</sup> faculties in 2003. In 2004 the Science Foundation programme was started and since mentoring was also central to its success, it also became part of the TAI programme, as did a general mentoring programme for students who were in other faculties. The Science Foundation evolved and became part of the Extended Studies Unit, which was established in 2005. This was prompted by an acknowledgement by the

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<sup>10</sup> The word ‘Trojan’ was chosen for its interpretation as referring to someone who works or fights courageously (works like a Trojan). It was based on a story about a high wire walker called Blondin, who walked across the Niagara Falls on a rope, in 1859. Initially he walked across on his own, then with a wheelbarrow. He then asked for a volunteer to be carried across in the wheelbarrow. Not surprisingly there were no volunteers. The person who named the Trojan Academic Initiative (Kevin Williams) decided that mentoring is a bit like getting onto the high wire (rope) and making a commitment. Hence the name.

<sup>11</sup> The mentoring programme described in this thesis



university that many of our students needed a programme that would enable them to succeed at Rhodes University.

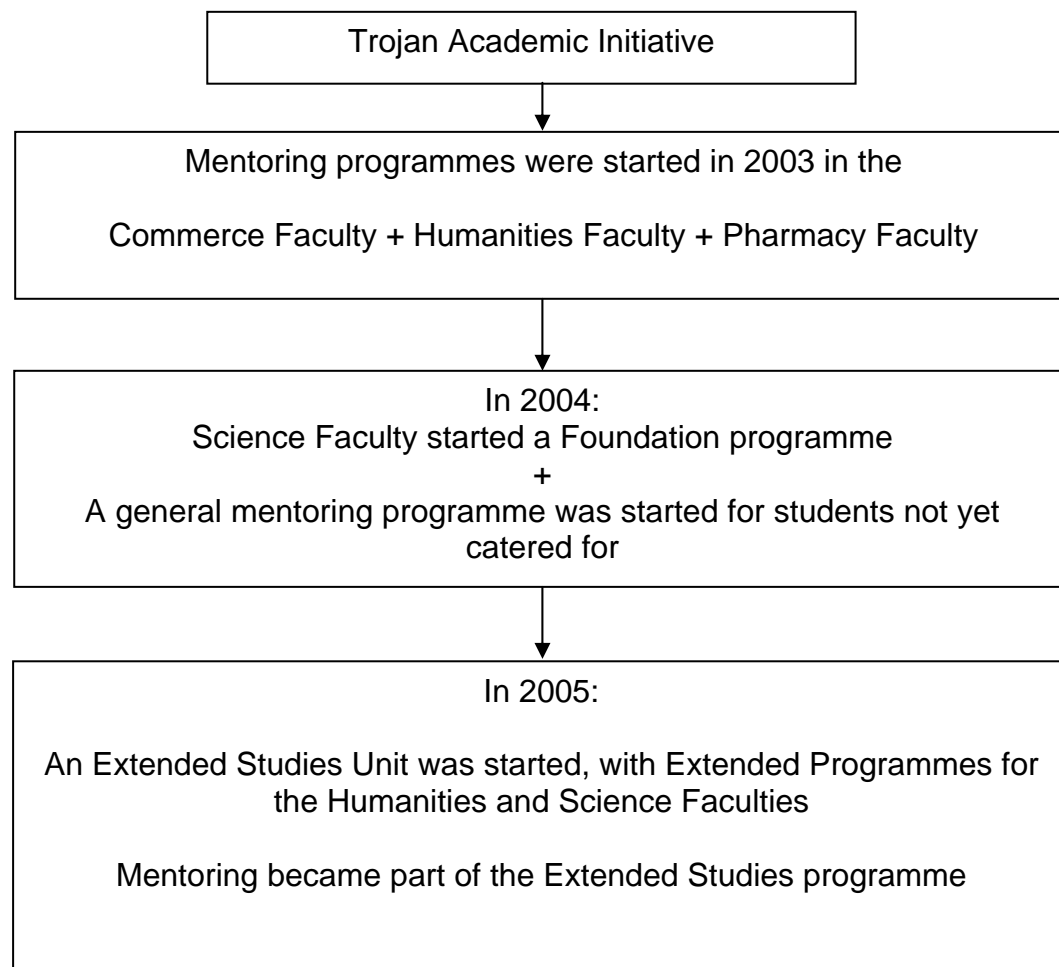


Figure 1: The development of Trojan Academic Initiative mentoring programmes at Rhodes University

The next section describes how the mentoring programme in the Faculty of Pharmacy at Rhodes University developed.

## **2.7. Mentoring in the Faculty of Pharmacy at Rhodes University**

Studying Pharmacy at Rhodes University is challenging. The first-year student is faced with being in a new environment, having to find out how everything works, making friends, being away from home, living in a restricted area with a diversity of students, and studying. For some students this change can be overwhelming, especially if their previous environment was very different and if they are first-generation university entrants. For many students adjusting to Rhodes University is potentially difficult.

In 2003 we developed and started a mentoring programme for our first-year pharmacy students because we recognized that some require more than academic help. We decided then that we needed to help first-year students assimilate into the Rhodes culture, bridge the gap between school and university, and between home and university. There was also the need to find role models for first-years (Ntombela *et al.*1994).

The pharmaceutical company Adcock Ingram sponsored the programme because they realized the importance of developing mentors at university who could later be mentors in the workplace after graduation. At the time I found it fascinating that we (the Faculty of Pharmacy) were more interested in helping the first-years (i.e. the mentees) overcome their problems, whilst Adcock Ingram were more interested in the development of the mentors. There was an intersection of complementary interests: helping the first year students (mentees) and helping the mentors develop mentoring skills, which they can use later on, when they are qualified pharmacists. A good example of symbiosis: both the Faculty and the sponsors were achieving their goals. Adcock Ingram donated money which enabled mentors to receive 'mentorships' (a type of bursary) and for running expenses. So the mentors also gained by receiving a financial incentive.

The purpose of the mentoring programme was (and still is) to:

- ensure that the academic and environmental difficulties experienced by mentees are eliminated or minimized,

- ❑ facilitate the mentees' socialization within the university environment, and
- ❑ facilitate the mentees' socialization towards the Pharmacy professional environment.

The outcomes for the programme include:

- ❑ having students who are better equipped to cope with the unfamiliar demands of an academic institution and its social environment,
- ❑ improved academic performance, and
- ❑ the development of a greater awareness of the needs of these students.

When an individual arrives in a new environment, they go through several stages of socialization. This is a developmental process, and Weidman *et al.* (2001) have described the stages of socialization as follows: the first stage is that of anticipation. Here the individual becomes aware of the expected behaviour, attitudes and expectations in the new environment. Novices learn through observation, by mimicking and by interacting with others. They learn that there are roles and procedures and that they have to follow these to 'fit in'. The second stage is the formal stage. By now the individual is no longer a 'novice' and there is a gradual acceptance of expectations set out by Faculty. The informal stage involves understanding and adopting the peer culture, the social and emotional support system among fellow students. This stage is just as important as the formal stage. Finally there is the personal stage. During this stage the individual internalizes the different roles and forms a professional identity. At the end of the degree we hope to have our final product - a competent entry-level pharmacist, who will succeed as an intern (in the first instance) and as a qualified pharmacist.

Our mentoring programme is a voluntary programme intended for all interested first-year students in the Faculty of Pharmacy. It started small and grew – in 2003 there were only 16 mentees, in 2007 there were 49. In 2007 the Faculty of Pharmacy accepted students into a Foundation programme for the first time, and of the 49 mentees, eight were Foundation students.

There are essentially three models of Foundation programme (Warren, 1998) - in all three there is an additional year (at least one): the 'slow stream' model where selected students split their first-year credit-bearing subjects over two years to produce a lighter workload, hoping that this will allow them time to adapt to the new environment and develop the practices required for university level learning. A second model involves students doing non-credit bearing courses in their preparatory year, followed by the normal credit-bearing courses in the next year. The third model is a hybrid of the first two models: students do fewer credit-bearing subjects in their first year and are provided support throughout the year.

The Faculty of Pharmacy's Foundation programme is based on the 'slow stream' model. Ideally we would have preferred an Extended Studies Programme (ESP) based on the third model mentioned above, but we did not have the capacity or curriculum in place to start it in 2007. The eight Foundation students were all previously disadvantaged individuals from the Eastern Cape who did not meet the entrance requirements. The Dean made their admission conditional upon participation in the mentoring programme. Although this was a good decision, the Foundation students required academic help too, and the mentoring programme is designed to mainly assist first-year students with issues of socialization and identity. The mentors could not give these students the academic support they would have had in an Extended Studies Programme.

One of the flaws of having a 'slow stream' Foundation programme is that it does not provide the students the appropriate support to succeed. Some might argue that these students needed to address their meta-learning, i.e., the "activity of a learner who is aware of his learning process and who can intentionally plan, execute, monitor and evaluate his learning" (Slabbert, 1994, 39). Poor schooling, where rote learning is dominant, has been blamed for the inability to address their own meta-learning (*ibid*) but I feel that this view is overly simplistic.

The kind of learning that typically occurs at school follows what has been termed the “IRF structures” where “I” refers to initiation, “R” to response, and “F” to feedback (Geisler, 1994, 29). Typically the teacher asks the learner (or class) a question (initiation), receives a response, and then gives feedback about the response. Geisler (1994, 29) writes:

“IRF structures ... function in defining and controlling what ... knowledge and understanding will be. They are part of a set of communicative devices whereby the teacher acts as a kind of filter or gateway through which all knowledge must pass in order to be included in the lesson as a valid or useful contribution”.

At school texts tend to have two roles: either they are to be read, i.e., they are “a source and authority for the knowledge to be acquired”, or they are to be written, i.e., they “serve as the demonstration that the acquisition has taken place” (Geisler, 1994, 32). At school knowledge in the sense of decontextualised information is more important than contextualization, and so it is not surprising to find that the texts at school are mainly textbooks.

The concept of the autonomous text (Geisler, 1994) is important in this context. It implies that “a text can stand independent of its context of production or interpretation, that a text can mean the same thing to all readers of all ages” (Geisler, 1994, 4) and that a text means what it says. Learners are taught that textbooks are ‘autonomous texts’ and very often ‘text-consulting’ is added to the IRF structure (Geisler, 1994). Learners are not encouraged to contextualize the text, and this leads to learners believing that the text and the teacher are the authorities.

At school learners have to read texts and write to demonstrate that they have understood them. According to Vygotsky (1962) writing is more challenging than speaking (both inner and oral speech) because it requires deliberate restructuring. Not surprisingly learners tend to write in the way they have been taught to read, i.e., without contextualization. Their writing is thus often an autonomous text and is produced with the teacher (or examiner) as the

intended audience. Hardly surprising then that it tends to be informative, and not analytical. Typically a school essay is written to demonstrate that the learner has the knowledge, and learners tend to “write quickly, attend to low-level details, edit to clean things up, and then turn the essay in to a reader who evaluates it against a mental ‘template’ for what is expected” (Geisler, 1994, 40). Generally learners do not spend much time planning their writing in terms of providing context for a range of readers.

Although writing assists in learning it is important to remember that “different kinds of writing seem to produce different kinds of learning” (Geisler, 1994, 50). For example, note-taking and answering short questions would be more beneficial to the learner (than writing an analytic essay for example) if all they were required to do is learn factual knowledge. Also, learners tend to learn information from texts if it is compatible with their prior knowledge. If it is not, then learners tend to ignore these texts (Geisler, 1994) and then not much learning occurs.

At university students are expected to learn ‘academic writing’ where texts are not considered to be autonomous. Instead, the student is expected to contextualize the text and analyse it critically. This is not something they have learned at school and so they have to learn to read and write differently in order to succeed. At university the meta-discourse is important: the relationships between “the writer and the readers, between the writer and their knowledge, and between the writer and the larger society” (Geisler, 1994, 50).

Many of our students struggle with this transition from school to university. Although our mentoring programme was designed to address the social needs of the mentees, anecdotal evidence suggests that our mentors also help mentees come to terms with the different ways of reading, writing, contextualising and coping with the academic requirements at university. Although this is not the main reason for the programme it is a useful and desirable side effect.

Until now I have focused on mentoring in the undergraduate Pharmacy programme. I wish now to illustrate how it can be adapted and used elsewhere in Pharmacy too.

## **2.8. The role of mentoring in the training of competent pharmacists**

Mentoring is not limited to undergraduate training. It has a crucial role to play in developing and maintaining competent pharmacists during the internship, community service, during Continuing Professional Development (CPD), and elsewhere.

### **2.8.1. The role of mentoring during the internship programme**

After completion of their BPharm degree all graduates have to complete an internship of at least 12 months, at a training site registered with the South African Pharmacy Council (SAPC), under the direct supervision of an approved tutor, as stipulated by the Pharmacy Act (No. 53 of 1974) as amended. The SAPC designed entry level competencies in 2000 (South African Pharmacy Council discussion document, 2000), which have evolved into Unit Standards. These are best summarized as follows: (Intern and Tutor manual, 2007, 10):

**Table III: The seven unit standards and their competencies**

<b>Unit Standard</b>	<b>Competencies</b>
1	Organise the manufacturing, compounding, and packaging of pharmaceutical products
2	Organise the procurement, storage and distribution of pharmaceutical products
3	Dispense and ensure the optimum use of medicine prescribed to the patient
4	Provide pharmacist-initiated care to the patient and ensure the optimum use of medicine
5	Provide education and information on healthcare and medicine
6	Promote community health and provide related information and advice
7	Participate in research to ensure the optimal use of medicine

For each of these Unit Standards the SAPC has developed outcomes, and the entry-level pharmacist has to be deemed competent before completing their internship and being accepted into the profession. The intern's tutor is expected to help the intern become competent. One way of achieving this could be by mentoring.

Pharmacists are expected to be responsible and accountable. Pierpaoli (1992) suggests that this is linked to self esteem, and highlights three important determinants of self esteem: a sense of belonging, being competent, and having a sense of worth:

(1) A sense of belonging: This concept goes beyond belonging to a profession but also includes aspects such as belonging to Communities of Practice, i.e., learning with and from each other (which will be discussed in detail in section 4.7.). To attain a sense of belonging one must be able to do what is expected: practice according to laws, rules, regulations and standards of practice, e.g., the Good Pharmacy Practice rules. Similarly, there is a need to fit in, to belong in "a culture and system of beliefs" (Pierpaoli, 1992, 2176).



(2) Being competent: Competence and self-confidence are closely linked, so it is not surprising that competence is a determinant of self esteem.

(3) Having a sense of worth: Understanding oneself and having a purpose is important from a personal and a professional point of view.

Pierpaoli (1992, 2176 - 7) also identified six stages in the development of pharmacy residents that are also relevant to pharmacy interns in South Africa:

(1) Putting theory into practice: Undergraduate students acquire the required knowledge, develop the necessary skills and attitude - but it is usually mostly theoretical. The curriculum does provide for opportunities to put their theory into practice but this usually happens in a relatively sheltered environment under the constant supervision of a lecturer or pharmacist. Then they graduate and start their internship, and although they are still under the supervision of a pharmacist, i.e., their tutor or a pharmacist to whom this duty has been delegated (Pharmacy Act [No. 53 of 1974] as amended) this supervision occurs in the real world where patients and clients are waiting, and time is money. The South African Pharmacy Council (SAPC) realized that this relationship between intern and tutor should really be one where mentoring occurs, and in 2002 they decided to promote the fact that tutors should also be mentors. This was done during the Intern-Tutor-Training workshops held in the different provinces. I have facilitated the workshop in the East London area since 2002. In my opinion the SAPC assumes that the tutors know what mentoring is and do not provide any training. They merely highlight the roles of mentors and expect the tutors to make the transition themselves. They do not provide mentoring for the tutors either. Although the SAPC urges tutors to attend the workshops, many do not. At a meeting between representatives of the Pharmacy schools/faculties and the SAPC on 18 January 2008, the SAPC finally agreed that there is a need to train the tutors, and to help them become mentors. We decided to start by writing guidelines for tutors, and to emphasize mentoring. I volunteered my services to help write these guidelines<sup>12</sup>.

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<sup>12</sup> For a variety of reasons little progress has been made

(2) Becoming professionally accountable: This can be seen as the rate-limiting step in the whole process, as interns realize and come to terms with the responsibility of practicing Pharmaceutical Care. Suddenly others depend on them: patients/clients, colleagues, and other members of the healthcare team. This can be a daunting realization but also a very powerful stimulus for not wanting to let anyone down, for wanting to do one's best, and for accepting this responsible role. The mentor (tutor) should play an important role in helping the intern during this difficult stage. It is arguably one of the most important stages and also one of the most important 'duties' of the mentor to ensure the intern does not jeopardize their professional development.

(3) Learning to cope with uncertainty, with unclear expectations and fear of the unknown. An intern is at the bottom of the pecking order, i.e., when they enter the real world after their studies they are the most junior members. They have to learn to cope with this. They enter a world that they have only encountered for relatively short periods of time during their undergraduate training. Suddenly they are immersed in it, and are expected to succeed. The SAPC sends them a manual explaining what is expected of them, they are expected to attend the Intern-Tutor-Training workshop, and the rest is 'on the job' learning. A tutor who is also a mentor can make all the difference as the intern deals with the new environment.

(4) Solving problems in practice: As undergraduates they learned to solve problems in a systematic, theoretical way. Then as interns they realize that they have to apply this to practice and that patients/clients and colleagues depend on their ability to solve problems. The intern has to develop the skills that will allow them to solve problems in practice. A mentor can help them develop these skills.

(5) Applying themselves and as a result feeling a sense of fulfillment and achievement. Mentors should be guiding the intern and ensuring that they apply themselves and feel fulfilled. This would improve self esteem and give the intern the realization of self-actualization.

(6) The intern develops and matures during their internship. The mentor often develops along with the intern, and so this process is important to both the intern and mentor. Pierpaoli (1992, 2178) describes this stage as “self-renewal” on the part of the mentor. Thus the reciprocity of mentoring is again evident.

Thus mentoring is extremely useful during the internship programme. However, mentoring need not be limited to the undergraduate or internship programmes. There are many other opportunities where mentoring could help alleviate some of the problems facing pharmacists in South Africa, e.g., by training more competent pharmacist’s assistants. In order to contextualize where and how mentoring can be used elsewhere in Pharmacy I decided to highlight two important challenges that impact on Pharmacy and therefore on Pharmacy education. I chose these two challenges because they are critical issues that need to be addressed soon, and that also contextualize Pharmacy and Pharmacy education in South Africa.

### **2.8.2. Human Resource issues in Pharmacy**

Africa has the highest burden of disease of any continent (per population) but has the lowest number and ratio of health workers per population (WHO, 2006a)

South Africa is experiencing a serious shortage of healthcare professionals, including pharmacists and pharmacist’s assistants, who perform routine tasks involved in providing services that are needed (South African Health Review, 2007). According to the Health statistics published by the Health Systems Trust (2007) there were 11 547 pharmacists registered with the South African Pharmacy Council in 2007. This number includes pharmacists in both the private and the public sector. However, at the 2006 South African Association of Hospital and Institutional Pharmacists (SAAHIP) conference the president

of SAAHIP informed us that in the public sector 54% of pharmacist posts were vacant. Indications are that this situation has worsened since 2006.

There are several reasons for this shortage: (1) many healthcare professionals have left South Africa since 1994. Some were actively recruited and lured to 'greener pastures', some left on their own accord. (2) Many leave the public sector to work in the private sector because the remuneration packages are significantly better. (3) The resultant shortage of pharmacists has increased the workload of pharmacists, especially in doing mundane dispensing tasks (that should be done by pharmacist's assistants) rather than the Pharmaceutical Care roles for which they are trained. This often results in crisis management with the result that the services offered are below the accepted standard, or not provided because there are not enough pharmacists to take on the advanced clinical roles. This also leads to the fall in the status of pharmacists as members of the healthcare team, and causes great stress for everyone involved. (4) The increased workload and subsequent stress often leads to burnout, which results in the health professional leaving (South African Health Review, 2007; Misra, 2007).

Some might argue that there is a shortage of pharmacists in many countries of the world, not just in South Africa. There has been a major emphasis on the global shortage of healthcare workers, e.g., by the WHO and the FIP. The World Health Report: "Working together for health" (2006b) states that there is a global shortage of 4.3 million healthcare workers. The South African Pharmacy Council (SAPC) is trying to address the issue of shortage of pharmacists and pharmacist's assistants.

As in many other countries, the shortage is becoming critical to the viability of the entire health system. The public health sector has been hardest hit, and it is seriously impacting on the quality and safety of pharmaceutical services that are offered (Gray, 1998; Misra, 2007). How can pharmacy in the public health sector function when more than half the posts are vacant? The shortage of pharmacists has led to task-shifting, i.e., non-pharmacists are having to do the job pharmacists should be doing (in many instances

pharmacist's assistants – and sometimes untrained personnel – are doing the pharmacists' jobs). Hardly surprising then that there are problems and there is great dissatisfaction, both by what is left of the healthcare team and the patients. Recruiting enough pharmacists and other healthcare personnel to fill all the vacant posts would go a long way to solving the problems experienced in the public health sector. One of the government's attempts to fill posts was to make community service compulsory. Since 2000 pharmacy interns, upon completion of their internship, have to work a minimum of 12 months in a public sector institution before becoming fully qualified pharmacists (Regulation 1157 of the Pharmacy Act [No. 53 of 1974]) as amended. In my opinion this was a strategic decision because not only does it fill about 400 posts every year, but the Department of Health, which places the community service pharmacists (CSPs), can also decide where the need is greatest. The rural areas are often the most under-staffed, and many of these posts are now filled by CSPs. It is also important because it exposes CSPs to the health needs of the public sector, and perhaps internalizing a commitment to help resolve these problems. One problem associated with this is that there is an annual turn-over of CSPs, i.e., new CSPs have to be inducted and trained every year. It would be better to have continuity but at the moment this is better than having no pharmacists – as was the case prior to 2000. There are rumours that the government is considering extending the community service period to two years.

The government will have to significantly upgrade the financial and other incentives for pharmacists in the public sector before they will be able to attract and retain pharmacists in that sector. They tried to address this by paying 'scarce skills' bonuses and 'rural allowances' in order to try to get pharmacists to work in rural areas (Public Health and Welfare Sector Bargaining Council, 2004). The latest initiative involves Occupation Specific Dispensation (OSD) for all health professionals (Fraser-Moleketi, 2007). The implementation of the OSD will result in salaries being based on criteria such as performance, qualification, scope of work and experience. It will also allow career-pathing and forward planning by individuals and organizations. The implementation date for pharmacists and pharmacist assistants was

supposed to have been 1 July 2008 but to date The Department of Health is still negotiating the details.

One way of overcoming this shortage of pharmacists is by graduating more competent pharmacists who are prepared to work in the public sector.

However, there is also a shortage of human resources at the universities where pharmacists are trained. In the 2006 WHO Health Report the authors acknowledged that scaling up the education and training of health professionals is not possible using only the existing institutions (WHO, 2006b). There is a need for new institutions and for novel ways of educating and training. I see mentoring as an important strategic initiative in educating and training more pharmacists and other healthcare professionals.

### **2.8.3. HIV and AIDS and Pharmacy**

Recent figures available estimate that more than 5 million people are living with HIV and AIDS in South Africa (Dorrington *et al.*, 2006; Department of Health, 2007; UNAIDS, 2006a; UNAIDS 2006b). It is also estimated that about 2 million South Africans do not know that they are infected (UNAIDS, 2006b) despite the fact that the general awareness of HIV and AIDS is found to be high (Department of Health, 2006). These are frightening statistics – not only from a humanitarian perspective but also from a human resource perspective. The South African government has now come up with the ‘HIV and AIDS and STI (Sexually Transmitted Infections) Strategic Plan for South Africa 2007 – 2011’ in an effort to address the issues (Department of Health, 2007).

HIV and AIDS are causing havoc, not only in our communities but also in our healthcare system. The Department of Health is committed to trying to put as many HIV positive people onto anti-retrovirals (ARVs) as possible but with such a shortage of healthcare personnel, especially in the public health sector (the shortage is not limited to pharmacists) this is not happening fast enough. People are dying of AIDS, and healthcare personnel are suffering from

emotional burn-out. Many are leaving the public health sector because of this, which then further burdens the already short-staffed sector.

Official statistics of how many pharmacists have died of AIDS are not available. HIV and AIDS are depleting our healthcare workforce either directly - by members of the healthcare team dying, or indirectly by people leaving the public sector, where most of the burden of HIV and AIDS is.

Thus there is a need to graduate more competent pharmacists to fill the vacant posts, and to help with the ARV programme. I believe that we can use mentoring to train our pharmacists, other healthcare professionals and community health workers, and to help them overcome some of the difficulties they are experiencing. The Eastern Cape Regional Training Centre is currently negotiating to start mentoring programmes for nurses involved in ARV programmes, as a way of helping them cope with the burden of increasing numbers of patients on ARVs.

## **2.9. Conclusion**

Mentoring has been defined and described in many ways because there is no 'one size fits all' model. Every mentoring programme has to be designed to meet the needs of the mentees. Mentors and mentees form a relationship and together address the issues the mentee deems as 'real'. There will even be negotiation on what issues are 'real'; the mentor will provide the benefit of experience to the perception of the mentee.

Mentoring can occur in many different arenas, e.g., in the business world, in higher education, or in the practice of pharmacy. The mentoring programme described in this thesis is located within the Faculty of Pharmacy at Rhodes University, and was designed and implemented with specific goals in mind.

The next chapter deals with the ontological framework used in this thesis.

## Chapter 3: Ontological Framing

By reflecting critically on our taken-for-granted worlds, and the way in which our lives are affected by these constructions, we may be freed to consider alternatives (Gergen 2000, 101).

In 1894 Locke declared that philosophy can be seen as the ‘underlabourer’ to both research and practice (Bhaskar 1979, 2002). With this he meant that philosophy is a way of "clearing the ground a little... removing some of the rubbish that lies in the way of knowledge" (Locke, 1894, 14). In response to the question ‘why is philosophy important in my research’ I quote Collier, who writes:

A good part of the answer to the question “why philosophy” is that the alternative to philosophy is not *no* philosophy, but *bad* philosophy. The “unphilosophical” person has an unconscious philosophy, which they apply in their practice – whether of science or politics or daily life (Collier, 1994, 17).

Walsham (1995) argues that philosophical reflection is required for a consistent, rational and logical research process. I have chosen critical realism to be the ‘underlabourer’ in this research.

### 3.1. Critical realism

#### 3.1.1. Introduction

Roy Bhaskar - one of the leading authors of this philosophy - coined the term ‘critical realism’. The word ‘critical’ has had many meanings over the years, such as being critical about the ‘universal truths’ that positivists claim, being critical and reflecting upon what may be myths, illusions or ignorance (Danermark *et al.* 2002, 201). The word ‘realism’ – as Benton and Craib (2001) explained – has different meanings in different contexts. The common



use of the word often refers to 'being realistic' or even not having high expectations. In art, the term 'realism' tends to be used to distinguish it from fantasy, imagination or escapism. In critical realism the word 'realism' refers to an acceptance that the external world exists, regardless of our understanding of it, how we want it to be, or how we want to change it. It exists. However, with the adjective 'critical' the meaning changes - it means that as critical realists there is a commitment to wanting to deal with the real. Critical realism is also concerned with wanting to deal with social injustices and inequalities (Archer, 1995). Critical realism contributes to clarifying the 'what' questions and also tries to answer the 'why' questions (Archer *et al.*, 1998).

Research in critical realism can only progress if the researcher is prepared to engage through dialogue between theoretical work and empirical work. It is important to know what the most important questions are, who the person asking the questions is, and what the relationship between the person asking the questions and the ontology is (Archer *et al.*, 1998).

Critical realism is both an epistemology and ontology. It makes assertions about the way the real world can be known as well as about the nature of the real world. It acknowledges that knowledge is theory-laden and socially constructed but it is not determined by theories (Sayer, 1992).

### **3.1.2. How critical realism fits into the epistemological landscape**

There are two approaches to epistemology: rationalism and empiricism. Rationalism is the belief that we gain knowledge through reasoning. It includes necessary truth – sometimes also referred to as *a priori* truth. Necessary truth includes self-evident truth, which incorporates tautology – the belief that something is true because we made it that way, for example that one plus one is two. Deduction is another form of rationalism, and refers to the process of implying or inferring something, e.g., if one plus one is two, then by a process of deduction two minus one is one. It is sometimes referred

to as analytic truth. Deduction is “usually what we think of when we think of thinking” (Boeree, 1999, 2).

Empiricism focuses on empirical truth - that which is derived from experience. Although empiricism is not the same thing as science, the methods in science are usually empirical (direct observation is an empirical method often utilized in science). The process of induction is also often used in science, and is sometimes referred to as indirect empirical knowledge (Doyal and Harris, 1986). An example of induction is generalization. For example: a chemical substance ‘x’ is soluble in boiling water<sup>13</sup>. The fact that ‘x’ is soluble in boiling water is a property. The principle that ‘x’ is soluble in boiling water is a generalization drawn from observations after dissolving ‘x’ in boiling water many times.

Statistics are a tool often used in science, especially in the process of induction and generalization, e.g., statistics are used to find out how often one would have to show the solubility of ‘x’ in boiling water before one could comfortably generalize.

There are different types of empiricism: realism and idealism, each of which has different forms. There are two forms of realism: direct realism – also known as simple or naïve realism, which suggests that “what you see is what you get” (Boeree, 1999, 4); and critical realism, which suggests that “we see sensations, the images of the things in the real world, not the things directly” (*ibid*). Boeree used the example of a stick jutting out of water to illustrate critical realism. The stick jutting out of the water looks as though it is bent. If one were to take it out of the water one would notice that it is in fact straight, and that the reason for it looking bent can be explained by refraction. The critics of critical realism, e.g., realists like Reid and Gibson, would argue if we had removed the stick from the water we would have seen that it was straight.

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<sup>13</sup> The monograph of substance ‘x’ would contain specific solubility details in water at various temperatures.

Idealism is another form of empiricism. The idealist way of thinking is that nothing exists until it has been perceived. Boeree (1999, 4) quotes a story to explain the different types of empiricism: three baseball umpires brag about their abilities. The first one says: "I call 'em as I see 'em!" [he's a critical realist]. The second says: "Well, I call 'em as they *are*!" [he's a direct realist]. And the third one says: "Shoot, they ain't *anything* till I call 'em!" [he's an idealist].

Science can be thought of as a blend of both rationalism and empiricism (Okasha, 2002). Typically, scientific enquiry involves starting with a theory about something. From this theory we create one or more hypotheses, which are forms of deductions. This is rationalism. Then we perform our experiment or make observations, collect and analyse our evidence (also known as data), and then by using induction we either support or reject our hypotheses, and perhaps even come up with generalizations. This is empiricism. Theories apply until they are shown to be false.

Much of the traditional research in pharmacy – especially in the pharmaceutical sciences - is located within scientific realism, which claims that truth is all about the laws of physics. This is sometimes referred to as naïve realism because reality is deemed to be both real and understandable (Cupchik, 2001). The researcher is seen to be separate from the observed, the findings are 'true', and methodologies tend to be quantitative in nature. Research in social pharmacy, on the other hand, is better situated within critical realism, which is based on a commitment to understand and explain the mechanisms at work in the social world, not only the empirical but also those which are not visible or experienced.

Although the naïve realists may argue - both quantitative and qualitative approaches deal with 'data', i.e., something becomes the object or subject of enquiry and thus data is always shaped by the researcher, be it in a laboratory setting or an interview.

### **3.1.3. Critical realism as ontology**

In the rest of this chapter I briefly describe some of the main theories that describe the relationship between society and individuals. This then leads on to a discussion of structure and agency before describing the ontological position in critical realism. The research which forms the basis of this thesis is located in critical realism.

The reality that social scientists - and social pharmacists - study is socially produced and is an interpretation of the social world (Danermark *et al.* 2002). The findings are 'created' and 'truth' is relative to individuals and communities, and mainly involves using qualitative methodologies.

#### **3.1.3.1. Society and the individual**

What is society? The common use of the word 'society' may refer to a particular group of people, such as the Pharmaceutical Society of South Africa; people with prestige or privilege, such as high society in England; or as general human company, i.e., if I am amongst people then I must be part of society. However, from a sociological point of view society is better described as a large complex of human relationships and interactions i.e. "society is made up of people, groups, networks, institutions, organisations and systems. These aspects of society may include: local, national and international patterns of relationships" ([www.aroweducation.org/Glossary.htm](http://www.aroweducation.org/Glossary.htm)). Society is made up of individuals, or groups of individuals, and is about relationships and interactions between people, and involves patterns of relationships. These relationships are not necessarily limited to local or national levels, but may be international.

Society is not observable in the empirical sense. We cannot objectively observe society, and our observations change that which is observed. We can study individuals or groups of people, e.g., communities but we cannot observe society *per se* (Outhwaite, 1998). Outhwaite (1998, 284) writes "the

laws of the phenomena of society are, and can be, nothing but the actions and passions of human beings united together in the social state". To understand what happens in society we need to understand social structures and how they are related (Manicas, 1998). Without the concept of social structures we cannot understand individuals, groups, communities, or society. Society depends on the practices of individuals, i.e., although we cannot observe society we can observe the actions of individuals within society. However, merely understanding the structures within society would not explain what happens in the world (Manicas, 1998). It is more complicated than that.

Few people have had as profound an effect on our thinking about society as Karl Marx. In his attempt to analyse and critique class relations under capitalism he concluded that society had to change. How one might change society is still an important question in Marxism. After Marx's death the study of society became central to the discipline of sociology. For example, Max Weber and Emile Durkheim were important sociologists who were in opposition to Marxism (Sciabarra, 2006).

There is much debate about the relationship between society and individuals. Does society exist because of the individuals that make it up? Do individuals function and relate to each other because they are within society? Does society only exist because of individuals? These questions, and many more, have been addressed by numerous sociologists, including (but not limited to) Weber, Durkheim, Giddens, Luhmann, Archer, and Bhaskar.

Weber (1978, 4) describes sociology as "a science concerning itself with the interpretive understanding of social action". His description of social action is: "action is 'social' insofar as its subjective meaning takes account of behaviour of others and is thereby oriented in its course" (*ibid*). He, like Durkheim, recognizes that humans relate to each other, and that their action is directed towards others. This action and interaction as humans relate to each other results in social reality. What this reality is for each of us depends on our actions and interactions with others.

Michel Freitag's theories were influenced by Durkheim, Weber, Marx and Hegel (Singer, 2002). Freitag is of the opinion that social structure has to be seen as a result of historical development and that it changes over time.

Bhaskar (1998) explains that there were two initial main sociological theories (known as models) that tried to describe the relationship between society and individuals:

Model I: Emphasizes that society determines individual human behaviour. Furthermore this model supports the idea that people understand and choose values that guide their actions (Hays, 1994). This is known as voluntarism (Kaboub, 2001, 3), and has been much criticized for being too simple.

Model II: Is based on Durkheim's theories, and suggests that individual human behaviour determines society. This is known as reification (Kaboub, 2001), i.e., a process of treating an abstraction, social relations or behaviour as if it were an object – sometimes referred to as “thingification” (it is derived from the German word “Verdinglichung”). This, too, has been seen as too simple. In fact, Bhaskar – a critical realist - criticized both models:

People do not create society. For it always pre-exists them and is a necessary condition for their activity. Rather, society must be regarded as an ensemble of structures, practices and conventions which individuals reproduce or transform, but which would not exist unless they did so. Society does not exist independently of human activity (the error of reification). But it is not the product of it (the error of voluntarism) [Bhaskar, 1998, 36].

These two models did not seem to be adequate, so third and fourth models were proposed by Berger and Bhaskar respectively:

Model III: Is based on the work of Peter Berger and associates, and states that society forms the individuals who create society (Wright, 2006). Society is seen as being the ‘object’ produced as a result of individuals’ actions, relations and interactions, i.e., society comes about as a result of individuals and as such is external to the individuals. At the same time it is the individuals and their actions that determine society since individuals are the ones who

practice consciousness and regulate society, which is an internal process (*ibid*).

Bhaskar found this third model to be misleading because although it combined models I and II it implied that people and society were “two moments of the same process” (Bhaskar, 1998, 33), which he disagreed with. Instead, he proposed the following:

Model IV: According to Bhaskar (1998) “society is not created by human beings, although it is reproduced and transformed by them” (Kaboub, 2001, 4). This (Model IV) is referred to as the Transformational model of social activity and will be discussed in greater detail in the next section dealing with structure and agency. The transformational model implies that “society is both the ever-present condition (material cause) and the continually reproduced outcome of human agency” (Bhaskar, 1998, 34 -35). This model is relevant in the context of critical realism, and also helps us understand the process of socialization:

Society ... provides necessary conditions for intentional human action, and intentional human action is a necessary condition for it. Society is only present in human action, but human action always expresses and utilizes some or other social form (Bhaskar, 1998, 34 – 35).

Thus individuals within society develop and maintain habits, skills and competences (intentional human action) and these in turn reproduce or transform society. However, according to Bhaskar (1998, 38) society is not simply about the intentional human actions – there is much more to it. Bhaskar argues that: “Model I has actions but no conditions, Model II has conditions but no actions, Model III confuses actions and conditions, and Model IV, by emphasizing material continuity, accounts for change and history” (Kaboub, 2001, 4), and is thus more descriptive and seems a better model to apply.

The discussions and debates about the relationships between society and individuals are ongoing. A comprehensive discussion would take up volumes. The following discussion will highlight some of the issues of structure and agency in society. Popper (1992) expresses the view that there is a difference between 'what is' i.e. ontology, and 'what we know about it' i.e. epistemology. Others, e.g. pragmatists, have argued that this distinction is not as clear as Popper claims. Be that as it may, my discussion is mainly ontological in nature.

### **3.1.3.2. Structure and agency**

In the sociological and anthropological literature, the terms structure and agency are often defined by contrasting them. This means that the meaning "becomes dependent on the concept which it is set against" (Hays, 1994, 57) and can lead to confusion because agency is what structure is not, and structure is what agency is not.

Structure - also referred to as social systems (by Luhmann, for example) - includes factors such as gender, social class, ethnicity, religion, customs (and others), which influence people and the opportunities they have in life. Early use of the term 'structure' varies in the literature, e.g., Geertz (1973, 331) refers to structure as "political instruments", "institutions" and the "power element", whilst Skocpol (1979) interprets structure to mean the relationship between states and classes. Harding (1986) claims that social science is about finding order and patterns in social structure. Hays (1994) describes structure as follows: first of all structures are created by people, but at the same time structure moulds people. Secondly, without structures there are no rules, and thirdly, there are levels of structures, i.e., some structures are hidden from consciousness. This ties in with the strata of critical realism, and the idea that there are generative mechanisms (as will be discussed in section 3.1.3.8.).



Agency “explains the creation, recreation, and transformation of social structures” (Hays, 1994, 62), i.e., people make structures but at the same time structures mould people. Structures can be changed (transformed) by people, but the transformation will affect the people. Sociologists often use the word ‘agency’ to refer to individuals’ capacity to act deliberately: they make their own choices, purposefully, and independently. Agents are sometimes referred to as actors.

According to Hays (1994, 57) we must not over-simplify the terms structure and agency to mean that “structure is systematic and patterned, while agency is contingent and random; that structure is static, while agency is active; that structure is collective, while agency is individual”. It is far more complex than that.

It is not possible to have structure without agency, or agency without structure. Bhaskar writes:

A structure is made up of a set of internally related objects; a certain structure may in its turn also be part of a greater structure.... The labour market, marriage, a language and a working team are all examples of structures. And social structures have emerged from human agency and have received novel properties of their own, different from the properties of people. When we analyse a structure we do so by mapping, through abstraction, the relationships of which it is made up; the foundation of a structural explanation is made up of the mechanisms it possesses and the positions it contains (Danermark *et al.*, 2002, 178).

According to Giddens (1984) structure gives form and shape to social life. Critics such as Mouzelis (1995) and Archer (1995) argue that Giddens’ definition resembles that used in anthropology and linguistics, and is too narrow to be useful in sociology. In Giddens’ definition structure is more constraining than enabling. Healy (1998) explains that the word ‘structure’ as used in Giddens’ definition refers to rules and resources, whilst the word

'systems' refers to the products of such rules and resources. Agents use rules and resources to produce and/or reproduce systems: "structures can be reproduced and transformed only through agency, and agents can come into existence only within a structured environment" (Jackson, 1999, 550). Thus structures can enable or constrain an agent, i.e., someone's capabilities depend on their social surroundings.

An agent is someone who can set goals and try to achieve them, i.e., someone who has intentions (Danermark *et al.*, 2002). It follows that one of the more obvious differences between structure and agency is that a structure cannot 'act', only an agent can. However, structures can channel the action of agents and thus there is always a relationship between structure and agency. This relationship has led to much debate.

According to Bourdieu (1990) agents accumulate social knowledge and experience throughout life, and this determines their future social practices. Elias (1991) on the other hand is of the opinion that the interactions between agents determine future social practices. It seems that both the social knowledge and the interactions between agents are important.

According to Weik (2006) there are three ways of dealing with the relationship between structure and agency, namely as an issue of "dualism, as a duality, or avoiding any commitment in this respect" (*ibid*, 2). Dualism is the division of an object of study into two elements. It is a relatively simple form of categorization used to contrast and separate the two elements. Examples of dualism in sociological debate include (but are not limited to): structure and agency, the individual and society, and mind and body. The dualistic approach has been heavily criticized recently. It appears to be too simple and restrictive, and resulted in a slightly different approach, namely duality, which allows for more interaction between the elements than dualism does, i.e., there is no need to separate the elements (although they are different). Duality has allowed theorists to think about the "nature and value of dualism" (Jackson, 1999, 546) and instead of having two opposing elements (as in dualism) they are "brought together in a duality of structure" (Jackson, 1999,

550). A criticism of duality is that it results in “social theory dominated by individual agency” (Jackson, 1999, 551) and that the actions of individuals are the dominant determinants, not structure. Some critics suggest that it is possible for dualism and duality to co-exist, but that they may be relevant in different circumstances.

According to Danermark *et al.* (2002, 179) three theories or paradigms are worth mentioning when discussing the relationship between structure and agency. The “social fact paradigm” stipulates that everything starts with structures and that the action of agents depends on their “positions in different structures” (*ibid*). In other words the role the individual agent plays within society is dependent on his/her position within it. This position could be dependent on age, gender, race, economic status, culture, level of education, job, social status and any other factor that differentiates positions within society.

The “agency paradigm” claims the opposite: that the behaviour of the agent (social action) is where everything starts, that what the person does to achieve a goal is more important than the structures, and that structures are secondary to agents. Weber (1978, 4) writes: “action is social insofar as its subjective meaning takes account of behaviour of others and is thereby oriented in its course”. Thus, social action is directed towards others and is affected by their behaviour. Social action involves other people and is determined and affected by social norms.

Danermark *et al* (2002, 179) describes a phenomenon relevant to the first two theories, namely “conflation” – also known as dependence. In the social fact paradigm there is “downward conflation”, i.e., agents are not autonomous but are dependent on structures (see A in Figure 2). In the agency paradigm there is “upward conflation”, i.e., structures are dependent on what the agents do (see B in Figure 2). This argument about conflation led to the third theory, where conflation is not as important (see C in Figure 2):

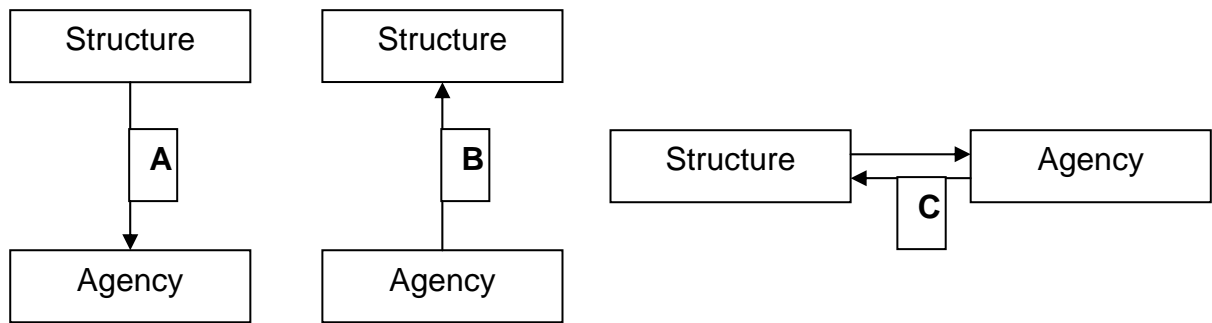


Figure 2: A schematic diagram illustrating conflation, where A represents downward conflation, B upward conflation, and C where structure and agency are dependent on each other, i.e., conflation is not as important.

The third paradigm (C) is Giddens' (1984) "structuration theory", which states that structure and agency are dependent on each other, and that "structure and agency can only exist by virtue of each other" (Danermark *et al.*, 2002, 179). This paradigm emphasizes the importance of duality, and looks at structure and agency with a more interpretative, individual point of view. According to Giddens (1984), social life is not just about random acts. The action of agents (individually and collectively) determines whether the structure will remain the same or change. Similarly, the action of agents will either reinforce and reproduce expectations, or go against them.

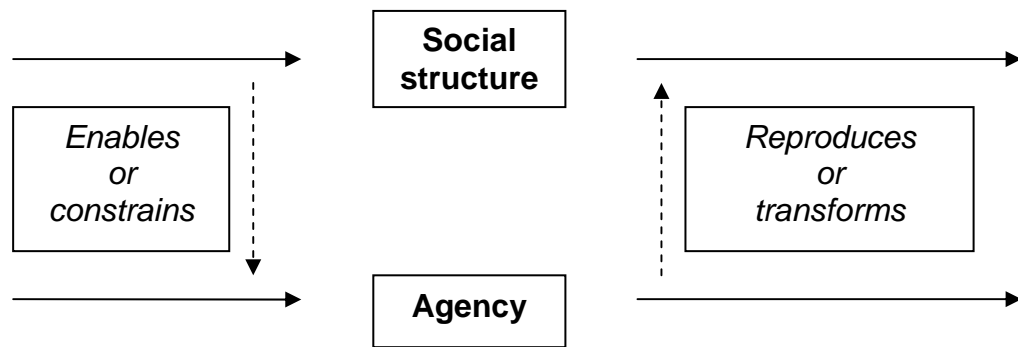
Critical realism offers a slightly different slant to the debate. Mouzelis (1995) agrees that social structures enable or constrain agency, but to him it is a matter of degrees of enablement and constraint. He also describes dualism in such a way that it implies some sort of distance between agent and structure. He uses the example of an assembly-line worker in a car factory to illustrate subject-object dualism, where the factory is the subject, and the worker the object. The assembly-line worker occupies a subordinate position, and as such has little influence on the structure of the company/factory. However, decisions made by the company/factory, e.g., if the managers in the company decide to implement a dress code for all workers, will influence the worker directly. The distance between the subject and object is important in determining the power relations. According to Mouzelis (1995) the greater the

distance between the subject and object - the greater the power of the subject over the object.

Archer (1995) argues that Giddens reduces social structures to rules and processes and that his theory/model suggests that agency reproduces structures. She is of the opinion that there is more to it. Similarly, Archer criticizes Mouzelis' theory as being 'virtual'. In her opinion social systems are not virtual – they do exist. Healy (1998, 516) writes that “societies are emergent from individuals and real in themselves”. According to Archer we need to think of societies and individuals as different things. Bhaskar (1989, 33) writes: “[Individuals and societies] do not constitute two moments of the same process. Rather, they refer to radically different things”. He developed the “transformational model” to illustrate the relationship between structure and agency (Bhaskar, 1993, 155). Although it resembles Giddens' structuration theory there are differences. Danermark *et al.* (2002, 180) describes Bhaskar's model:

The social structures already exist for every agent – they are simply there. This does not mean that society could not exist without human action or that this action could take place even if the individual had no comprehension of her action. On the other hand, one cannot say that individuals create society out of nothing – we may instead regard them as reproducing or transforming it. If social structures already exist, actions can only modify them – and the whole set of actions maintains or changes them. While social structures cannot be reduced to individuals, the former are a prerequisite for any human action – social structures enable actions but they also set limits to what actions are possible. From this line of reasoning we may form a transformation model of human activity, the foundation of which has been developed by Bhaskar.

Bhaskar (1993, 155) represented this transformational model graphically. I have adapted it slightly:



**Figure 3:** Diagrammatic representation of the transformational model according to Bhaskar (1993, 155)

The model illustrates that social structure and agency are separate phenomena (they each have their own little box) - each with its own properties and powers, but each is “essential for how the other will be moulded” (Danermark *et al.*, 2002, 181). Social structure can either enable agency or constrain it (shown by the dotted arrow on the left), and agency can either reproduce social structure or transform it (shown by the dotted arrow on the right). The solid arrows indicate that this is a process and that social structure and agency are in what Danermark *et al.* (2002, 181) refer to as “strata” and that something “emerges” as a result of the interplay between social structure and agency. This concept of emergence will be discussed in section 3.1.3.8. It is not a linear one-dimensional process, but rather cyclical.

Danermark *et al.* (2002, 182) argue that although conflation (upwards and/or downwards) may be important in the social fact and agency paradigms, it might be better to link structure and agency, and to study the interplay between social structure and agency. They sum it up rather well:

The most productive contribution to social practice that social science can make, we conclude, is the examination of social structures, their powers and liabilities, mechanisms and tendencies, so that people, groups and organizations may consider them in their interaction and so – if they wish – strive to change or eliminate existing social structures

and to establish new ones. Another contribution may be predictions of how interplay and structural elaboration will appear in the future. The whole matter, however, is more complicated (Danermark *et al.*, 2002, 182).

Individuals make decisions based on personal self-interest and society is a result of the interaction of personal self-interest (Hays, 1994). For example, Willis documented the ideas and behaviour of a group of working-class schoolboys in Britain in the 1970s (Willis, 1977). He noted that the schoolboys decided that they were not going to conform to the school's rules and ideology. Instead they mis-behaved, which led to them - the "lads" as Willis called them - leaving school as soon as they could. Some ended up working in factories, others were unemployed. Willis recognized that the decisions these lads made (as agents) kept them in the working class, and perpetuated the working class culture. Their decisions reproduced their existing social structures.

Sometimes agents can change structures and produce social change. Social revolutions are examples of incidences where agents have changed the nature of social structures, e.g., the French Revolution. However, social change can occur without such dramatic interventions, as Hays (1994, 64) explains:

Technically speaking, people are agents on a daily basis. Structures, in this sense, are in the process of constant readjustment. Further, in view of the logical systematicity of structures, this constant readjustment at the surface level can potentially, though infrequently, lead to the possibility of change at the deeper level.

One of the main features of any definition of agency is the idea that agents have choices. However, Hays (1994, 64) warns that choice does not necessarily imply intentionality because choice may be at the conscious or unconscious level. Secondly, choices should not be seen in isolation. Instead

we should see choices as being “socially shaped” (*ibid*). Thirdly, the choices agents make are influenced by social structures.

Structure and agency are thus both different from each other, and dependent on each other.

### **3.1.3.3. What about culture?**

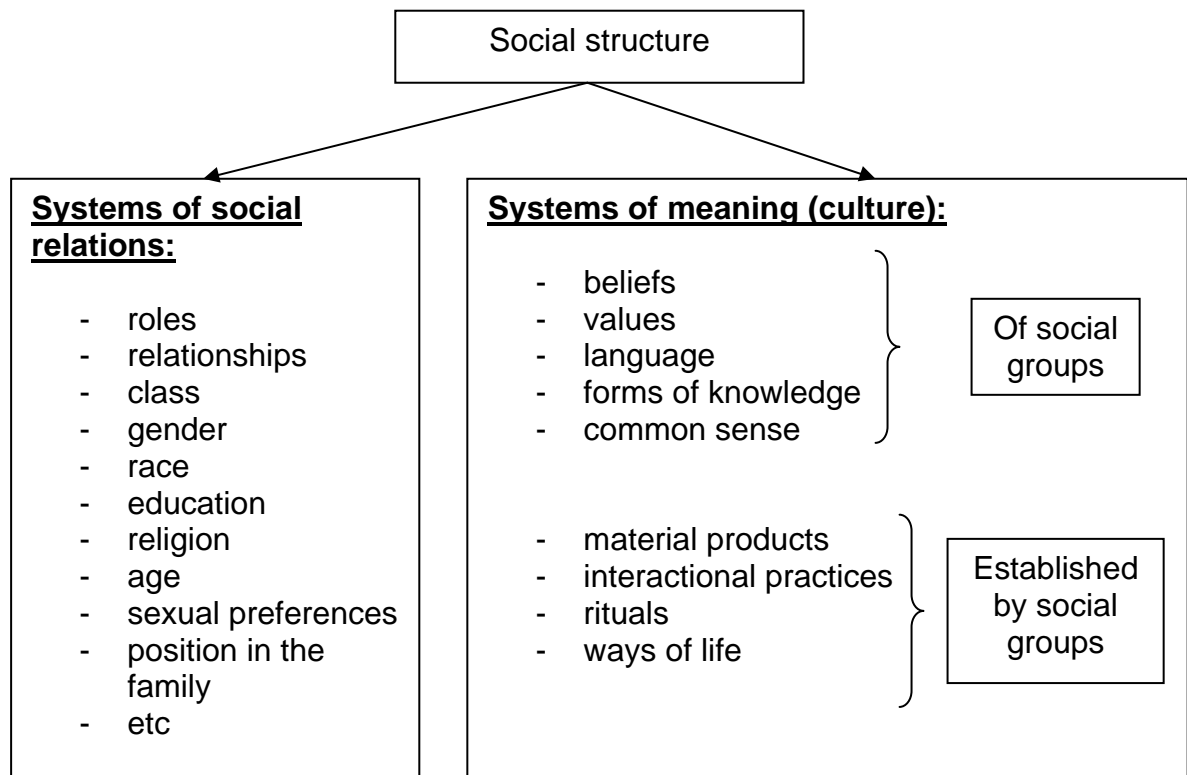
Much has been written about structure and agency and there is still much debate about where and how culture fits in. For example, Schwartz (1981) sees culture as that which gives structure to social life, whilst most sociologists see culture as something very different to structure (Hays, 1994, 58). Sewell (1992) notes that often culture and agency are placed in the same category. Hays (1994, 58) poses the following question: “is structure objective and material whilst culture is subjective and ideal...?” She refers to “...the sticky problem of culture” – and this seems an apt description of the relationship between structure, agency and culture. She describes culture as:

... both the product of human interaction and the producer of certain forms of human interaction. Culture is both constraining and enabling. Culture is a social structure with an underlying logic of its own (Hays, 1994, 65).

Hays studied the theories of Marx, Durkheim, Weber, Williams, Giddens, Bourdieu, Foucault, Geertz, Mannheim and Sewell before theorising that there are two parts to what is called social structure: (1) systems of social relations, and (2) systems of meaning (Hays, 1994, 65 – 66). Systems of social relations include the roles people play, relationships, class, gender, race, education, religion, age, sexual preference, position in the family and so on (*ibid*). Systems of meaning include the “beliefs, and values of social groups, but also their language, forms of knowledge, and common sense, as well as the material products, interactional practices, rituals, and ways of life



established by these” (*ibid*). Another name for these systems of meaning is culture. This can be represented diagrammatically:



**Figure 4:** Diagrammatic representation of the components of the systems of social relations, and the systems of meaning (culture), according to Hays (1994, 65 – 66).

Mannheim (1985, cited in Hays, 1994, 68) states that what we think and how we think is “derived from old ways of thinking and respond to existing ways of thinking in a systematic fashion” thus “culture influences not only what we think about, but *how* we think about it” (Hays, 1994, 68).

People do not choose which race, gender, or class to be born into. Similarly they do not choose the beliefs, values, language, forms of knowledge or common sense of the family they are born into. These initial systems of social relations and systems of meanings determine what choices we make in life (Hays, 1994). For example, our beliefs and values may change in life as we

mature from adolescence into adulthood. We may decide to learn a new language but we will always have our mother tongue to refer to, and the forms of knowledge associated with our initial culture. These systems of social relations and systems of meaning (culture) can be either constraining or enabling, e.g., as we move between social groups. As agents, people make choices. An example that comes to mind is that of a Xhosa- speaking student from a working class rural area who arrives at Rhodes University for the first time. The language of instruction and predominant language at Rhodes University is English, the beliefs and values are predominantly middle- class and western, and the forms of knowledge and 'common sense' are typical of a tertiary institution such as a university. The choices this student makes could change his/her life, i.e., as an individual, but are unlikely to affect the systems of meaning (the culture) of the institution much, unless these choices are acted upon by many people. Systems of relations and systems of meaning (culture) tend to be reproduced more often than they are transformed (Hays, 1994, 70).

#### **3.1.3.4. The nature of reality**

To understand critical realism we have to acknowledge that there is a real world out there, and that it exists regardless of what we know or believe about it. Critical realists believe that it is possible to know something about the world and that on the basis of knowing something we can change some things. This does not mean that knowing something about the world means that that knowledge is certain, nor that what we believe or think we know is, in fact, real.

Benton and Craib (2001, 120) describe four important features of critical realism:

- (1) In critical realism we can understand science and scientific claims provided we acknowledge that science is about understanding things that exist independently of us. Critical realists do not make judgements about truths in science. For example we can understand the

- (2) Unlike empiricism, critical realism acknowledges that knowledge is a social process, and that knowledge can be represented in many ways. According to Bhaskar critical realism “accepts the idea of relativism in the sense that all knowledge is socially produced, but all knowledge is not therefore equally valuable” (cited in Danermark *et al.* 2002, 202). For example if we were to compare a urologist to a plumber, one could argue that both deal with (and understand) water borne sewerage systems. However, no one would want a plumber to solve their urological problems! The knowledge they possess is very different and not equally valuable because it is very context specific.
- (3) Unlike other forms of realism, critical realism acknowledges that things may not be as they seem and so critical realists look beyond the surface appearance of things. Benton and Craib (2001) explain that this is why critical realism is sometimes referred to as ‘depth realism’ whilst empiricism is known as ‘empirical realism’. An example in pharmacy of looking beyond the surface is if a person presents at a community pharmacy with a skin rash, which they think might be measles. The pharmacist should look at the rash to see if the distinguishing features are present, and ask the client/patient specific questions to determine if it is indeed measles. These questions could include when the rash started, whether they have a fever, whether they are taking any medication, if they feel stressed or anxious etc. Only after receiving answers to these questions (and other questions), and analyzing the rash should the pharmacist make a tentative diagnosis. Treatment or referral will depend on the tentative diagnosis.
- (4) Critical realism acknowledges that all understanding and beliefs are fallible, i.e., they are always open to correction. For example my understanding of how the mentors in this research constructed mentoring is based on my understanding of: mentoring, the context, the

Thus, to sum up, critical realism acknowledges that reality exists independent of us and that our perspective of reality is dependent on our experiences:

Critical realism contends, first, that there is a real world independent of our knowledge about it, and second, that it is possible to gain knowledge about this real world: facts are certainly theory-laden, but they are not theory-determined. However, knowledge is always fallible and more or less truth-like, and its usability varies in various social situations, since there are many different levels and forms of social practice (Danermark *et al.* 2002, 202 – 203)

In research we use methods to determine how well a theory or a related set of concepts accounts for things or events. In trying to answer my research questions I had to do more than just describe mentoring because “events can be seen, but social mechanisms are not readily observable; they require theory and abstraction” (Wikgren, 2005). I needed to look more deeply at what was happening, and why. Critical realism rejects the idea that the appearance of things corresponds directly with the way things are. Thus the aim of my research was to discover (i.e. identify and describe) the obvious and the “hidden or not readily observable structures and objects that have causal powers to produce effects” (Wikgren, 2005).

### **3.1.3.5. Critical realism in relation to empiricism, positivism, and hermeneutics**

The empiricist view is that all knowledge is acquired by experience. But modern science has challenged this view because there are things and processes which we cannot experience or observe directly, but which we

know exist, such as atoms and molecules. Furthermore, modern science has used these things and processes that we cannot experience or observe directly to describe things and processes that we can experience and observe (Benton and Craib, 2001). For example, we use our knowledge of atoms and molecules to explain receptor theory, and therefore how some medicines work.

The positivists claim that nature and society should be studied in the same way, and this is called the 'naturalist view'. In fact, initially critical realism was called critical naturalism, where Bhaskar (1998, 2) defined naturalism as "the thesis that there is (or can be) an essential unity of method between the natural and the social sciences". But although one can argue that both natural sciences and social sciences are socially defined and based on theory and ideology, the natural sciences are "naturally produced", whilst the social sciences are "socially produced" (Danermark *et al.* 2002, 51).

Hermeneutics promote the study of human relations and shared understanding. They argue that society cannot be studied using the 'naturalist' methodology. In the hermeneutic approach there are two important elements, which are also relevant in critical realism:

- (1) "An interpretation is dependent on the researchers' earlier experiences, her theories, frame of reference, and the concepts she uses in the interpretation of the studied object (Danermark *et al.* 2002, 159)". This is known as 'prejudice' and 'pre-judgement' and includes (but is not limited to) own experience, language and ideologies. Language is not a fixed entity. It is dynamic and changes meaning depending on the social context. For example if someone says 'I feel sick' does that mean they are nauseous and want to vomit, or does it mean they don't feel well, e.g., because they have a fever? According to Sayer (1992) the meanings in language are dependent on previous experiences, context and what others have said. For example, it would be foolish to use complicated medical terminology when talking to a client/patient, unless the client/patient is a fellow health care professional.

(2) “One is constantly involved in interplay between the parts and the whole”, i.e., to understand human relations and have a shared understanding one has to put everything into context (Danermark *et al.*, 2002, 159). For example, if an oncology patient on chemotherapy says ‘I feel sick’ the context is different to that of someone who has over-indulged with alcohol – although the outcome (namely vomiting) may be the same. However, all interpretation is “contextual in time and space, i.e., the knowledge we acquire is grounded in specific contexts” (*ibid*). For example, we cannot simply implement USA designed treatment protocols for HIV and AIDS in South Africa without tailoring them to local needs. Our context is different.

#### **3.1.3.6. The intransitive and transitive dimensions of reality**

Bhaskar (1991) argues that researchers must distinguish between reality and the observation of reality, which is value laden. There are two different dimensions or ‘worlds’: “an intransitive world that is natural and (relatively) unchanging and a transitive world that is social and historical” (Bhaskar, 1991, 10). When someone does research the natural world in which they are doing the research does not change, but the person doing the research “afterwards works in a different (social or cognitive) world” (*ibid*).

Critical realism, according to Bhaskar (1991), operates in these two dimensions: a transitive epistemological dimension and an intransitive ontological dimension. Research in the critical realism paradigm is mainly concerned with the intransitive dimension, i.e., wanting to find out about the structures and mechanisms that result in the empirical events. Critical realists argue that the underlying structures and mechanisms that constitute reality are relatively enduring.

According to Danermark (2002) we should be asking questions about access to an external reality. Constructionists claim that we can only get access to phenomena in the external world based on our knowledge of social and cultural processes. For example, Lupton (1998) argues that there is no reality

independent of us, and that all reality is experienced and interpreted. Sayer (2000) believes there is an external reality but is of the opinion that access to the external world cannot be neutral, and that knowledge is dependent on social issues, e.g., language. Critical realists claim that it is possible to gain access to the external world, but they acknowledge the influence of social factors (Danermark, 2002).

### **3.1.3.7. Strata, domains and emergence in critical realism**

In critical realism much is made of the two dimensions of reality, namely strata (or levels) and domains. Strata refers to a hierarchical order of reality, namely the physical, biological, psychological and social strata. The physical stratum is at the chemical and biochemical level, the biological stratum involves anatomical and physiological processes, the psychological stratum involves psychological processes, and the social stratum involves human beings in their social capacity and society. It may be useful to think of these strata as layers of a pyramid:

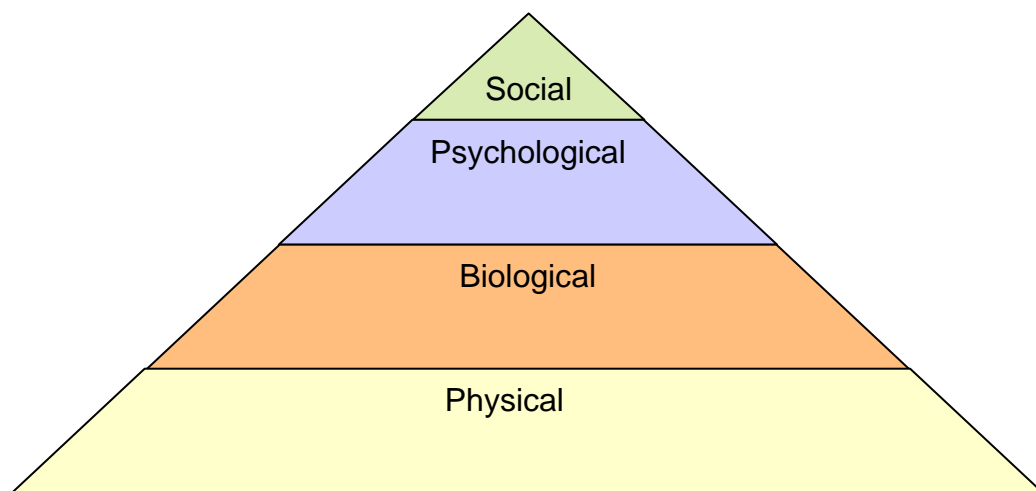


Figure 5: A diagrammatic representation of the physical, biological, psychological and social strata important in the understanding of critical realism and emergence.

Each underlying stratum “creates the conditions” for the next stratum (Danermark, 2002, 57). For example, when sodium moves into a nerve cell (axon or dendrite) it causes a change in polarity in that section of the nerve. This change in polarity may or may not result in an action potential, depending on a whole number of factors, like whether or not that section of the nerve cell is sufficiently stable for depolarization to occur. The continued movement of an action potential along nerve cells, and across synaptic clefts may eventually lead to an outcome such as contraction of a muscle, or brain activity. But this depends on which nerve is stimulated, where, for how long, to what extent and so forth. Thus the mere fact that a nerve is stimulated does not necessarily mean that something biological will occur. It might, but it might not. However, the biological stratum is dependent on chemical reactions – without chemical reactions there cannot be biological activity. Similarly, without biological outcomes there will be no psychological activity, and without our psychology we cannot be social creatures. It is the presence of generative mechanisms within each stratum that determines the stratum (*ibid*). These different strata have led to the formation of different disciplines, e.g., chemistry and biochemistry investigate mechanisms within the molecular level, physiology at the biological level, psychology at the psychological level and sociology at the social level. Research may include more than one level or be limited to one. In my research I will limit my discussions to that which is emergent within the social stratum, but acknowledge that the other strata are significant.

Han and Ballis (2007) describe an interesting observation that serves as an example to demonstrate the significance of the different strata in healthcare. They noticed that some healthcare workers in Sydney were using psychological and socio-economic information about clients (i.e. from the psychological and social strata) to help understand their illness. However, when it came to diagnosing and treating the illness they would revert back to their patho-physiological knowledge, which is in the biological stratum.

In critical realism we acknowledge that “reality exists independently of us and of our knowledge and/or perception of it” (Kaboub, 2001, 2). This is an



important concept in understanding critical realism, and leads onto the next important issue in critical realism, namely the stratification or differentiation of reality. Bhaskar (1978, 1979, and 2002) explains that reality exists as three domains: the first is made up of our experiences of what actually happened, and is known as the empirical domain. The second (middle) domain contains events, i.e., all the things which happen even if we don't experience them, and is known as the actual domain. The third domain is the deepest domain, and contains all the mechanisms with generative powers. This domain is known as the real domain. Perhaps this name “real” is unfortunate because all three domains are real. It is probably best to illustrate the domains diagrammatically:

**Empirical**                      *(event is experienced, it is observed)*

---

**Actual**                      *(event which may or may not be observed, existing in time and space)*

---

**Real**                      *(generative mechanisms)*

Figure 6: Diagrammatic representation of the three domains in critical realism

The “real” stratum is the most “basal” - as Danermark *et al.* (2002, 67) put it – the “actual” is the intermediate and the “empirical” is the highest. Essentially the empirical is “rooted” in the actual, and the actual is “rooted” in the real stratum.

To explain by example: if a person is exposed to the measles virus (a paramyxovirus) there are several things that can happen (in the real domain) depending on whether the person was previously exposed to the virus or not, and on the status of the person’s immune system. The following diagram shows the measles example in terms of the three domains:

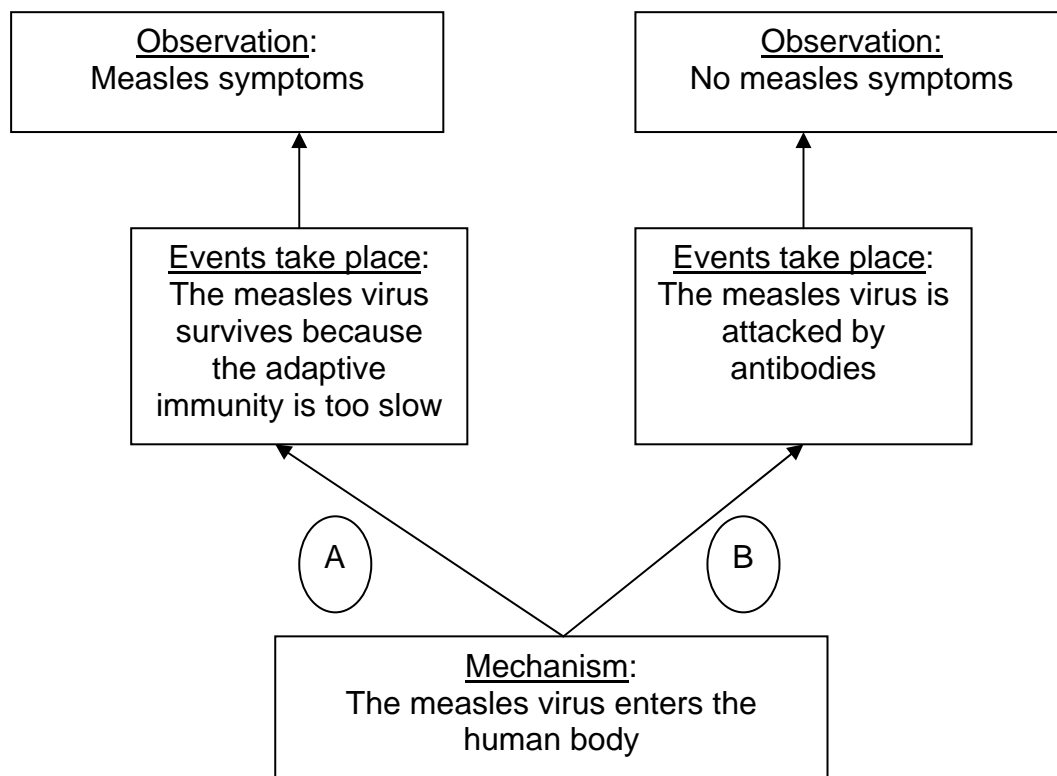


Figure 7: An example of the three domains of reality showing how mechanisms produce events, which can be observed

If the person has not been exposed before, and has a fully functional immune system, then the immune system will be too slow to detect the virus as an antigen and make antibodies (events take place in the actual domain). Chances are the person will probably get all the symptoms of measles, namely a fever, cough, coryza, conjunctivitis, malaise, irritability and a typical skin rash. These symptoms will be experienced and observed (in the empirical domain) (pathway A). If the person had been exposed before, and has a fully functional immune system, then chances are they won't get the measles symptoms (pathway B).

The mechanisms may or may not produce an event. For example, the person's immune system may recognize the measles virus and produce antibodies which attack and destroy the virus, thus not resulting in the typical measles symptoms (pathway B). Obviously if there was no measles virus in

the first place, no events would take place and none of the typical measles symptoms would be evident.

The strata mentioned earlier (the physical, biological, psychological and social strata) exist within each of the domains, i.e., within the real, actual, and empirical domains. The real domain contains mechanisms and structures that have causal powers which may or may not be exercised, thus they may or may not generate new structures, forces, powers and mechanisms, and this is known as emergence. An important aspect about emergence is that it is about “internal relations”, i.e. “objects depend upon each other for their existence” (Danermark *et al.* 2002, 64). An example of how objects depend on each other, as well as emergence, is how proteins are synthesised within cells. This depends on the presence of (amongst other things, and greatly simplified) DNA within the nucleus, mRNA and tRNA, nucleotide bases, ribosomes, amino acids and a whole range of enzymes. Amino acids are linked to each other in chains. This linking is an example of a mechanism. Some of the amino acid chains end up being nonsense and not usable, others are useful depending on their structure and environment. It is the sequence of amino acids and the environment that determines its structure and subsequent functions. So, depending on the structures and the mechanisms, proteins may or may not emerge.

There are numerous consequences to accepting the stratification of reality posited by critical realism. One is that all observations depend on our own theories and concepts, and secondly that science has to be more than just empirical, it has to also include the other two domains (Danermark, 2002). Thus research has to be more than just descriptions, it has to involve trying to discover the events and structures that lie beneath the empirical domain, as well as the generative mechanisms.

Danermark *et al.* (2002, 164) argue that “society can neither be reduced to its individuals (Weber), nor to a social entity without individuals (Durkheim), but that the world is structured and stratified”. Thus, “social phenomena emerge from the deep underlying real structures, become actual, and then empirical.

Whereas our understanding of these social phenomena goes exactly in the opposite direction (from empirical to actual to real), which makes understanding them a very difficult task” (Kaboub, 2001, 2). Critical realism offers a meta-theory which tells us what structures, entities and mechanisms make up the social world.

#### **3.1.3.8. Generative mechanisms**

According to Danermark (2002), generative mechanisms are found within the deepest domain (within the “real” domain). These mechanisms may or may not result in events, which are in the “actual” domain, and we may or may not be able to observe the events, which refers to the “empirical” domain. The ability of the mechanisms to produce an event is known as being “generative” (*ibid*, 59).

Danermark *et al.* (2002, 163) argue that the positivist and Grounded Theory approach state that “experiences are the primary object of knowledge”. However, in their discussion of critical realist ontology Danermark *et al.* (2002) emphasize that in critical realism it is not the experience or the events that are the most important, but rather the mechanisms involved, i.e., the experiences of events are subordinate in importance (for investigators) to their underlying causes. In both the natural and social sciences the mechanisms that cause an event are often the most fundamental reasons for doing the research, i.e., answering the questions ‘why’ and ‘how’. Bhaskar (1998, 9) wrote the following about causal laws:

What is so special about the patterns [that scientists] deliberately produce under meticulously controlled conditions in the laboratory is that it enables them to identify the mode of operation of natural structures, mechanisms of processes which they do not produce. What distinguishes the phenomena the scientist actually produces from the totality of the phenomena she could produce is that, when her experiment is successful, it is an index of what she does not produce.

A real distinction between the objects of experimental investigation, such as causal laws, and patterns of events, is thus a condition of the intelligibility of experimental activity.

My research does not involve laboratory simulations or “meticulously controlled conditions” and is open to all kinds of influences and mechanisms. I am interested in finding out what mechanisms (and events) are involved in the process of mentoring, in the development of mentoring skills, and in the construction of mentoring, and to explore how mentoring facilitates access to a Community of Practice (CoP). However, the relationship between mechanisms and events/objects is not necessarily one of ‘cause and effect’ (Sayer, 2000). It is possible that a mechanism exists without a resultant outcome/effect, or with a different (or unexpected, or new) outcome/effect, and is known as a “tendency” (Danermark *et al.* 2002, 55). The issue of tendencies is important: if we assume that generative mechanisms exist we cannot assume that they will necessarily have an outcome/event. There may only be a tendency for an outcome/event. This means that although I am biased because of my own experiences, language and ideologies I have to be as open-minded as possible when analysing the data for generative mechanisms and when looking for tendencies.

Mechanisms may be enabling or constraining (Sayer, 2000). For example, if we refer to the measles example again, then an example of a mechanism is the action of the immune system on the virus. A normal fully-functional immune system will recognize the virus – provided it is not the first time the person has been exposed to it. If it recognizes the virus it will attack and try to destroy it. Thus the mechanism constrains the production of the measles symptoms. In a person with a compromised immune system the virus will result in the measles symptoms, regardless of them having been exposed to it before.

According to Danermark (2002) we must always remember the context. To illustrate the importance of context let me use an example of two deaf children who can both communicate via sign language. One goes to a school for the

deaf, where everyone uses sign language, whilst the other attends a school where no-one else is deaf, and no-one uses sign language. They both have a similar impairment, so their biological mechanisms with regard to this impairment will be similar. However, the child at the school for the deaf communicates easily with his/her peers and teachers by using sign language, whilst the other child feels lonely and ostracized because no-one communicates by using sign language. The psychological and social experiences of these two children are vastly different because different psychological and social mechanisms are at play. How we communicate is socially constructed, i.e., it depends on the mechanisms in the social stratum, and on the context (Danermark, 2002). This example also illustrates that one cannot simply analyse a phenomenon at one level or stratum. Mechanisms act at different levels.

Thus, the challenge in the research which forms the basis of this thesis is to find and understand mechanisms and their tendencies that resulted in the events of mentoring.

### **3.1.3.9. Open systems**

In the natural sciences, experiments are designed and performed in what Danermark *et al.* (2002, 67) refer to as “artificially closed systems”, where every attempt is made to reduce and limit change and variation – both internally and externally. However, “nature as such does not produce closed systems; in all probability there is no such thing as a naturally closed system, even though certain natural phenomena, such as the solar system, may appear to be near to that definition” (*ibid*).

In the social sciences researchers always work in an open system, where the mechanisms are always dependent on other mechanisms. Open systems cannot be predicted because mechanisms may be either active or inactive (dormant) at any one time, and cannot be controlled.

### 3.1.3.10. Strategies in critical realism

Critical realism suggests that science is “a movement, by way of theory, from phenomenon to structure” (Wikgren, 2005, 13). Critical realists are interested in the mechanisms underlying phenomena. Understanding the mechanisms allows critical realists to explain experiences, but not to predict them. This is in contrast to positivism, where theories are used to predict experiences.

Since the knowledge produced by critical realist analysis is socially produced, in open systems, it would not make sense to use experiments, at least not in the traditional, closed sense. Also, critical realism allows experiences or observations to be explained, but not to be predicted. But how is this done?

As long ago as 1865 Peirce made a distinction between three types (or modes as he called them) of reasoning: deduction, induction and abduction (which Peirce called hypothesis) (Putnam, 1978). As mentioned previously (in section 3.2.) in natural science one typically starts with a theory and from this creates a hypothesis. This usually follows a logical process, and is known as deduction. Once the experiment or observations have yielded results one uses induction to either accept or reject the hypothesis. Thus induction is the process of testing a hypothesis by experiment. Neither deduction nor induction is particularly useful in critical realism because they are unable to reveal much about the deeper nature of reality. Instead, a process of abduction and retroduction is useful. Danermark *et al.* (2002) describes this as a process of searching for explanations and providing them. Nubiola (1997) explains that abduction is a way of explaining that which arises spontaneously when we consider the circumstances.

Essentially what happens in critical realist research is a three step approach: first observations are made about phenomena, and relationships and connections are explained. Then one has to suggest mechanisms and structures that could explain why the phenomenon, the connections and the relationships exist (or don't). And thirdly, one has to try to show that the mechanisms exist.

My research draws on observations, transcribed interview data, reflections by mentors, and discussions with mentors. All these are sources for abduction and retroduction in an effort to explain how mentors construct mentoring and how mentoring facilitates access to a Community of Practice (CoP). Discourse analysis is the tool used to analyse the data. The design of the actual research which underpins this thesis is described in chapter 5.

The next chapter deals with substantive theories: initially I describe and discuss learning theories, followed by a discussion of Invitational Learning Theory and Communities of Practice (CoPs).



## **Chapter 4: Substantive theories**

### **4.1. Introduction**

As discussed in chapter 3, critical realism is the meta-theory in this research. In order to put it into practice and to make sense of structures and mechanisms I draw on substantive theories such as learning theories. There are many learning theories, and “learning has traditionally been the province of psychological theories” (Wenger, 1998a, 279). It is necessary to start off with a brief discussion of the major learning theories, to position Invitational Learning Theory, one of the substantive theories underpinning the research which forms the basis for this thesis.

The major learning theories are related to Behaviourism (a focus on behaviour and its modification), Cognitivism (learning is a transformation of cognitive structures), Constructivism (learners build their own mental structures when they interact with their environment), Social learning theories (a focus on the social environment as it affects thinking and feelings), and Humanist theories (a focus on personal growth and relationships between people).

### **4.2. A brief overview of Behaviourism and Behaviourist Learning Theories**

The term ‘learning theory’ is often associated with Behaviourism because behaviourists believe that learning is a relatively permanent change in behaviour brought about as a result of experience or practice (Huitt and Hummel, 2006). Behaviourism focuses on a new behavioural pattern being repeated until it becomes automatic. The emphasis is on behaviour, repetition and practice, forming and breaking habits, and reward or punishment to reinforce learning (Cunia, 2005a).

The main focus in Behaviourism is the impact that the environment has on behaviour. There are several psychological behaviourists that deserve

mention in order to illustrate the development of behavioural theories. For example, Thorndike – one of the early behaviourists - was interested in animal intelligence and made cats and other animals do puzzles. He concluded that the speed at which animals solved these puzzles increased gradually the more they were exposed to them. This led to the 'laws of behaviour' which described the formation of habits through trial and error (Sargent, 1944), and which Skinner later used to develop his theories.

Watson was the one who coined the term 'Behaviourism' in 1912, when he proposed that organisms (man and animal) adjust themselves to their environment and that certain stimuli lead to responses (Watson, 1912). This led to Pavlov's famous research with dogs, when he demonstrated the stimulus-response model (Pavlov, 1927). Tolman and Hull both accepted the stimulus-response framework but concluded that there were other variables that needed to be considered. Tolman's research into stimuli and the cognitive role they play as signals led to what he coined 'cognitive maps' and 'latent learning' if there was no reinforcement. Hull was looking for the internal variables and mechanisms between the stimulus and the response. Some say that their work can be considered to be precursory to Cognitivism (Hauser, 2006).

Skinner built on Tolman and Hull's theories and developed theories about prediction and control. He is probably most famous for his explanation of operant conditioning, i.e., that a response is followed by a consequence. Upon repeated conditioning behaviour is 'shaped' – Skinner was of the opinion that language was shaped by repeated high-level conditioning. If there is no conditioning the behaviour becomes extinct. Skinner is also known for his insistence that mental states and processes exist but are not relevant to the prediction, control, and experimental analysis of behaviour (Hauser, 2006). Many have criticised Skinner but he claimed that "experimental analysis of behaviour ... has led to an effective technology, applicable to education, psychotherapy, and the design of cultural practices in general" (Skinner, 1987, 75). Skinner's research led to the use of behaviour research to treat phobias and addictions, and operant conditioning was used to train

animals in certain instances. However, his theories of behaviour relating to education have been less successful. Zuriff (1985, 278) went as far as to write: “the received wisdom of today is that behaviourism has been refuted, its methods have failed, and it has little to offer modern psychology”. However, Hauser (2006) argues that some of the more recent psychological theories could be labeled behaviouristic, e.g., Putnam’s theory that meaning is not in the head but depends on environmental factors (known as semantic externalism).

The early philosophical behaviourists include William James, John Dewey and Bertrand Russell. James proposed that consciousness is a function but not an entity, and he came up with one of the earliest definitions of emotion, which linked the perception of a fact to bodily changes, which resulted in feelings, i.e., emotion. Dewey’s research led him to argue that “sensations be given a functional characterization” (Hauser, 2006, 6), and Russell claimed that Behaviourism had a lot to offer philosophy, specifically analytical philosophy.

Carnap and Hempel were famous for their proposal of logical Behaviourism, i.e., “the meaning of a psychological statement consists solely in the function of abbreviating the description of certain modes of physical response characteristic of the bodies of men and animals” (Hempel, 1949, cited by Hauser, 2006, 7). But if this were the case, then someone who is paralysed should not be able to think or experience anything. This theory has since been widely regarded as oversimplified and perhaps even unfounded. Ryle and Wittgenstein are known as the ‘ordinary language behaviourists’, and their research delved into language and the philosophy of the mind-body interaction and knowledge of other’s minds. Quine is seen as a methodological behaviourist, and he proposed the theory of physicalism, i.e., that mental states are states of the body. Turing, another methodological behaviourist, developed games, e.g., the imitation game, where men had to successfully impersonate women, and the Turing test, in which a computer had to pass for human (Hauser, 2006). In both games successful impersonation did not make them female or human – something else was essential.

Behaviourist Learning Theories exist as a result of the psychological and philosophical theories of Behaviourism. The general assumptions of Behaviourist Learning Theories include:

1. Learning involves a behaviour change;
2. Environmental events are mainly responsible for learning;
3. The principles of learning apply to different species of animals;
4. The principles of learning apply to different behaviour;
5. The stimulus-response model is a good way to objectively study learning;
6. When an organism is born it is as a “blank state”; and
7. Consciousness and other inner states are not relevant when studying behaviour although it is acknowledged that they do exist (Cunia, 2005a, 1).

Thus according to these general assumptions, in order for learning to occur the learner has to be given the opportunity to behave, and there has to be behaviour change. The three learning theories that arose as a result of Behaviourist Theories are:

(1) Any stimulus (environmental event) and response (behaviour) connected in time and/or space will tend to be associated. For example if a cricketer scores a century on the day he uses a new brand of bat he may associate these; or if a student does very well in a test after having studied in a particular way he may associate these. This is known as ‘contiguity’ (Huitt and Hummel, 2006).

(2) A stimulus preceding a response regularly will cause an involuntary (reflexive) response (either physiologically or emotionally). This is known as conditioning (Huitt and Hummel, 2006). If a different stimulus is applied, it will have a different response. For example, coaches use conditioning to train athletes. They are drilled until they can perform repeatedly at a given intensity.

(3) If there is another stimulus (either reward or punishment) after the response then it may change the consequences. This is known as operant conditioning (Huitt and Hummel, 2006). For example, if an athlete wins a race they will react differently than if they did not perform well. The stimulus-response model may be applied repeatedly with reward or punishment to develop habits, and to practice drills. To change habits the stimulus and subsequent response have to change.

Behaviourism and its associated learning theories may be applied in certain learning situations, e.g., in coaching, in the army, and in treating certain phobias. The instruction focuses on the learner's behaviour, and on one reality. The problem with this is - what if the learner is in a situation where he/she has to respond but he/she has not been conditioned to this situation? In higher education, behavioural learning theories fall short because in essence they omit the subjectivity of thought, i.e., they omit what happens inside the head of the learner. Thus to many Behaviourism is too limiting (and some say too boring) in its attempt to scientifically characterize the mental events and in its limited approach to learning.

#### **4.3. A brief overview of Cognitivism and Cognitive Learning Theories**

Cognitivism is based on the processes behind the behaviour, i.e., it emphasizes mental processes. It looks at how we perceive, think, remember and solve problems, and behaviour is observed to try and find out what is happening in the learner's head.

Piaget (1977) was very interested in finding out how we come to know - particularly how children think. Children are not taught how to think – they construct their own world by interacting with the environment. Piaget's theory of cognitive development describes how humans are able to think abstract thoughts. It describes the processes and the stages of development, and together with work by Vygotsky, Bruner and others, forms the basis of constructivist theory.

Piaget's processes of development involve 'schemata' (Piaget, 1990). These schemata are like a map in our mind that organizes our behaviour and actions. Piaget's hypothesis is that when a child is born the only schema he/she has is in the form of reflexes. As the child develops these reflexes are replaced by schemata that the child constructs. As the environment becomes more complex the child (and later as adolescent and adult) adapts to its environment by assimilating and accommodating. Assimilation is the incorporation of new information into one's existing knowledge, and accommodation is an individual's adjustment to new information. As schemata become more complex they are called structures.

Piaget (1990) identified four stages of development:

- (1) Infancy (0 – 2 years): the child learns from physical experiences, e.g., puts everything into its mouth – if it tastes good it might continue sucking/chewing on it, if it does not it will spit it out. Gradually the child becomes more mobile and starts to develop language. A child also has to learn that even if it cannot see, hear or touch something (or an event) – it is still there. This is known as object permanence.
- (2) Toddler and early childhood (2 – 7 years): the child learns more language, and memory and imagination develop. However, the thinking tends to be non-logical.
- (3) Elementary and early adolescence (7 – 11 years): the child learns to use logical reasoning; memory increases and the child learns more language.
- (4) Adolescence and adulthood: intelligence is demonstrated by logic and abstract thinking. Adolescents think that everyone is as preoccupied with them (the adolescent) as they are. They also think they are unique and indestructible. This way of thinking changes during adulthood.

Piaget (1990) believes that a child's biological development is linked to the stages of development. This seems to be the case for the first three stages but during adolescence and adulthood the environment appears to be the limiting factor, not biological development. Many pre- and primary school programmes are based on Piaget's theory of cognitive development and on

constructivist theory. Parents and teachers are encouraged to challenge the abilities of the child but not at a level that is too far beyond their level of development.

To sum up, the general assumptions of Cognitivism and its learning theories are:

- “Cognitive processes influence learning.
- As children grow, they become capable of increasingly more sophisticated thought.
- People organize the things they learn.
- New information is most easily acquired when people can associate it with things they have already learned.
- People control their own learning” (Cunia, 2005b, 2).

Piaget's theories are often contrasted to those of Vygotsky (Huitt, 2006).

Piaget was of the opinion that what separates humans from animals is our ability to do abstract symbolic reasoning. Vygotsky on the other hand, is of the opinion that social interaction is the primary source of cognition and behaviour, and not abstract reasoning (Huitt and Hummel, 2003).

Critical and creative thinking are complementary and related aspects of thinking. Creative thinking usually involves creating new ideas, processes, experiences or objects, whilst critical thinking involves their evaluation (Novak and Gowin, 1984)<sup>14</sup>. Cognitive theories imply that humans are capable of critical and creative thinking. (Huitt, 2006).

Cognitivism acknowledges that every person's reality is based on their own social view, e.g., growing up in South Africa means my reality is based on the social views in South Africa. This affects my view of every situation I encounter.

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<sup>14</sup> This is only one definition of critical thinking. There are many others. For example, the ability to use context to critique a text is often referred to as critical thinking in universities.

In Cognitivism the learner is believed to learn a way to do things, i.e., follows a mental model. The learner passively follows the mental model and the socially imposed reality but the learner has the choice whether or not to practice the new behaviour.

#### **4.4. A brief overview of Constructivism and Social Learning Theories**

Constructivism is a paradigm that suggests that learning is an active process of construction, i.e., it is not simply acquired. The learner constructs their own knowledge and reality, and this process of construction involves linking new knowledge and experience to prior knowledge and experience. Both personal experience and the environment are important. The learner also constantly tests the new knowledge and experience against social and cultural norms and expectations. A learner is not an empty vessel to be filled with knowledge. Instead, constructivism implies that everyone brings past experiences, social and cultural factors to a situation (Doolittle and Camp, 1999).

Social learning focuses on the learning that occurs in a social context. People learn from each other by observing, imitating and modeling. They see what others do, and what the consequences of their actions are. Social learning claims that the social environment is critical but that there does not necessarily have to be a change in behaviour. It rejects Behaviourism and Cognitivism but does acknowledge that consequences of behaviour have a role to play in learning, and that knowing the consequences can influence learning. Modeling is a form of shaping behaviour, and the modeling of appropriate behaviour is important for learning to occur (Cunia, 2005c).

Vygotsky believes that individuals are “inextricably related, both to each other and their physical surrounds” (Gergen, 2000, 126). Vygotsky’s theories led to what is called cultural psychology, and Bruner is one of its main proponents. Bruner is of the opinion that we “understand others by thinking in narratives” and that this shapes our perspective of the world (*ibid*). Traditional education is interested in developing the mind by exposing the learner to educational



material. Cultural psychology suggests that learning should be about relationships. Indeed, according to Vygotsky learning is about “being in a matrix” of relationships and learning by “doing with” (Gergen, 2000, 127).

Vygotsky’s social development theory is one of the important theories in constructivism, and its main argument is that there has to be social interaction before there can be development, i.e., social interaction is vital in the development of cognition. Vygotsky’s social development theory has three main themes:

(1) In contrast to Piaget’s understanding of child development, Vygotsky argues that social learning comes before development, and not the other way round. He writes:

Every function in the child’s cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first between people (inter-psychological) and then inside the child (intra-psychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relationships between individuals (Vygotsky 1978, 57).

(2) Vygotsky’s research into social learning theories revealed that people (both children and adults) learn from social interactions and that learners need someone who knows what they are doing to help them learn (Vygotsky, 1978). The concept of a ‘More Knowledgeable Other’ (MKO) arose. This is normally a teacher, coach, or older adult but it could also be a peer, a younger person or even a computer.

(3) The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is the difference between the potential and the actual levels of development of the learner. Initially the MKO (teacher/mediator) guides and supervises the learner through this zone of proximal development, helping the learner develop and be able to perform the task required that will eventually allow the learner to perform without supervision or assistance. This is known as scaffolding (Van Der Stuyf, 2002).

The MKO provides scaffolding so that the learner can build onto prior knowledge. The analogy is with a building site where scaffolding is used in the construction process. The scaffolding is temporary, and is withdrawn when it is no longer required. According to McKenzie (1999) the following aspects of scaffolding are important: scaffolding provides direction, reduces the learner's confusion, clarifies purpose, keeps learners on task, clarifies expectations, incorporates assessment and feedback, directs learners to worthy sources, and reduces uncertainty, surprise, and disappointment.

Many learning environments promote the transmission of knowledge, i.e., someone who 'knows' merely transfers the knowledge to those who don't. Many schools in South Africa promote this instructionist model. Vygotsky's theories suggest a move away from this environment to one where learning is seen in context and one in which the learner plays an active role. The MKO thus facilitates the process and the learner constructs their own knowledge. Situated learning is related to Vygotsky's theory of learning through social development (Lave and Wenger, 2007). It suggests that learning normally occurs within an activity, context and culture. Learners become involved in a Community of Practice (CoP). This will be discussed in section 4.7. According to this theory CoPs are important because information only becomes meaningful when it is seen in the context of social practices, and when the individual engages in the practices and activities of the community, e.g., in one or more CoP. Learning is fundamentally a social phenomenon, and the following seven principles apply (Wenger, 1996, 1 – 2):

(1) "Learning is inherent in human nature": it happens all the time – not just when something is taught, so we need to create opportunities for learning.

(2) "Learning is fundamentally social": information on its own is not enough – we have to put it into a social context in order to create meaning.

(3) "Learning changes who we are": it changes our identity in society as well as our ability to participate in the world. In the healthcare arena this is important from the patient/client's perspective as well as that of the healthcare

provider's. The patient/client engages with the world to find an identity either as a sick person (in the case of a patient) or as someone who wants to stay healthy. The healthcare provider/professional does not only possess the required knowledge, skills and attitude but also has to understand themselves in the context of the community. With the advent of Pharmaceutical Care (Hepler, 1987) the pharmacist's focus has moved away from the product and onto the patient/client (WHO and FIP, 2006). However, many pharmacists are still product oriented and one could argue that they have not changed how they practice because they have not embraced the Pharmaceutical Care paradigm, and as a result they have not changed. Futter and Oltmann (2007) recently asked pharmacy educators to think about how they have responded to the paradigm change, and whether they have facilitated progress, been an obstacle to it, or not changed at all.

(4) "Learning is a matter of engagement in practice": we all have an identity in society, which allows us to engage with the world in a certain way. For example, pharmacists have an identity in society. They are considered to be the custodians of medicines and until fairly recently that was their main identity. However, with the advent of dispensing doctors this identity has been diluted. Pharmaceutical Care requires that the pharmacist is not just the custodian of medicines but that the emphasis moves away from the product, and onto the patient/client. Thus the pharmacist had to change the way they practice as well as the way they engaged with their practice. This did not happen overnight. Pharmacists had to learn about the new paradigm, and had to put it into practice. "What we learn and what we don't, what matters and what does not, what we have access to and what we don't, is profoundly shaped by our practical engagement in these communities" (Wenger, 1996, 4).

(5) "Learning reflects our participation in communities of practice": we all belong to communities of practice – some are formal, others informal; in some we are main members, in others we are peripheral; in some we are newcomers, in others we are established members. The main issue about belonging to CoPs is that we learn by being a part of them, and by

participating. “What we know, who we are, and what we do seamlessly come together in one experience of participation” (Wenger, 1996, 4).

(6) “Learning means dealing with boundaries”: there are boundaries between the people engaging in practice within a CoP and those who are not; between those with experience and those who are new to the CoP and/or the practice. These differences exist because there are differences in perspectives, language, and styles (Wenger, 1996, 5). For example, after completing the pharmacy degree a pharmacy student has to complete an internship. The intern has to put theory into practice: they have to learn how things are done, what protocols to follow, the appropriate language to use etc. Thus when they start their internship they have to cross the boundaries and learn by being in the workplace, and by becoming a member of a new CoP. Similarly, embracing and practicing Pharmaceutical Care means pharmacists have to cross the boundaries and engage with the paradigm and its appropriate practices. Boundaries can be a liability (if not crossed) or an asset (if crossed and negotiated successfully). Sometimes the crossing of boundaries results in innovation – for example as interns cross the boundaries they often find new and innovative ways of doing things.

(7) “Learning is an interplay between the local and the global”: for example, in pharmacy we have to learn what applies locally and globally. We have to learn and apply our practice in our own local setting but be aware of global changes in practice. The Pharmaceutical Care paradigm was first implemented in the USA, but has been embraced all over the world, including South Africa.

#### **4.5. A brief overview of Humanism and Humanist Learning Theories**

Humanism is a paradigm that focuses on human freedom, dignity and potential. It suggests that learning is about fulfilling personal potential. (Huitt, 2001). Humanism emerged in the Renaissance with scholars like Erasmus. Michelangelo’s David was an attempt to capture the Humanist spirit in

sculpture. The paradigm's key proponents are Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers and Malcolm Knowles. One of the central assumptions of Humanism is that people act with intentionality and values. This assumption separates Humanism from Behaviourism (which argues that people behave as a result of consequences), Cognitivism (which argues that discovering knowledge is central to learning), and Constructivism (which argues that constructing meaning is central to learning).

Humanists believe that people have the capacity to grow and fulfill potential; and that they have the capacity to choose their own destiny and to improve their lives (Huitt, 2004). Maslow is well known for his research into human motivation. He came up with the hierarchy of human needs, best illustrated diagrammatically:

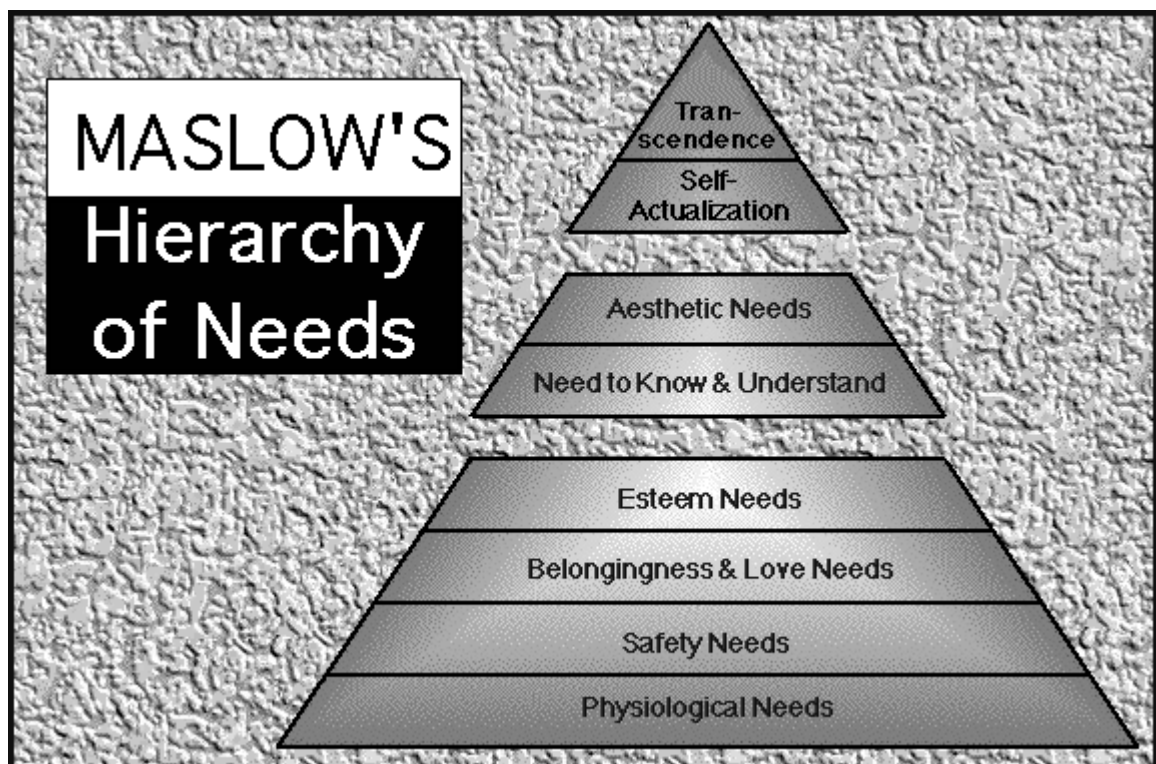


Figure 8: Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Huitt, 2004, 2)

There are sets of needs, which Huitt (2004, 1) describes as: (1) deficiency needs which include the bottom four, i.e., “Physiological needs (hunger, thirst, bodily comforts etc); safety/security needs (the need to be out of danger); belongingness and love (the need to be affiliated with others, to be accepted); and esteem (the need to achieve, to be competent, to gain approval and recognition). (2) Growth needs: which include cognitive needs (the need to know and understand); esthetic needs (the need for symmetry, order and beauty); self-actualization needs (the need for self-fulfillment and to realize one’s potential); and self-transcendence needs (the need to connect to something beyond the ego or the need to help others find self-fulfillment and realize their potential)”.

This hierarchy of needs is different to the different strata and domains described with regard to critical realism. Maslow’s hierarchy represents a bottom-up approach, i.e., the lower need must be satisfied first before the next need can be met. Also, the growth needs can only be met if the deficiency needs have been met. According to Huitt (2004) Maslow’s suggestion that transcendence is the highest level of self-actualization may be one of his most important contributions to the study of human behaviour. The implication that committing to a cause or working with others is the highest human good, that we can only be truly fulfilled by leaving behind the selfish satisfaction of our own needs is a magnificent one.

According to Huitt (2004) a person requires different kinds of information to meet the needs at each level, e.g.:

- at the Physiological level a person would seek ‘coping information’,
- at the safety level a person would seek ‘helping information’,
- at the esteem level a person would seek ‘empowering information’.

Huitt (2004, 3) suggests that at the transcendence level a person would seek “information on how to connect to something beyond themselves”.

Maslow’s hierarchy of needs has been modified by a number of people. For example, according to the Institute for Management Excellence (2001) there are nine basic human needs: (1) security,

(2) adventure, (3) freedom, (4) exchange, (5) power, (6) expansion, (7) acceptance, (8) community, and (9) expression. Interestingly transcendence (or any related function) is not included here. This body of research provides information for people to meet their needs at the different levels, and to become competent and successful.

Carl Rogers took Maslow's hierarchy of needs a step further, and asked the question 'why', e.g., why do we need water and food, why do we seek love? Rogers' theory is called the 'actualizing tendency' and refers to people (and he argued animals too) making the most of their existence (Boeree, 2006). According to Rogers we have more than just physiological needs – when we are hungry we find food, but not just any food, we tend to look for food that tastes good. This he refers to as organismic valuing. We also seek love, attention and affection, and this Rogers refers to as positive regard. Part of positive regard is positive self-regard, i.e., the need to feel worthy, have self esteem and a positive image. Organismic valuing plus positive regard and positive self regard all lead to what Rogers refers to as the 'real self', i.e., the self we will become. However, life is not that simple. We live in a society which conditions us by only giving us what we need when we show we are 'worthy', rather than just because we need it (Boeree, 2006). So we develop the 'ideal self', which is not real and is not something we can become. We all have a 'real self' and an 'ideal self'. The gap between the two is referred to as 'incongruity': the bigger the gap the more incongruity (*ibid*). Another name for this incongruity is 'neurosis'. If a person is in a situation where there is incongruity, the person may feel threatened, which may lead to feelings of anxiety, and the use of defense mechanisms. For example, a student being taught that they are not worthy unless they get good marks. If the student is not a top student or an academic achiever, they may feel threatened during situations such as tests and exams, which will lead to anxiety. In trying to deal with the anxiety they may well use defense mechanisms such as denying that there is a problem or perhaps blaming others, e.g., the lecturers. Unfortunately the more they use defense mechanisms the greater the incongruity, and the worse their neurosis.

Rogers contributed substantially to psychological therapy. Rogerian therapy has been described as 'supportive, not reconstructive' and he used the analogy of learning to ride a bicycle to explain. One cannot teach someone to ride a bicycle by telling them how. They have to actually get onto the bicycle and try. Whilst trying they may fall, but if they never try they will never learn. At some point one has to let go and let them try (Boeree, 2006). This approach applies to mentoring too, e.g., a mentor cannot write a test or exam for a mentee, but a mentor can help the mentee acquire the necessary knowledge, and develop the skills and attitude to do well in the test/exam. Rogers also felt that in order for therapy to succeed there had to be:

- (1) "Congruence - genuineness, honesty with the client.
  - (2) Empathy - the ability to feel what the client feels.
  - (3) Respect – acceptance, unconditional positive regard towards the client"
- (Boeree, 2006, 8).

Thus, if a therapist was congruent, had empathy and showed respect then the therapist would be able to reflect from the heart, and could help the client in the same way one helps someone ride a bicycle.

Rogers defined empathy as "an accurate, empathic understanding of the client's world as seen from the inside. To sense the client's private world as if it were your own, but without losing the 'as if' quality – this is empathy" (cited by Patterson, 1985, 52). Empathy is not simple, and assumes that the client will communicate their world to the counselor, and that the counselor is receptive. The counselor must then be able to put themselves in their client's shoes (so to speak) and communicate his/her understanding of the client's world to the client.

Alfred Adler believed that "human beings live in the realm of meanings" and in the "fundamental creative power of individuals and their freedom to choose and change their direction in life" (cited in Stein and Edwards, 1998, 1). He also believed in the interconnectedness of people, and that if we did not learn to cooperate then we would annihilate each other. Adler believed that to understand an individual one has to understand his or her social context, and that an individual behaves as a unit where "the thoughts, feelings, actions,



dreams, memories, and even physiology all lead in the same direction” (*ibid*, 3). Thus in order to understand someone one has to look at the whole person.

According to Adler psychological disturbances exist as a result of “exaggerated inferiority feeling and an insufficiently developed feeling of community” (Stein and Edwards, 1998, 6). He realized that there were three levels of intervention: (1) preventing by educating, (2) by counselling, and (3) by therapy.

Huitt cited Gage and Berliner’s five objectives of the humanistic view of education (1991). They are:

- (1) “promote positive self-direction and independence,
- (2) develop the ability to take responsibility for what is learned,
- (3) develop creativity,
- (4) curiosity, and
- (5) an interest in the arts” (Huitt, 2001, 2).

These objectives relate to what Huitt (2001) refers to as the regulatory and the affective/emotional systems. The regulatory system acts as a filter, i.e., it regulates connections between the environment, thoughts, feelings, knowledge and actions. The affective/emotional system “colours, embellishes, diminishes or otherwise modifies information acquired through the regulatory system or sent from the cognitive system to action” (Huitt, 2001, 2). The end result of these two systems working together is a set of principles:

- (1) learners will “learn best what they want to and need to know”, i.e., they filter the useful from the useless. In order to do this they have to have the skills to decide what is useful, and why, and the motivation to do so.
- (2) “Knowing how to learn is more important than acquiring a lot of knowledge”: this is certainly important in today’s information age. However, there has to be a reliable foundation of knowledge and skills to build on, and an attitude that encourages learning. Successful learners appear to be motivated, understand the

- (3) Self –evaluation is important: the learner must meet both external and internal expectations.
- (4) “Feelings are as important as facts”: emotional evaluations of situations are as valid as objective ones. Many non-humanistic educators would probably dispute this.
- (5) Learners “learn best in a non-threatening environment”: the environment should be psychologically, emotionally, and physically non-threatening (Huitt, 2001, 3). In my opinion a distinction needs to be made between threatening and challenging: threatening implies negative influence, whilst challenging does not. For example, some learners prefer to be challenged whilst learning.

Humanistic education would involve giving learners choice with regard to the tasks and activities they want to perform; helping them “set realistic goals”; use group work and cooperative learning; and be a facilitator and role model (Huitt, 2001).

Malcolm Knowles is probably best known for his defense of andragogy, which is used for adult learning (Carlson, 1989). He focused on the promotion of self-directed learning and adult education, and has been criticized for his approach that “instructors had to care about learners’ interests rather than what they believed ought to interest learners” (*ibid*, 3). According to Knowles andragogy is based on a seven step approach:

- (1) “Set a cooperative learning climate,
- (2) Create mechanisms for mutual planning,
- (3) Arrange for a diagnosis of learner needs and interests,
- (4) Enable the formulation of learning objectives based on the diagnosed needs and interests,
- (5) Design sequential activities for achieving the objectives,
- (6) Execute the design by selecting methods, materials, and resources, and

(7) Evaluate the quality of the learning experience while re-diagnosing needs for further learning” (Carlson, 1989, 6 -7).

Thus, according to Knowles, education for adults is about guided interactions, and the learner should manage their own learning.

Kolb (1984), another Humanist, is best known for his discussions of experiential learning. There are two interpretations of experiential learning that deserve explanation. First is the experiential learning usually associated with institutions, i.e., providing learners the opportunity to acquire and apply knowledge, skills and feelings in an immediate and relevant setting (Kolb, Osland and Rubin, 1995b). For example our fourth year Pharmacy students go to people’s homes, interview them and practice Pharmaceutical Care. This is a specially designed programme that was designed to provide students this opportunity. The fact that it is also service learning, i.e., that the patient gains from the experience, is significant but not relevant to this discussion.

The second interpretation of experiential learning involves reflecting on everyday experiences, i.e., it is not formal and does not involve an institution or a programme. The emphasis is on the reflection creating change in the individual, as practices and beliefs change or become reinforced as a result of the new experience (Kolb, 1984).

Kolb and Fry (1975) created the famous learning circle/cycle to represent the different stages involved in learning, namely concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization or thinking, and active experimentation or acting. For example, as supervisor of the mentoring programme in the Faculty of Pharmacy since its inception in 2003 I noticed how mentors developed and changed during the programme (concrete observation). This made me think about what I had noticed (reflective observation), and about mentoring (abstract conceptualization), and eventually led to this study (active experimentation). The cycle can begin at any stage, and is probably better represented as a spiral because it occurs again and again in different circumstances.

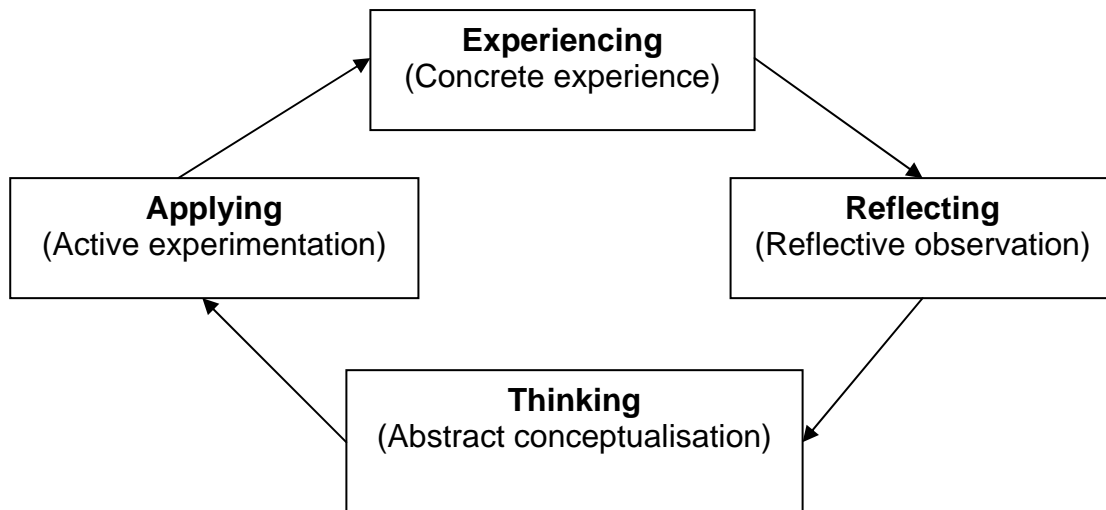


Figure 9: The learning cycle (Kolb and Fry, 1975)

Kolb acknowledges that his work was influenced by that of Jung, Rogers and Piaget (Kolb, 1984). Kolb's experiential learning theory model incorporates the learning cycle and the learning styles (Kolb 1984). This model demonstrates typical learning styles, based on three stages of development during life: (1) from birth to adolescence, when children learn the basic abilities and cognitive structures; (2) during schooling and early work: when young adults gain personal experience and are influenced by social, educational and organizational socialization; and (3) from the mid career to the end of life: when adults also use their non-dominant learning style in work and personal life (Kolb, Osland and Rubin, 1995a ). This involves translating experience into concepts which are then used as guides in the selection of new experiences (Kolb, 1976).

According to Kolb (1984) there are two opposing (he used the word 'dialectically') continua: feeling or thinking, and doing or watching. We choose which approach to adopt: either we think and analyse a situation first (abstract conceptualization) or we decide how we feel about the experience (concrete experience); and we either reflect and watch (reflective observation) or we do something about it (active experimentation). From these options Kolb designed the four learning styles: accommodating, diverging, converging, and

assimilating (Kolb, 1984), best illustrated by the matrix he used to explain them:

Table IV: Kolb's four learning styles

	Doing (active experimentation - AE)	Watching (reflective observation - RO)
Feeling (concrete experience - CE)	<b>Accommodating</b> (CE/AE)	<b>Diverging</b> (CE/RO)
Thinking (abstract conceptualization - AC)	<b>Converging</b> (AC/AE)	<b>Assimilating</b> (AC/RO)

**Accommodators** tend to feel and do, and typically are hands-on people who enjoy doing things and enjoy new challenges. They tend to be good team members, and they take their feelings (e.g. gut feel) into account. **Divergers** tend to feel and watch, and tend to be able to look at things from different angles, they tend to be sensitive and they prefer learning by observation. They tend to be interested in people and tend to be emotional and imaginative. **Convergers** tend to think and do, and prefer technical tasks over working with people. They will problem solve and find practical solutions. The **assimilators** watch and think, i.e., they tend to think things through and then get on with doing things. They tend to enjoy a concise logical approach. They tend to be less focused on people, and more on the concepts or ideas. These people enjoy learning from lectures, readings and models (Kolb 1984).

Kolb's learning theory model is best illustrated graphically:

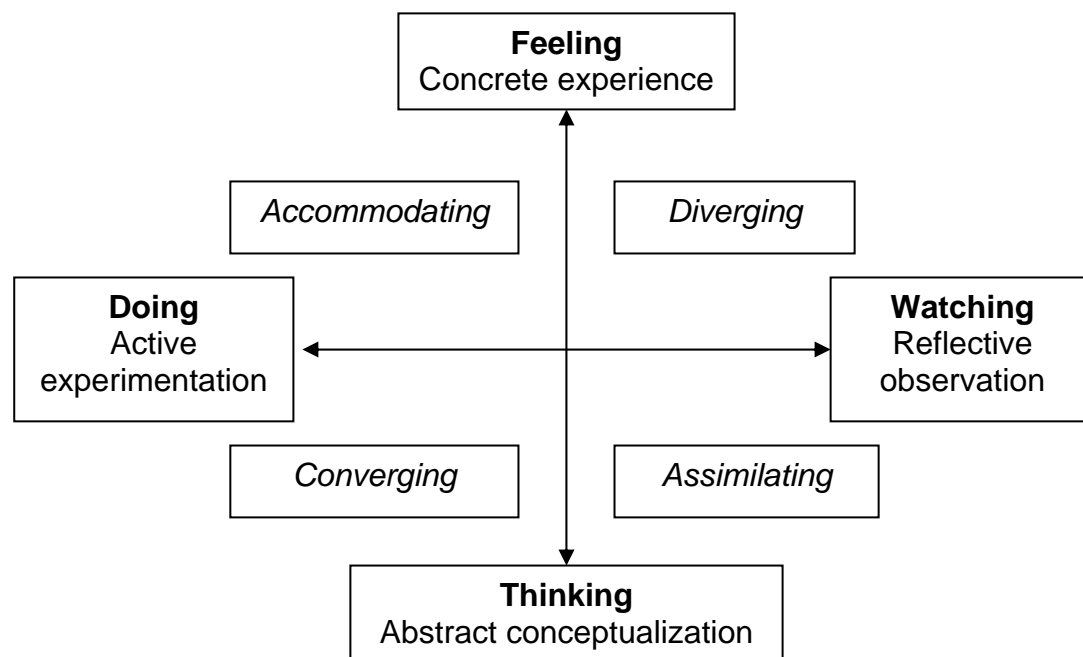


Figure 10: Kolb's learning cycle and learning styles.

Zubin Austin (2004) did some research into the learning styles of pharmacists in Canada, specifically how their learning style impacted on their career decision. He found that in his group of 166 pharmacists, 33.7% were assimilators, 32.5% convergers, 21.1% divergers and 12.1% accommodators. Thus about two thirds of the group tended to prefer technical tasks and solving problems over working with people. Interesting, when one thinks about the implications this may have for the ability and willingness to practice Pharmaceutical Care.

This model of learning styles was an attempt at recognizing that learning (and the potential to learn) was not simply based on intelligence. Each style has strengths and weaknesses, and there is no one correct style. The model can be used to plan teaching and learning activities. It has its limitations though: Sewall (1986) argues that this model focuses on learning as individual, and does not take learning as situated into account. Another criticism is that Kolb seems to have understood learning as the production of knowledge when he

wrote “knowledge results from the combination of grasping experience and transforming it” (Kolb, 1984, 41).

In Humanism the development of self-actualized, autonomous people is important. Learning tends to be learner centred and personalized, and the learning process is facilitated by an educator. The environment is also important, but less so than in Behaviourism.

Self concept describes how we perceive our abilities, behaviour and personality. It is the cognitive aspect of self. Criticism of humanism includes that self-actualization is very difficult to test, and that humanists are too optimistic about human nature – they tend to think that human nature is pure and good, and ignore the reality of tragedy and evil. Some even go as far as to suggest that humanism encourages narcissism.

The next section deals with Invitational Learning Theory, which will be used as a model for understanding and commenting on my data. It is an explanatory model that helps us understand mentoring in the context of this thesis.

## **4.6. Invitational Learning Theory**

### **4.6.1. Introduction**

Invitational learning theory is most often associated with counseling, where its application is sometimes referred to as invitational counselling. In order for invitational learning and/or counseling to occur an “inviting relationship” has to exist (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987, 2). The concept of ‘inviting’ is a complex one that occurs “at identifiable levels, involves a series of skills, requires a hierarchy of choices, and applies to particular areas and styles of human interaction” (*ibid*). The inviting relationship was first described by Purkey (1978), and later by Purkey and Novak (1984), and is best defined as follows:

The inviting relationship is the incorporation of compatible theories, systems, and techniques of human service into a therapeutic “stance” for professional helping. This stance is based on four assumptions: (1) people are able, valuable, capable of self-direction, and should be treated accordingly, (2) helping is a cooperative alliance in which process is as important as product, (3) people possess relatively untapped potential in all areas of human development, and (4) this potential can best be realized by places, policies, and programmes that are *intentionally* designed to invite development, and by people who *constantly* seek to realize this potential in themselves and others, personally and professionally (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987, 3).

This definition addresses several key issues, which will be discussed using the Invitational Learning Model. Invitational Learning Theory suggests that the invitational relationship is all about “doing with” as opposed to “doing to” relationships (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987, 5). It is a shared responsibility, where there is collaboration and cooperation. This is what is meant by “therapeutic stance”. It is not limited to counselling or therapy but can be adapted and applied in any situation where an inviting relationship is beneficial.

#### **4.6.2. The Invitational Learning Model**

Invitational leaning is based on the Invitational Learning Model, which is based on the theory that humans have potential, and although it is not always evident, it is waiting to be discovered (Purkey, 1992). If we think about invitational learning from the critical realist’s perspective, then the potential to learn is waiting to emerge, depending on the generative mechanisms. Invitational Learning Theory is based on two foundations: firstly, the viewpoint that although events influence people, people are more influenced by their own perception of the event. This is known as the perceptual tradition (Purkey and Novak, 1984, 1988), which maintains that “human behaviour is the product of the unique ways that individuals view the world” (Purkey, 1992 1).



According to Purkey and Novak (1996) there are three important assumptions about the perceptual tradition that are relevant here: behaviour is based on perceptions, perceptions are learned [and can thus be un-learned], and perceptions can be reflected upon (Smith, 2002).

Husserl, a phenomenological philosopher, proposed that “all experience is intentional” and that conscious experience is about relations between subject and object, and between myself and others (Gergen, 2000, 128). In doing so he likened consciousness to the external world, thereby trying to describe how our own consciousness affects our senses, our perception, our imagination and our use of language. Invitational Learning Theory acknowledges that this impacts on self development (Schmidt, 2004).

The second foundation is that of self-concept. Purkey defined it as “the totality of a complex, organized, and dynamic system of learned beliefs, attitudes and opinions that each person holds to be true about his or her personal existence” (1988, 1). Everyone has their own beliefs about why they exist, i.e., answers to the question “who am I and how do I fit in the world?” (Purkey, 1992, 2). No one is born with self concept - it is learned, organized and dynamic (Purkey, 1988).

Invitational Learning Theory suggests that behaviour is mediated by the way people view themselves:

Human behaviour is always a product of how people see themselves and the situations in which they are involved. Although this fact seems obvious, the failure of people everywhere to comprehend it is responsible for much of human misunderstanding, maladjustment, conflict and loneliness. Our perceptions of ourselves and the world are so real to us that we seldom pause to doubt them. Since persons behave in terms of their personal perceptions, effective helping must start with the helper's understanding of the nature and dynamics of perceiving (Avila, Combs and Purkey, 1977, 15).

Invitational Learning Theory suggests that all services (e.g. healthcare) and education should promote inviting relationships and physical environments that are conducive to promoting Invitational learning. There are four beliefs that are fundamental to the application of Invitational Learning Theory, namely:

- (1) Every person wants to be accepted and affirmed as valuable, capable, and responsible, and wants to be treated accordingly.
- (2) Every person has the power to create beneficial messages for themselves and others, and because they have this power, they have the responsibility.
- (3) Every person possesses relatively untapped potential in all areas of learning and human development.
- (4) Human potential is best realized by creating places, programmes, policies, and processes intentionally designed to invite optimal development and encourage people to realize this potential in themselves and others (Purkey and Novak, 1996, 23)

I will now explain the four fundamental elements of the Invitational Learning Model.

#### **4.6.2.1. The four main elements of the Invitational Learning Model: optimism, respect, trust and intentionality**

In order for invitational learning to occur an invitational relationship must exist. This relationship has to be intentional, optimistic, respectful and trusting. Without these characteristics the relationship is not an inviting one, and people may not realize their potential. Purkey and Schmidt (1987) compared a relationship without these four elements as being similar to flying a plane without a map or instruments.

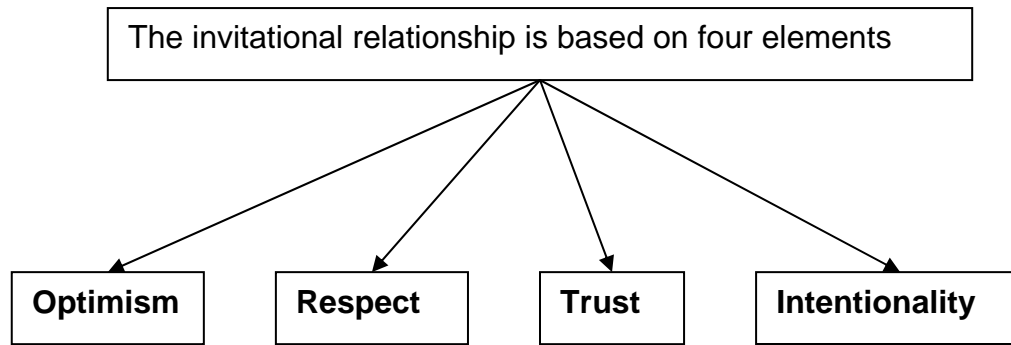


Figure 11: Four elements of the invitational relationship.

Optimism is the belief that people are “able, valuable, [and] capable of self-direction” and that they should be treated as such (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987, 3). Goethe wrote “If we take people as they are, we make them worse. If we treat them as if they were what they ought to be, we help them to become what they are capable of becoming” (cited in Purkey and Schmidt, 1987, 8, who cited Frankl, 1968, 8).

The Inviting relationship is about people, and so respect is crucial. Both parties have to respect each other, the process and the complexities involved (they may not understand the complexities but they have to respect that they exist). Respect involves behaviour that is civil, polite, courteous and caring. Respect thus involves knowing when behaviour is appropriate and when not. It also involves being responsible and respecting autonomy: our own and that of the other person (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987).

Trust is the third element or assumption of the Invitational Learning Model. In order for the Inviting relationship to be effective there has to be trust in the people and processes involved. Trust is not something that just happens, it is dependent on a “pattern of action”, i.e., repeated actions that instill trust (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987, 9).

There is much philosophical debate about the concept of Intentionality. Sartre linked intentionality to consciousness but Brentano disputed this, suggesting that intentionality is only one of the mental phenomena (Dennett, 1987). Intentionality is seen as “behaviour guided by an actor’s sense of purpose” (Parker *et al.*, 2003, 120). By definition an invitation is intentional because it has purpose and direction. Inviting someone to become part of the invitational relationship, and then maintaining the relationship is an intentional act. However, what one person finds inviting might be dis-inviting to another. This depends on the person’s perception, and thus it is not surprising that one of the foundations of the Invitational Learning Model is self perception.

#### **4.6.2.2. Intentionality**

The Inviting relationship can involve either helpful or harmful behaviour (Schmidt, 2004). This is also dependent on the perceptions of everyone involved - what one person finds inviting is not necessarily inviting to another. And thus there are four levels of intentionality:

- I - intentionally dis-inviting,
- II - unintentionally dis-inviting,
- III - unintentionally inviting, and
- IV - intentionally inviting (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987, 10-11, and Schmidt, 2004, 28 - 30).

The first level, being intentionally dis-inviting, involves deliberately being discouraging, demeaning, negative, discriminatory and/or destructive. Apartheid in South Africa is an example of such intentional dis-invitation since the policies were designed to be demeaning, discriminatory and destructive to black social groups. Needless to say this level of intentionality can and should never be justified.

The second level, being unintentionally dis-inviting, usually involves well-meaning people whose behaviour is contradictory to their ‘well-meaningness’. Their behaviour is typically insensitive, and may be “uncaring, chauvinistic,

condescending, patronizing, sexist, racist, dictatorial, or just plain thoughtless” (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987, 10). Examples are everywhere, e.g., a professor who used to enjoy belittling women students by referring to them as ‘little girl’, another who used to refer to women staff members as ‘poppet’ regardless of their age or the fact that they hated the name, the common practice in some departments at Rhodes University of referring to students in a tutorial as ‘tuttlings’. Being unintentionally dis-inviting does not have to be something others do to us. It can also be reflected in the way we refer to ourselves, e.g., saying about ourselves that ‘we are so stupid’.

The third level, being unintentionally inviting, is more acceptable in the inviting relationship than the first two levels. Here the person is successful but does not know why. Typically “they know *what* they are doing, but they do not know *why*” (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987, 11). This is not a bad situation to be in while things go well but if the situation changes and things go badly they often do not know why or what to do differently. Then they sometimes drop to levels II or even I, which is not desirable. The important thing to realize in the inviting relationship is that it has to be inviting throughout, in good times and in bad.

The fourth level, being intentionally inviting, is obviously the level everyone strives to be at. Everything influences the relationship, so it is important that all factors (people, places, policies, programmes, processes, and politics - to be discussed next) are such that they are intentionally inviting. Also, let us not forget that optimism, respect and trust are as important as intentionality. Thus, to be intentionally inviting the person has to take responsibility for all these elements and factors.

#### **4.6.2.3. The six Ps (people, places, policies, programmes, processes and politics)**

The Invitational Learning Model suggests that people have untapped potential to develop intellectually, psychologically and/or physically. It also suggests that this development is influenced by people, places, policies, programmes,

and processes (known as the five “Ps”) and that the best development occurs where these five Ps are such that they invite the process (Purkey, 1992, Schmidt, 2004). Fink (1992) suggested that a sixth P should be added, namely politics. Fink quoted Burns’ definition of politics: “to act politically is to raise the aspirations of others through teaching, mentoring and coaching. The ingredients of this process are: honesty, responsibility, fairness, and honouring the commitment” (Burns, 1978 cited by Fink, 1992). If we accept Gee’s (2005) understanding of politics, namely that it is about money, power and status, then it makes sense to add it as another P because learning is about power and status (and sometimes about money). Fink argued that by leaving out politics the Invitational Learning Model was undermined. His argument was mainly related to the schooling system and the resultant politics, but it can be applied elsewhere too.

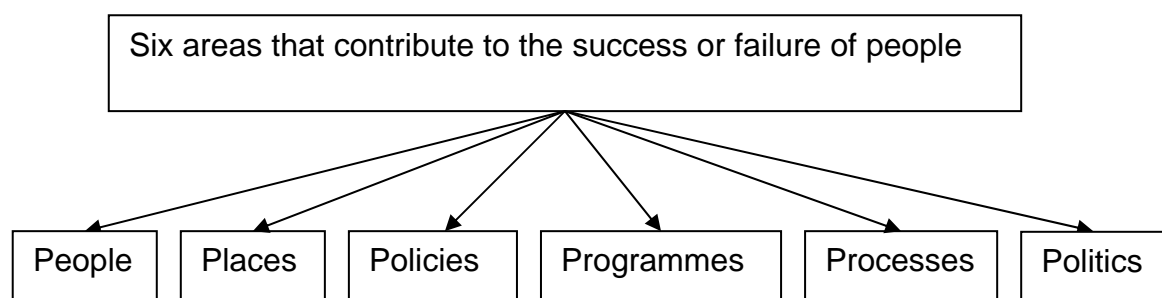


Figure 12: Success and failure in invitational learning.

Invitational learning involves people. In fact, people come first. They are the ones who create the inviting relationship. As mentioned previously, this relationship depends on optimism, respect, trust and intentionality, all of which manifest as caring and appropriate behaviour.

Although people come first in the Invitational Learning Model, the physical environment, i.e., the surroundings, are also important. This is what is meant by ‘places’ (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987, 13). Where people live and work will influence their perception of self and of the inviting relationship. Pharmacy

takes this very seriously. In fact, the Good Pharmacy Practice rules in South Africa (2004) spell out the minimum standards for: pharmacy premises, facilities and equipment; services provided in pharmacy; human resources in pharmacy; and for the management of the pharmacy or pharmaceutical service. For example, the Good Pharmacy Practice rules (section 1.2.13) stipulate that “A minimum standard for pharmacies where medicines are supplied directly to the public is a suitable area for the furnishing of advice to patients in a reasonably private environment” (Good Pharmacy Practice rules in South Africa, 2004). The environment has to be conducive to being able to maintain confidentiality by offering an area that allows for privacy. Similarly, section 2.8.2 (k) states: “the provision of advice must take place in a suitable environment and the patient should be put at ease, especially with regard to the necessary information in the patient’s medical/clinical records” (*ibid*). Privacy is an aspect of the physical environment that many people need. In Pharmacy, privacy and confidentiality go hand in hand. The same can be said for mentoring. Mentors need to provide a place and an environment in which the mentees are comfortable and where confidentiality will be maintained.

Policies influence people and places, and thus need to be taken into account. They may enhance or restrict the inviting relationship, sometimes quite unintentionally. They are usually made in relation to programmes and processes, so should not be seen in isolation (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987, 14). For example, Rhodes University has a list of policies on its Intranet, for easy access by staff and students (Rhodes University Policies, 2008). The University prints the general rules in its University Calender every year, and each faculty prints their specific rules in a Handbook, e.g., the Faculty of Pharmacy Handbook (2007). These policies and rules are freely available to students, e.g., every first year student receives a Calender and the appropriate Handbooks upon registration. They are also available on the Rhodes University webpage. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with the policies and rules to enable them to live by them. At the same time these same policies and rules are used to reprimand those who transgress.

Everyone registered with the South African Pharmacy Council (SAPC) as a pharmacist, pharmacist's assistant, pharmacy intern or pharmacy student is obliged to practice according to the scope of practice for which they are registered. They are also ethically and legally obliged to practice according to the various Acts pertaining to Pharmacy, e.g., the Pharmacy Act (No. 53 of 1974) as amended, and its Regulations.

Programmes are typically found in organizations. The research in this thesis is about a mentoring programme in the Faculty of Pharmacy, at Rhodes University. Thus the mentoring programme is constrained (to some extent) by the undergraduate Pharmacy programme, by the Faculty's policies and procedures, and by the Faculty. However, being located within the undergraduate programme also means it is not entirely an *ad hoc* process, i.e., the Faculty acknowledges the importance of mentoring, although it is not yet part of the curriculum - mentees are invited to join the mentoring programme. The mentoring programme was designed to contribute to the goals and objectives of the Faculty; the University; and the welfare of the mentees.

Processes are about cooperative function, democratic activities, collaborative efforts, ethical guidelines, and humane activities (Purkey, 1992). Processes are thus involved in seeing how people conduct themselves, and how places, policies and programmes are conducted.

Politics is one of the 6 'Ps' in the ILM, and as already mentioned, relates to money, power and status. Very few relationships - be they personal or professional - are void of power and/or status issues. Although Fink wrote about politics in relation to schools and the school system I believe the following applies to the Invitational Learning Model *per se*: "people who behave politically choose to approach the people, places, policies, programmes and processes [in their schools and school districts] from an invitational stance" (Fink, 1992).



#### **4.6.2.4. Four areas of functioning**

The Invitational Learning Model has four areas of functioning that are important to the inviting relationship. They are

- Being personally inviting with oneself,
- Being personally inviting with others,
- Being professionally inviting with oneself, and
- Being professionally inviting with others (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987, 17 – 18).

Being personally inviting with oneself implies that we have to look after ourselves first before being able to help others in the inviting relationship. This is particularly true in the case of counselling, but is also true in other cases where the inviting relationship exists.

Being personally inviting with others refers to being able to relate to others at the personal level. The “others” referred to may include “family, friends, mentors, colleagues, and lovers who make living and helping worthwhile” (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987, 18).

Being professionally inviting with oneself implies that in a professional capacity we must constantly grow and develop our knowledge, skills and attitude, and refrain from stagnation. As a pharmacist I have to practice Continuing Professional Development (CPD) continuously to prevent academic and professional stagnation.

Being professionally inviting to others only occurs if we build on the other three areas of functioning. Only if we are functioning in all four areas can we consider ourselves to be professional.

#### **4.6.2.5. Choices of interaction**

There are four choices that anyone in the inviting relationship can make. They are: “sending, not sending, accepting, and not accepting” (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987, 19; Schmidt, 2004, 32 - 33). These four choices are all linked to intentionality and described as purposeful action. Sending refers to the purposeful sending of a “message, signal or action” (*ibid*). There will be times in the inviting relationship when it is appropriate to send a message or signal to the other person or to act in a particular way (intentionally). For example, a mentor may want to send a message to his/her mentee that they are proud of their progress.

Accepting (in this context) refers to accepting an invitation, e.g., the acceptance of being in an inviting relationship. By accepting we demonstrate willingness and “affirm both the sender and the receiver” (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987, 20). Accepting thus depends on the nature of the invitation, on the other person(s) in the relationship as well as whether or not the receiver is willing and/or able to accept. The mentors and mentees in our mentoring programme accepted the invitation to form a mentoring relationship. Not accepting means the person declines the invitation and opportunity, e.g., the other members of the 2007 first year Pharmacy class who decided not to become mentees. However, it could also mean becoming a mentor or mentee and not engaging in a mentoring relationship. There may be numerous reasons for not accepting, e.g., not wanting to commit to a programme, time constraints, personal taste, and other factors.

Each of these four choices is important in the Invitational Learning Model. There may be times when it is appropriate to send a message or act in particular way, and there may be times when it is not. Similarly there may be times when it is appropriate to accept an invitation, and there may be times when it is not. To some people saying ‘no’, i.e., not accepting an invitation can be difficult. Other people need assertiveness training in order to say ‘yes’ and accept invitations.

#### **4.6.2.6. The four styles**

The ILT is said to have four styles based on appropriateness of behaviour. Inappropriate behaviour may be visible or invisible. For example, laughing when being told a sad story would be visibly inappropriate, so would being discriminatory. Invisible inappropriate behaviour could be the difference between “a ‘gaze’ and a ‘stare’, a ‘touch’ and a ‘feel’, and a ‘smile’ and a ‘smirk’” (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987, 20; Schmidt 2004, 34 - 36). It is easier to recognize and correct visible as opposed to invisible inappropriate behaviour.

Similarly appropriate behaviour may be visible or invisible. Visibly appropriate behaviour is the most common behaviour where human service is required. For example in pharmacy it is appropriate for the pharmacist to be professional, to be ethical, to communicate effectively, to embrace confidentiality, and to practice Pharmaceutical Care. These all form part of the visible appropriate behaviour of being a pharmacist. Invisible appropriate behaviour could include active listening and/or having a sympathetic demeanour. According to Purkey and Schmidt (1987) the difference between visible and invisible appropriate behaviour is best explained by using the analogy of driving a manual car (i.e. not automatic). Initially the learner driver struggles to change gears, with typical grinding of the gears and jerking car movements. With time and practice this becomes almost automatic and changing gears is effortless and smooth. In pharmacy the behaviour mentioned earlier would become effortless and smooth with time.

#### **4.6.2.7. Application of Invitational Learning Theory**

The Invitational Learning Model can be applied anywhere where an inviting relationship is beneficial. For example, in Human Resource Development a “more knowing person” forms an inviting relationship with a “less knowing person” to “reach maximum development of his individual potential for a productive life” (Roebuck, 1975, 9). Roebuck also found that where teachers formed such inviting relationships their students achieved in “personal,

academic, and social growth” (*ibid*, 14). Invitational Learning Theory can also be applied in healthcare settings (and facilities) where the healthcare professional would/could/should invite a patient into an inviting relationship. Patients are people, who have potential to take ownership of their own health or illness, and to make informed decisions.

The application and study of Invitational Learning Theory is known as Invitational Education (Schmidt, 2004, 31). The concepts of inviting and dis-inviting, and intentionality can be taught, and can be used to assess development of others and oneself, as well as relationships.

Some of the Invitational learning theories can be applied to education, and specifically to higher education. I believe that effective mentoring can be seen as a form of invitational learning.

#### **4.7. Communities of Practice (CoPs)**

##### **4.7.1. Introduction**

A second substantive theory underpinning the research which forms the basis of this thesis relates to the construct of ‘Communities of Practice’. The term ‘Community of Practice’ (CoP) is a relatively new one – it was first used by Lave and Wenger in 1991 (Lave and Wenger, 1991) but the phenomenon has been around for as long as people have learned together. It refers to the process of social learning whereby people with a common interest share ideas and knowledge, solve problems and learn with and from each other. A CoP is a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly. Wenger (2004, 1) writes:

...intuitively, everybody knows what knowledge is. When you have it, you are likely to understand situations and do the right thing; when you don’t, you are in trouble. More recently, the field has come to realize

the importance of 'communities of practice' as the social fabric of knowledge. Scientific knowledge, for instance, is really the property of communities, which decide what counts as relevant facts and acceptable explanations of these facts. Knowing is not merely an individual experience, but one of exchanging and contributing to the knowledge of a community. Knowledge from this perspective is what our human communities have accumulated over time to understand the world and act effectively in it.

#### **4.7.2. What are CoPs?**

Not all communities are CoPs. For example Wenger (1998a) mentioned that a neighbourhood may be a community but is not a CoP. There are three characteristics that are important for a community to be recognized as a CoP: the domain, the community and the practice. The domain refers to a shared domain of interest, where the members "value their collective competence and learn from each other" (Wenger, no date, 1). The community consists of members who have this shared domain of interest and who learn with and from each other. This also implies that CoPs have to be easily accessible to their members (Wallace and Saint-Onge, 2003). However, this does not mean they necessarily have to involve face-to-face encounters. Communication via text messages, email, the intranet or the internet may be acceptable to members of the CoP.

Initially Wenger (1998a) described CoPs according to four main factors, namely (1) practitioner-orientation, (2) autonomy, (3) informality and (4) crossing boundaries. Members of a CoP don't just have similar interests - they are actually practitioners who develop a shared practice (Wenger, 1998a). According to Wenger (1998a) CoPs are autonomous and should be informal: they should allow the members to learn with and from each other in a relatively informal setting. Wenger explains:

Communities of Practice are often where things get done. Because communities of practice organize themselves around what matters to their members, not according to institutional decrees, they arise, evolve, and disappear with a life of their own (Wenger, 1991, 5)

CoPs are not isolated social structures – they are prone to what Wenger (1998b, 4) calls “boundary encounters” where individuals bring practices and perspectives from one CoP to another. This process affects the identity and practices of the CoP and its members.

CoPs are not the same as teams. Storck and Hill (2000) describe the differences between CoPs and teams as follows: (1) teams are assigned, whilst members choose to join a CoP. This ties in with Wenger’s idea that CoPs should be voluntary. (2) The authority of people within a team is usually determined by people not on the team, i.e., by others within the organization. Within a CoP authority emerges as members interact with each other. The power relations within a CoP are therefore usually different to those of a team. (3) The goals of teams are often determined by people not on the team. In CoPs this is not normally the case – the members of the CoP determine the goals of the CoP. (4) Teams usually have to follow processes as determined by people not on the team. CoPs develop their own processes.

Lesser and Storck (2001) suggest that we should think of CoPs as developing social capital. This concept of social capital is not new - it is widely used in sociology, political science, and economics and more recently it has also become an important issue in management - specifically in Human Resource (HR) development. Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) developed a definition of social capital which I think is useful in the context of this thesis. They define social capital as: “the sum of the actual and potential resources embedded within, available through and derived from the network of relationships possessed by an individual or social unit” (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998, 243). Hezlett and Gibson (2007, 387) describe social capital as a process whereby individuals invest “in social ties to gain access to the resources of others in the group or network”.

Social capital is not the same as a social network. A social network can be understood in two ways: (1) in the broad sense it relates to how individuals, groups and organizations are linked to each other to form a network. Examples in management include network organizations, inter-firm alliances, and group processes within an organization (Borgatti and Foster, 2003). (2) In the narrower sense a social network refers to the social connections between individuals or groups of people (Hezlett and Gibson, 2007).

There are three important dimensions of social capital that relate to CoPs: (1) people have connections with other people, i.e., are part of a network, (2) there is trust between the people who are connected, i.e., between members of the network, and (3) the members of a network have common interests and understandings.

Wallace and Saint-Onge (2003) argue that customer/client and market-driven demands are forcing organisations to develop strategies to help individuals within the organisations to develop the capabilities required in order to meet the organisational goals. According to Wenger *et al.* (2002) organisations have to intentionally and systematically focus on managing information and people in order to succeed. One way of doing this is by having CoPs within organisations. Sometimes CoPs start spontaneously. However, some organisations are now deliberately organising CoPs, i.e., they are no longer spontaneous or autonomous. The CoPs are designed and launched based on the needs of the individuals within the organisation as well as the demands and goals of the organisation. However, once established, the members of the CoP are usually expected to drive the process and take responsibility for it. Perhaps the informality and autonomy is reinstated within this second phase.

Wenger's (2004, 2) "doughnut model of knowledge management" describes the processes involved more clearly. It is an ongoing process:



Figure 13: The doughnut model of knowledge management Wenger (2004, 2)

This doughnut model is not supposed to represent the chronological order that is to be followed in knowledge management, but rather the logic behind it. According to Wenger everything starts with a strategy, e.g., to help individuals within an organisation develop the capabilities required to meet certain organisational goals. In order to apply this strategy one has to define the key issues that the individuals – known as practitioners – need to address. This is known as the “domain”, i.e., what knowledge do the individuals need in order to achieve the organizational goals? Within the CoP relationships develop between the members/practitioners as they interact and learn with and from each other. The methods, tools, documents, and knowledge the members/practitioners use in the process is what Wenger terms ‘practice’. “It brings together practitioners who are involved in doing something. Over time, they accumulate practical knowledge in their domain, which makes a difference to their ability to act individually and collectively (Wenger, 2004, 3).



Within his earlier work Wenger (1998a) describes the need for people to have places to engage with each other, to challenge and encourage learning. He also emphasizes the need for conversations and reflection in order to share and build knowledge. To do this the members of the CoP need to understand the power relations, push boundaries, and interact with other CoPs.

What learning occurs within CoPs? Wenger writes:

But even those who speak about “learning organizations”, “life long learning”, or the “information society” do so mostly in terms of individual learners and information processes. The notion of community of practice breaks out of this mold; it provides a new way of dealing with the complex issue of creative learning in organizations; and it opens new fields for strategic and visionary thinking (Wenger, 1991, 7).

Wenger states that his interpretation of learning and knowledge is based on four assumptions, namely:

- (1) We are social beings. Far from being trivially true, this fact is a central aspect of learning.
- (2) Knowledge is a matter of competence with respect to valued enterprises – such as singing in tune, discovering scientific facts, fixing machines, writing poetry, being convivial, growing up as a boy or a girl, and so forth.
- (3) Knowing is a matter of participation in the pursuit of such enterprises, that is, of active engagement in the world.
- (4) Meaning – our ability to experience the world and our engagement with it as meaningful – is ultimately what learning is to produce (Wenger, 1998a, 4).

According to Lesser and Storck (2001) the identity of every member of the CoP is important. The older members of the CoP will have a different identity to the new-comers. New members become legitimate members by interacting

and participating with the members of the CoP. However, the level of participation may vary. Lave and Wenger (1991) argued that it is acceptable for members to be peripheral members. Not every member of a CoP needs to be a main member and be intricately involved. It is possible to remain on the periphery of the CoP with marginal participation and still benefit.

#### **4.7.3. Identity and CoPs**

Theories of identity include “gender, class, ethnicity, age, and other forms of categorization, association, and differentiation in an attempt to understand the person as formed through complex relations of mutual constitution between individuals and groups” (Wenger, 1998a, 13). Identity can be interpreted differently, depending on whether one does so from a social or psychological perspective. In psychology, identity refers to issues such as the notion of self, and how one sees oneself as a person and in relation to others. Sociologists emphasise role behaviour and negotiating identity (Leary and Tangney, 2003). Noonan (2003) uses the example of the “Ship of Theseus” to illustrate how complex identity is: Theseus returns from slaying the Minotaur and the Athenians preserve his ship as a memorial. As a plank rots, they replace it with a new one, storing the old planks in an adjacent warehouse. After a period of time all the old planks have been replaced, at which point a local entrepreneur reassembles them into a second ship. The question is: which is the ship of Theseus?

An in-depth discussion of identity theory is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, there are four characteristics of identity that are relevant to CoPs (Noonan, 2003): (1) Identity is not the same thing as a role. For example, in a family the mother may have many roles: as cook, person transporting children to school and back, person who holds the family together etc. What happens if the mother becomes ill? Someone else will have to take on her roles. But she remains the mother despite this. Thus taking on someone else’s role does not change the person’s identity. (2) Identity can change in context over time. For example, a migrant worker may move from a rural area where he has a

family to an urban area and start another family. Although he is the father in both families the context is different. (3) Identity is complex and often seems chaotic and difficult to predict. For example, if a spouse dies it may cause an identity crisis for the surviving spouse. (4) Identity is dependent on others and on the ability to adapt. For example, in the case of a divorce a whole family has to adapt to the new situation. Everyone in the family has to adapt and take on a new identity but they are still members of that family.

Tajfel and Turner (1986) developed the Social Identity Theory in 1979. This theory states that an individual has many social identities, and that social identity changes based on the person's perceived membership of social groups. For example, a church-going rugby-playing student will probably have two different identities depending on whether he's on the rugby field or in church.

#### **4.7.4. Belonging to more than one CoP**

Most people belong to more than one CoP – sometimes as main members and sometimes as peripheral members. Learning may be the reason why the group gets together, or it may be incidental. The individual in such a CoP is a participant and by engaging and contributing the individual constructs his/her own identity as well as a shared identity.

Wenger (1998a) describes how we experience the world and how we engage with it as 'negotiation of meaning'. Leibowitz *et al.* (2007) studied strategies used by students to negotiate differences in identity. The participants in their study were students from two different South African universities – one a Historically White Institution (HWI), the other a Historically Black Institution (HBI). Their research supported previous findings that people who belong to the majority or dominant culture in an institution tend to refer and reflect less on their identity than those who are in the minority.

#### 4.7.5. Learning and CoPs

Lave and Wenger (2007, 47) are unhappy with the conventional explanations of learning as “a process by which a learner internalizes knowledge, whether ‘discovered’, ‘transmitted’ from others, or ‘experienced in interaction’ with others”. They claim that the focus on internalization fails to take the nature of the learner, the world, or their relationships into account. They argue that learning is “an integral part of generative social practice in the lived-in world” (*ibid*, 2007, 35). They coined the term “legitimate peripheral participation” by which they mean that learners are part of a CoP and that learning is situated within social structures. It is possible to be a main or peripheral member of a CoP and still learn with and from each other:

Legitimate peripheral participation provides a way to speak about the relations between newcomers and old-timers, and about activities, identities, artefacts, and communities of knowledge and practice. It concerns the process by which newcomers become part of a Community of Practice (Lave and Wenger, 2007, 29)

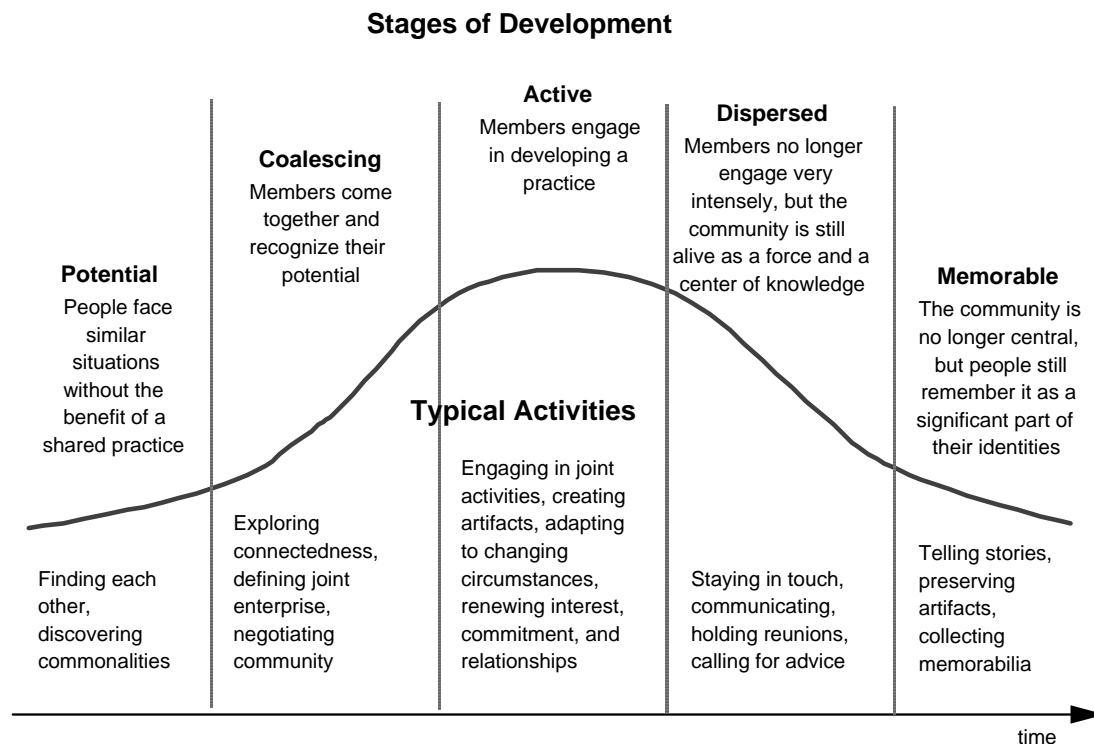
According to Wenger, most learning is about participating in CoPs:

For *individuals*, it means that learning is an issue of engaging in and contributing to the practices of their communities.

For *communities*, it means that learning is an issue of refining their practice and ensuring new generations of members.

For *organizations*, it means that learning is an issue of sustaining the interconnected communities of practice through which an organization knows what it knows and thus becomes effective and valuable as an organization (Wenger, 1998a, 7).

According to Wenger (1998b, 4) all communities of practice have stages of development and concomitant activities that typically occur in those stages. He developed a diagrammatic representation of the stages and activities:



**Figure 14:** Diagrammatic representation of the stages of development and typical activities of Communities of Practice (CoPs) (Wenger, 1998b, 4)

Wenger's stages of development correlate to the stages of mentoring, described by Johnson, Geroy and Griego (1999) as initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition. During initiation the mentoring relationship begins and boundaries are negotiated. The mentoring relationship is then cultivated and maintained for as long as needed (or required). At some point the mentoring relationship may end, and mentor and mentee separate. After separation the mentor and mentee need to redefine who they are outside of the mentoring relationship.

Invitational Learning Theory suggests that people can realize their potential by learning to 'do things with other people' as opposed to 'doing things to other people' (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987). This involves cooperation and collaboration, and is similar to the way in which people in a CoP learn with and from each other.

The potential that people have is waiting to emerge, depending on the generative mechanisms. In this research I am asking: what are the structures and mechanisms that relate to Invitational Learning and CoPs?

The next chapter deals with the research methodology relevant to the research in this thesis.

## **Chapter 5: Research Methodology**

### **5.1. Introduction**

This chapter describes the design of the research used to answer the question ‘how does mentoring facilitate access to a Community of Practice (CoP)’.

As already noted in chapter 3, critical realist research involves a three step approach: first observations are made about phenomena, and relationships and connections are explained. Then one has to suggest mechanisms and structures that could explain why the phenomenon, the connections and the relationships exist (or don't). And thirdly, one has to try to show that the mechanisms exist. In order to do this, I employed a qualitative research design and, more specifically, discourse analysis.

### **5.2. Discourse analysis**

Discourse analysis is a theoretical frame for observing social reality (Phillips and Hardy, 2002). It allows us to look closely at the processes that construct and maintain the social world:

Without discourse, there is no social reality, and without understanding discourse, we cannot understand our reality, our experiences, or ourselves (Phillips and Hardy, 2002, 2).

Discourse analysis is thus a methodology rather than a method. It is an epistemology that allows us to analyse and explain how we know the social world.

### 5.2.1. What is discourse/Discourse?

This seems a simple question to ask but the literature suggests that the answer is not simple. Fairclough (2003, 3) refers to discourse as a “particular view of language in use” but goes on to say that it is “an element of social life which is closely interconnected with other elements”. This begs the question: what other elements, and how are they connected?

To complicate matters Gee (2003) differentiates between “discourse” (small “d”) and “Discourse” (capital “D”). By discourse (small “d”) he means “connected stretches of language which hang together so as to make sense to some community of people” (Gee, 2003, 90). For example pharmacists (a community of people) use specific technical language when describing the effects of medicines in the body and the effects of the body on medicines (e.g. bioavailability, volume of distribution, protein binding etc). This is known as Pharmacokinetics, and probably only makes sense to pharmacists or those who have studied Pharmacokinetics. In 2003 Gee described Discourse (capital “D”) as:

a socially accepted association among ways of using language, other symbolic expressions and ‘artefacts’, of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and acting that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or ‘social network’, or to signal (that one is playing) a socially meaningful ‘role’ (Gee, 2003, 131).

At first glance Discourse seems obviously different from discourse. Discourse is about social reality, about social interactions, about who we are and how we behave. And discourse is about using language in a way that only makes sense to a particular group of people. Thus it seems that discourse is an aspect of the bigger picture, namely Discourse. In 2005 Gee refined his definition of Discourse to:

ways of combining and integrating language, actions, interactions, ways of thinking, believing, valuing, and using various symbols, tools,



and objects to enact a particular sort of socially recognizable identity (Gee, 2005, 21).

According to Gee (2003) there are two kinds of Discourses: primary and secondary. Primary Discourses are those we are born into and learn from, i.e., the Discourses of our family. Our first social identity is determined by the primary Discourses. They help us find out “who we are”, and what our beliefs, norms and values are (ibid, 137). Secondary Discourses are those we socialize in, other than our families, and could include church, school, gangs, workplace relationships, societies etc. In the context of this thesis, then, Gee’s idea of a Discourse relates to the construct of Community of Practice (see section 4.7 above). Students on the mentoring programme are seeking to gain access to both academic and pharmacy-related Communities of Practice. The mentoring programme, then, ideally sets out to allow them access to the Discourses or ways of behaving, thinking etc, which characterise those communities.

But Discourses are not limited to individuals, or even groups. Institutions have Discourses too. Kress describes Discourses in the context of a social institution:

Discourses are systematically-organised sets of statements which give expression to the meanings and values of an institution. Beyond that, they define, describe and delimit what it is possible to say and not possible to say (and by extension – what it is possible to do or not to do) with respect to the area of concern of that institution, whether marginally or centrally. A discourse provides a set of possible statements about a given area, and organizes and gives structure to the manner in which a particular topic, object, process is to be talked about. In that, it provides descriptions, rules, permissions and prohibitions of social and individual actions (Kress, 1985, 7).

In the context of mentoring, discourses, in the Kressian sense, construct the act of mentoring as well as the roles of the mentors themselves and are, of

course, related to Gee's notion of Discourse in that they too give rise to associated practices, or ways of behaving.

Gee claims that much of what we know is as a result of both acquisition and learning, and that the balance between the two changes depending on the situation we're in. He argues that:

Discourses are mastered through acquisition, not through learning.  
That is Discourses are not mastered by overt instruction but by inculturation (apprenticeship) into social practices through scaffolding and supported interaction with people who have already mastered the Discourse (Gee, 2003, 139)

If Discourses are not actively learned but acquired and mastered by being part of a group or institution that provides support and scaffolding, then how does Discourse fit into the structure versus agency debate? According to Parker (1990, 1) Discourse is a "system of statements which construct an object", i.e., this construction enables an agent to either reproduce or transform the structure (group or institution). Davies and Harre (1990, 47) refer to Discourse as "a multi-faceted public process through which meanings are progressively and dynamically achieved". It seems the word 'public' is used to describe the process as being out in the open, as opposed to something one struggles with privately. The emphasis on meaning is important - Discourse is about the meaningfulness of social life. Widdicombe (1995, 107) refers to Discourse as "[a] product and reflection of social, economic and political factors, and power relations". In other words Discourse reflects the way social reality is produced. Gee writes:

Discourses, for me, crucially involve (a) situated identities; (b) ways of performing and recognizing characteristic identities and activities; (c) ways of coordinating and getting coordinated by other people, things, tools, technologies, symbol systems, places, and times;

(d) characteristic ways of acting-interacting-feeling-emoting-valuing-gesturing-posturing-dressing-thinking-believing-knowing-speaking-listening-(and, in some Discourses, reading-and-writing, as well)  
(Gee, 2005, 33).

By “situated identities” Gee means the different ways in which people are involved in “social groups, cultures, institutions...” and Communities of Practice (CoPs) (Gee, 2005, 1). In other words what we say, how we behave and interact, how we feel, and what we value depends on the social group or CoP we identify with at the time. This identity within the Discourse is recognizable and characteristic of the social group. People within this Discourse are coordinated by people, things, places or times. An example is someone who is in a gang. They tend to talk, dress and behave in a way that is characteristic of that gang, and thus recognizable. They may have the name of the gang tattooed on their body, hang out in a specific area (often called their ‘turf’), have to obey the leader(s) and show their commitment by committing acts particular (or peculiar) to that gang. Another example is the Discourse common to the Springbok rugby team who won the rugby world cup in 2007. Their identity is as a member of the winning team – and they are expected to behave accordingly. The media has ensured that they are recognizable, especially when they wear clothing with the Springbok emblem. The coaching and management staff coordinates them as rugby players in the Springbok team. This is an identity that is dependent on time and place: they are the victors of the rugby world cup held in France in 2007 – and they are expected to act-interact-feel-emote-value-gesture-posture-dress-think-believe-know-speak-listen as winners, as champions.

Discourses evolve and change with time, but are all “products of history” (Gee, 2003, 132). Gee sums it up well:

The key to Discourse is ‘recognition’. If you put language, action, interaction, values, beliefs, symbols, objects, tools and places together in such a way that others recognize you as a particular type of who (identity) engaged in a particular type of what (activity), here-and-now,

then you have pulled off a Discourse (and thereby continued it through history, if only for a while longer (Gee, 2005, 27).

Another term that deserves mention at this point is 'discursive practices'. It refers to commonly occurring routine homogenous interactions which result in social categorisation (Potter, 1996). For example, students in the Faculty of Pharmacy at Rhodes University are categorised as such based on the way they speak, act, interact and behave. Pharmacy students are expected to act in a professional manner. This may influence the way they act and speak even when they are not expected to be professional, e.g., many Pharmacy students either wear or visibly carry their professional coat when on campus, signifying that they are Pharmacy students.

### **5.2.2. Doing Discourse analysis**

As already mentioned, Discourse analysis is not just a method – it is a methodology. Discourse analysis allows us not just to interpret social reality but also to find out how it was produced.

Discourse analysis - as a method - is a tool we can use to approach and think about a situation or problem. It cannot supply absolute answers because it is context-specific and based on assumptions of the person doing the analysing (and those of the reader). However, it does allow us to make our assumptions explicit, and it provides an opportunity to analyse a situation or problem, and ourselves in relation to the situation or problem. Discourse analysis cannot provide unequivocal answers but it gives us the opportunity to ask ontological and epistemological questions.

According to Phillips and Hardy (2002, 20) there are different approaches to Discourse analysis. They represented this graphically as two sets of continua:

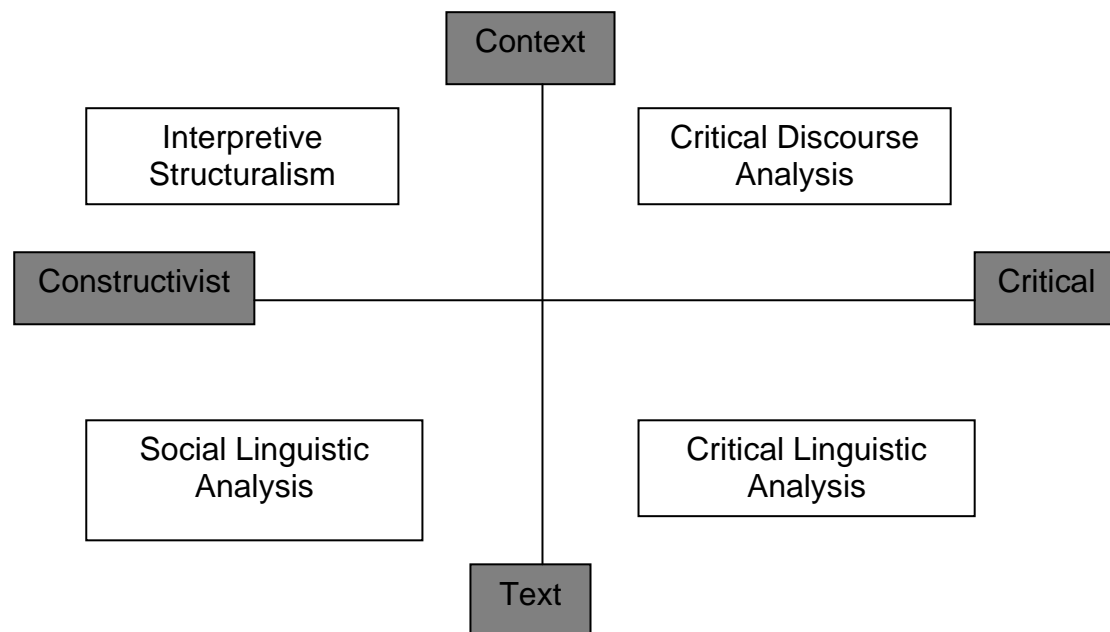


Figure 15: Different Approaches to Discourse Analysis (Phillips and Hardy, 2002, 20).

The vertical axis concerns what Phillip and Hardy (2002, 19) call the “relative importance of text versus context in the research”. Text refers to connected discourse, whilst context refers to an environment surrounding a phenomenon that gives it meaning, or to circumstances, or connections. Some people use the words ‘setting’ or ‘background’ to further explain context. The use of axes in Figure 15 seems to contradict current thinking that both context and text are important in Discourse analysis. However, researchers are usually forced to decide where their emphasis is, i.e., is it mainly contextual or textual?

The horizontal axis represents the continuum relating to the power dynamics of the research, i.e., is it a process of social construction (constructivist) or is it more about “the dynamics of power, knowledge and ideology”, i.e., critical (Phillips and Hardy, 2002, 20). However, once again it is not possible to separate them from each other. Instead the researcher has to decide to what degree their research focuses on the dynamics of power. My research deals more with context than text, and power dynamics are important – although that does not mean constructivism is not. Thus my research is located within the Critical Discourse Analysis quadrant.

According to Gee (2005, 93) it is human nature to assume that there are always “good reasons” for doing things, and that they “make deep sense”. However, this may not necessarily be true, and I must take that into account when analysing my texts (data). Critical Realism suggests that as researcher I should be looking at the outcome of actions and trying to find out the mechanisms that may have caused the outcome in that particular context. Burnett (2007, 4) modified Robson’s (2002) “Realist Model of Outcomes” to illustrate this diagrammatically:

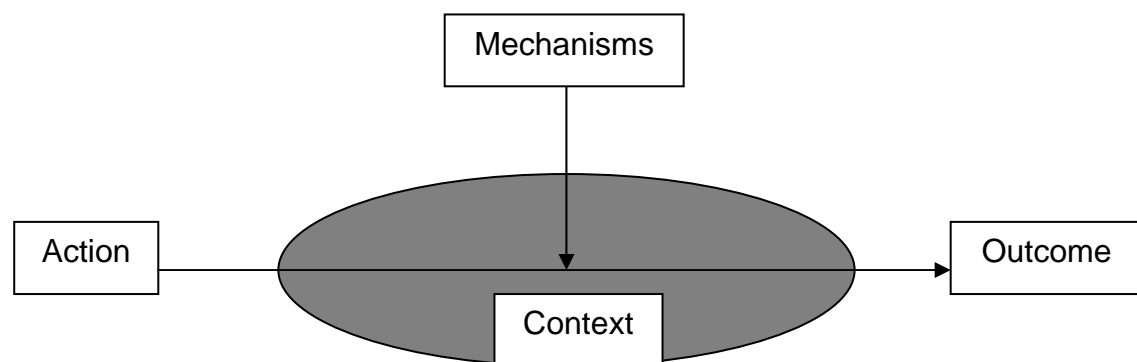


Figure 16: A Realist Model of Outcomes (adapted from Robson, 2002)

The action and outcome within a specific context are in the empirical domain (and thus can be observed) but the mechanisms are in the real domain, and thus we can only speculate and theorise about them.

### 5.2.3. Reflexivity

Reflexivity is an important aspect of Discourse analysis. Reflexivity is the relationship between the situation and the language being used. For example, how we greet someone (language) will differ depending on what setting we’re in. If we’re on the beach and a friend walks past we might say “Howzit?” If we’re in the office and our boss walks past we would possibly be less casual and more likely to say “Good morning”. The situation determines (constructs) what language we use but at the same time the language we use reflects how things are: if we hear someone say “Howzit?” we may assume that they have

a casual relationship, whilst “Good morning” is more formal. This reflection of the situation by the language being used is known as reflexivity (Gee, 2005, 97). Language constructs and reflects the situation we are in.

#### **5.2.4. Texts**

There seem to be numerous interpretations of the concept “text”. Fairclough (2003, 21) sees texts as being “parts of social events”, i.e., not just as speaking or writing but also including actions. This makes sense since we perform discourse analysis on texts, and it would not make sense to limit this to spoken or written texts. Cheek (2004, 1147) refers to text as “the data” in discourse analysis.

According to Truex (1996, 5) the terms “narrative” and “text” are sometimes used in a metaphorical sense. Text does not have to be in the written form and is defined in terms of the act of its reading (observing), rather than in the act of being written. Thus my text (data) includes my field notes from weekly meetings with the mentors, journal entries from each mentor, transcripts from interviews with the mentors, and written evaluation by mentees. It is important to remember though, that a transcript is in fact “a theoretical entity” (Gee, 2005, 106) because transcribing the interviews (which I did myself) was, in fact, part of the analysis.

### **5.3. How to conduct Discourse analysis**

Potter and Wetherell (1987) described 10 steps in Discourse analysis. They are: (1) decide on a research question, (2) select a sample of data, (3) collect records, (4) interview, (5) transcribe the interviews, (6) code the data, (7) analyse the data, (8) go through the data again, (9) validate the data, (10) write it all up. This is a general approach to Discourse analysis and should not be seen as the only way.

According to van Dyk (2000) there is no one way of dealing with the analysis of Discourse. Instead, there seem to be a number of approaches. For example, Braun and Clarke (2006, 79) suggest using thematic analysis as a “method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data”. This involves searching for meanings and patterns, coding the data (as described in section 5.5.) and after all the data has been coded the codes are arranged into themes and subthemes. Themes and subthemes are then reviewed, defined and described.

Huckin (1997) suggests first reading the text in an un-critical manner, i.e., accepting the text without questioning it. Thereafter the text should be analysed critically, looking for the different levels and questioning how it was constructed. Huckin (1997) suggests that one first looks for topics within the text, and then looks at agency and power relations.

#### **5.4. Research Design**

In qualitative research such as this the researcher becomes the main instrument for collecting the data (Maughan, 2006). One method of data collection within qualitative research is to deliberately choose a sample. This is called “purposeful sampling” (Creswell, 2003, 185). I purposefully decided to study the mentoring programme during 2007, when there were six mentors. However, I have been involved in, and have been observing the mentoring programme since its inception in 2003, and this affected my interpretation of data.

During the course of the mentoring programme in 2007 I met the mentors every week. I interviewed the mentors three times: first before the programme started, then half way through the programme, and again at the end. The interviews were semi structured, i.e., I asked each mentor the same questions. Appendix A lists the questions I asked during each interview. I also met the mentors every week, and during these meetings I made extensive notes. These I refer to as my field notes ((Appendix B), and they also form



part of my data. Mentors were expected to keep a journal, and these journal entries were analysed the same way the interviews were. My final set of data involved programme evaluation data from the mentees.

#### **5.4.1. Site selection**

I purposefully chose to study the mentoring programme in the Faculty of Pharmacy, at Rhodes University, in 2007.

#### **5.4.2. Data collection**

I was involved in designing and supervising this mentoring programme from its inception in 2003. I realized that although both mentees and mentors gained from the mentoring relationship, the mentors were the ones who changed most significantly<sup>15</sup>. Although the data collected and analysed in this thesis reflects what occurred during 2007, it is in fact a culmination of six years of observing, collecting and thinking about how mentors develop and construct mentoring.

I used four sets of texts to crystallize (triangulate) my data: (1) field notes from weekly meetings with the mentors; (2) mentors' journal entries; (3) transcribed interviews; and (4) evaluation data from mentees. Each of these will now be described briefly.

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<sup>15</sup> The way the mentors changed may have been more noticeable to me because I met them every week

#### **5.4.2.1. Weekly meetings with the mentors**

The mentoring programme officially started in the first week of the first semester<sup>16</sup>, and officially ended on the last day of lectures of the first semester<sup>17</sup>. The mentoring process thus lasted 12 teaching weeks<sup>18</sup>. Every week I met with the mentors and we discussed issues that arose during their mentoring sessions – sometimes the mentors were able to handle the situations themselves, sometimes my intervention was required. We tried to pre-empt potential problems, discussed their experiences and learning that week and any other issues that arose. It was an opportunity for the mentors to hear what the others had done, and to learn with and from each other. These meetings also gave me the opportunity to find out how each mentor was doing, how they were coping, what problems they had, and to help them address problems or issues. I made notes of our discussions, and used them as field notes. Refer to Appendix B for a synopsis.

#### **5.4.2.2. Mentors' journals**

Mentors were expected to document all meetings they had with their mentees and reflect on them in their journals. I read these journals twice: once half-way through the programme, and again at the end. After the completion of the mentoring programme I had the journal entries typed into a Word<sup>®</sup> document, which I then imported into the NVivo<sup>®</sup> 7 software programme (QSR, 2006), which I then used to analyse the journal entries (as will be discussed in section 5.5.)

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<sup>16</sup> One semester consists of two terms, with a vacation separating the terms

<sup>17</sup> Some of the mentors continued with unofficial mentoring after the programme ended officially. However, officially the programme ended then so as not to negatively impact on the mentors' own academic performance, since the semester ended with exams.

<sup>18</sup> The semester was 12 weeks long, but there was a 2 week vacation after the first 7 weeks.

#### **5.4.2.3. Transcribed interviews**

All six mentors were interviewed individually, in my office, on three separate occasions. The interviews were semi-structured, and the questions asked during each interview can be found in Appendix A.

The first interview occurred before the programme started, i.e. before the mentors had received any training (pre-intervention). Interview questions focused on their and other students' experiences as first-year students at Rhodes University; how others perceived them; how they perceived themselves; what they thought mentoring was about; and their expectations of the mentoring programme. I also gave them several scenarios and asked them to tell me how they would deal with them in the mentoring context.

Mentors were again interviewed half-way through the programme. Interview questions focused on procedural changes; how they related to their mentees and the mentees to them; how the mentees related to each other; how their understanding of mentoring had changed; and how mentoring had changed them.

At the completion of the mentoring programme mentors were again interviewed (post-intervention). The interview questions focused on a description of their mentoring journey; whether they would do it again if they knew at the beginning what they knew at the end; how mentoring had affected them emotionally, socially and academically; what aspects of mentoring they liked most, and least; whether the programme had met their expectations or not; whether they still agreed with selected responses in their first and second interviews dealing with what they thought mentoring was and how it had changed them; what they thought about the individual view of learning; and lastly whether they thought they could apply what they had learned during the mentoring programme to starting a support group for HIV positive patients who are about to start their Antiretroviral (ARV) treatment.

Interviews lasted between 30 and 60 minutes, and were recorded using audio cassettes, which I later transcribed. The transcripts followed the format of a dialogue and did not include the conversational nuances or non-verbal behaviour.

#### **5.4.2.4. Evaluation by the mentees**

At the end of the mentoring programme mentees were asked to evaluate the programme and their mentor. This was done by the coordinator of the TAI mentoring programme by means of a questionnaire. Results of this evaluation were made available to the mentees, mentors and supervisors of each programme (refer to Appendix C)

### **5.5. Data analysis**

There is some controversy about the use of software to analyse qualitative data but it certainly helped me. I attended an NVivo® course organized by the then Rhodes University Academic Development Centre (now known as the Centre for Higher Education Research, Teaching and Learning, or CHERTL), in September 2007.

Written transcripts were formatted so that they could be imported into the NVivo® 7 software programme (QSR, 2006). I used the NVivo® 7 programme to organize my data and code the texts (Online QDA, 2005).

Coding is a process of indexing and then linking the parts of the data that are seen as sharing something in common both with the index and with each other. Initially I coded according to themes, and started writing descriptions of the themes and codes. This involved constantly comparing what I had coded to other codes and looking for new codes. The difficulty with this process is remaining critical, for example avoiding coding according to preconceived and pre-conceptualized ideas. Merriam (1998, 7) refers to a process called

“bracketing”, which means that as the primary researcher I have an ethical responsibility to try and minimize my own biases and values.

Initially the transcript data seemed daunting and I felt the need to refine and reduce it to make it more manageable for interpretation. Coffey and Atkinson (1996, 27) warn against this reductionist approach and claim that this process is a kind of “content analysis”. The danger of this is that the discourse becomes fragmented, de-contextualized and it loses its richness and complexity (Crinson, 2001).

The next part of my analysis involved exploring and categorizing the themes and codes; relating them to each other; analyzing them; and interpreting them according to Gee’s interpretation of Discourse (2005), and with reference to Invitational Learning Theory and CoPs. I looked for evidence of the characteristics of each of these as described in the previous chapter. This process was time-consuming but necessary. It was a case of noticing something about the text or codes, collecting relevant evidence to substantiate what I had noticed, thinking about this, noticing other issues whilst thinking and collecting, and so on, until the cycle repeated itself (Seidel, 1998). It was important to keep writing because I found that whilst I was writing I was thinking and interpreting.

Frankland and Bloor (1999) suggest that analyzing discourse is about finding propositions that can be applied across all discourse being analysed, and not about being reductionist. Critical realism argues that we look beyond the subject–object and also structure–agency divide (as discussed in chapter 3) to begin to understand the causal relations and social processes.

## **5.6. Justifying my findings**

This brings me onto a very important part of Discourse analysis, namely validity. In quantitative research, findings are valid if a different researcher can replicate the research, and get the same results. In qualitative research this is

impossible and replicating is seldom possible, because very few people will act, react or say the same things if the research is replicated (Taylor, Gibbs and Lewins, 2005). So, what makes Discourse analysis valid? What makes Discourse analysis more than just opinion? The answer to this is not simple, because we cannot say that Discourse analysis “reflects reality in any simple way” (Gee, 2005, 113). First of all, according to the critical realism paradigm, reality has three domains (real, actual and empirical) and our understanding of reality is as a result of emergence from the real domain, to the actual and then to the empirical. This is how we construct our own reality. Secondly, there is the issue of reflexivity whereby language constructs and reflects the situation we are in. Gee (2005, 113-4) believes that validity is “social, not individual” and consists of four parts: convergence, agreement, coverage and linguistic detail:

(1) Convergence: triangulating or crystallizing data from different sources helps substantiate our findings. I used data from different sources: (a) field notes from weekly meetings with the mentors; (b) mentors’ journal entries; (c) transcribed interviews; and (d) evaluation data from mentees. At the same time, it is important to always look for what Taylor, Gibbs and Lewins (2005) call negative cases i.e. where something seems to contradict what your explanations would predict. Usually when we find a negative case we look for a way of explaining it.

(2) Agreement: there are several levels to this point. Firstly, have the participants (the mentors) been given the opportunity to agree or disagree with the transcriptions of the interviews? This is known as member validation (Taylor, Gibbs and Lewins, 2005) and did occur in this research – the mentors all read through the transcripts of their particular interviews. They were given an opportunity to clarify ambiguities and any other issues. Secondly, is there agreement between analysts? If there is only one researcher (as in this research) it is important to leave an audit trail (*ibid*) so that it could be possible to retrace one’s steps, and other analysts could interpret the data.

(3) Coverage: is sometimes also referred to as generalisability and transferability (Taylor, Gibbs and Lewins, 2005), and refers to the question

‘can the results be applied to other data’? In qualitative research, this is seldom possible because it is context-specific. One must, however, be careful of what Silverman (2001, 223) calls anecdotalism, in which we find something fascinating or unique.

(4) Linguistic details: the structure and details of the language being analysed can be linked to communicative functions. However, this is most relevant when the discourse analysis involves language-in-use.

In arguing whether Discourse analysis is valid, analysts address these four issues. However, no Discourse analysis can address all four to the same extent. This research only addresses convergence, agreement and coverage. The discourse analysis I performed was not linguistic in nature and therefore the linguistic details were not analysed per se.

## **5.7. Ethics**

Before embarking on my data collection I obtained ethical approval from the Faculty of Pharmacy’s in-house ethics committee. There were several ethical considerations that had to be taken into account during this study. I explained the following to the mentors: the reason for the study, issues of confidentiality, that they could withdraw at any stage, and the procedure of the research before asking them to complete informed consent forms. These forms (see Appendix D for a copy of the consent form) were completed before I interviewed them for the first time.

In the interviews I started off by explaining why I was interviewing them and that they would all be asked the same questions, in the same order. I emphasized that there were no ‘right’ or ‘wrong’ answers because I was trying to find out what each of them thought, had experienced and how they understood mentoring. I was thus expecting individualized responses. I also explained that anonymity would be guaranteed and I outlined the data collection process (recording on audio cassettes and then transcribing and

analysing it myself). I informed them that they would get to read their transcribed interviews so that they could clarify any misunderstandings or ambiguities that may have arisen.

I transcribed and analysed all the interviews myself. The journal entries were typed by another person who promised to maintain confidentiality. I typed out the summary of our weekly meetings myself, and the evaluation by mentees and mentors was analysed by the coordinator of the TAI programme, who also maintained confidentiality.

I expunged all references to particular people from the quotes I used in this thesis.

## **5.8. Who I am**

Who I am is central to this research. I have my own assumptions and outlook on life that influenced my interpretation of the data. I encountered some difficulties whilst studying towards my first degree (in the 1980s). One of my lecturers recognized the fact that I was unhappy, and helped me. She became my mentor – although at the time I did not know anything about mentoring. I am deeply indebted to her, and think that my involvement with this mentoring programme is my way of wanting to help others as she helped me.

I am currently Head of the Pharmacy Administration and Practice (PAP) division and Deputy Dean in the Faculty of Pharmacy at Rhodes University. I have come a long way from the struggling undergraduate student in the 1980s, but I will never forget how difficult it was. I studied pharmacy when I was in my thirties, and despite the advantage of age and maturity it was not an easy journey either. During my second year I was a mentee in the second year academic mentoring programme in the faculty (which is still running) and gained enormously – albeit mainly academically. So, in my third year I became a mentor in this programme.



When the Faculty of Pharmacy decided to start a mentoring programme in 2003 I volunteered to supervise the programme. I have never regretted this decision, and for the past six years I have grown with the programme. My difficulties whilst a student and my interest in mentoring helped me during the research process.

According to Palmer (1998) we teach who we are. I believe it is similar in mentoring – that we mentor who we are.

Having discussed the methodology I now move on to the discussion of my findings.

## Chapter 6: Constructing mentoring

### 6.1. Introduction

The research covered in this chapter aims to find out what structures and mechanisms are involved in the process of mentoring, in the development of mentoring skills, and in the construction of mentoring. I address the research question: how do mentors construct mentoring? To do this I use critical realism as the ‘underlabourer’ or meta-theory. As already noted, critical realism acknowledges that reality exists independently of us. Critical realist research is mainly concerned with the intransitive, ontological dimension of reality. It involves wanting to find out about the structures and mechanisms that could result in (and therefore explain) empirical events.

In order to determine how mentors constructed mentoring I had to do more than just describe mentoring. Critical realist research involves trying to discover the events and structures that lie beneath the empirical domain, as well as the generative mechanisms. The relationship between mechanisms and events/objects is not necessarily one of ‘cause and effect’ (Sayer, 2000). It is possible that a mechanism exists without a resultant outcome/effect, or with a different (or unexpected, or new) outcome/effect, and is then known as a “tendency” (Danermark *et al.* 2002, 55). The issue of tendencies is important: if we assume that generative mechanisms exist we cannot assume that they will necessarily have an outcome/event. There may only be a tendency towards an outcome/event.

Critical realist research – and therefore also the research discussed and described in this thesis - typically involves three steps: (1) the observation of phenomena – in this case mentoring, (2) relationships and connections are explained by suggesting structures and mechanisms that may (or may not) exist, and (3) trying to show that the structures and mechanisms exist.

As explained in section 3.1.3.4. there are four important features of critical realism that need to be borne in mind: (1) my understanding is relative to what

I believe and understand now, (2) knowledge is a social process and is context specific, (3) things may not be as they seem, and (4) all knowledge is fallible (Benton and Craib, 2001).

As already noted in chapter 4, discourse analysis is a theoretical frame for observing social reality and a tool we can use to approach and think about a situation or problem. In this research the issues were to find out how mentors constructed mentoring, and how mentoring facilitates access to a CoP.

Discourse analysis allows me to explore the relationships and connections between my data (texts), events, and discursive practices on the one hand, and social structures, relations and processes on the other (Fairclough, 2003). Discourse analysis is context-specific and based on assumptions of the person doing the analysing as well as those of the reader. Discourse analysis does not provide unequivocal answers but it gives us the opportunity to ask and answer ontological and epistemological questions.

According to Bhaskar (1978, 1979, and 2002) reality exists as three domains: the empirical, the actual and the real. As discussed in section 3.1.3.7. our experiences are in the empirical domain, the actual domain contains the things/events that happen even if we don't experience them, and the real domain contains the mechanisms with generative powers. During the interviews and discussions with the mentors during our weekly meetings I accessed the experiences of the mentors at the empirical level. According to Bhaskar this is acknowledged as construction. Discourses are what bring about the experiences. The Discourses are thus mechanisms which need to be identified and explored.

Social learning theory suggests that people learn in a social context, i.e., that knowledge is a result of social interaction (Doolittle and Camp, 1999). The interaction has a social and cultural context and thus the knowledge is specific to a particular time and place. The research that makes up this thesis relates to a time period from 2003 (when the mentoring programme started) to 2007 (when most of the data was collected). The place is Rhodes University, South Africa.

Since critical realism rejects the idea that the appearance of things corresponds directly with the way things are, the aim of my research is to identify and describe the obvious and the hidden structures and mechanisms that may be producing the effects.

Throughout chapters 6 and 7 I refer to mentors according to an assigned number e.g. mentor 1, mentor 2 etc. I placed their quotes in boxes, to differentiate them from my discussions. The quotations were minimally corrected for the sake of readability.

It seems appropriate to start off with a description of being a first year student at Rhodes University according to the mentors, i.e., to provide a description of the empirical. This description is based on the interpretation of the mentors, i.e., it is a result of their experiences which are subjective and which result from the socio-historical contexts they draw upon. This data was obtained from the interview data.

## **6.2. Being a first year student at Rhodes University**

The mentoring programme on which the research reported in this thesis is based was started as a result of anecdotal evidence from students that being a first year student at Rhodes University can be difficult. The first-year student is faced with being in a new environment, having to find out how everything works, making friends, being away from home, living in a restricted area with a diversity of students, and studying. For some students this change can be overwhelming, especially if their previous environment was very different and if they are first-generation university entrants. For many students adjusting to Rhodes University is potentially difficult.

### 6.2.1. Cultural diversity at Rhodes University

In his welcome to the university - on the university's website - our Vice-Chancellor writes: "of our 6 000 students, 24% are postgraduates and 25% are international students from 57 countries around the world, making Rhodes a dynamic and cosmopolitan knowledge institution" (Badat, 2007b). New students have to come to terms with this diversity. Not only are they new to the environment and have to form their own identity, they now have to do so in an environment of diversity.

People from the 57 different countries not only bring different cultures to Rhodes University but also different languages. According to Gee (2005, 1) the most important functions of language are: "to support the performance of social activities and social identities, and to support human affiliation within cultures, social groups, and institutions". The language of learning at Rhodes University is English, but for many students English is not their mother tongue and sometimes this leads to difficulties. For example, mentor 4 said

... where I come from you don't have to speak English like every time.

According to Christie (1985) language is not just an instrument of communication. Language and context cannot be separated because context shapes language, and language shapes context. For example, the language used on the soccer field will be different to that used to describe the pharmacological activity of a medicine. Similarly, explanation of pharmacological activity of a medicine will differ depending on who one is communicating with, e.g., a fellow pharmacist or a patient with a low level of education. This means that even students who are accustomed to using language in some contexts may experience difficulties in using it in the academic disciplines. In the example above, the student refers to the difficulty of using English to make meaning consistently and across a range of contexts.

Developing their own identity and developing affiliations may also be difficult for first year students. It is hardly surprising then that students who share the

same language and/or nationality find each other and socialize together.

Mentor 4 described this as follows:

I don't know whether it's because they speak the same language, most of them, but they are always in a group, even when not in meetings, they walk together.

Some mentees said that when they had to choose their mentor, the home language of the mentor played a role in their decision. Language is a structure in what I term, in this chapter, 'politics', and will be discussed later.

### 6.2.2. Freedom

Very few students live in Grahamstown permanently, so coming to a residential university like Rhodes means most students are faced with various forms of freedom. They no longer live at home or boarding school, so there is freedom from authority figures such as parents, prefects, teachers and/or matrons. Mentor 2 said she noticed that some of her mentees had problems with the sudden freedom:

I find that if people come from a very strict house or a town or house where there's no freedom or opportunity to even try things then they kind of have that immature 'wanting too much at once' attitude when they get here.

This experimentation with freedom and need to 'break free' is not unique to Rhodes University. It is part of growing up and maturing into someone who wants their own identity and personal autonomy (Kegan, 1982). According to Piaget (1990) adolescents and young adults think they are unique and indestructible. That students overshoot the mark and 'go wild' is an expression of their new-found freedom and belief in being indestructible. However, as with most things in life – there has to be a balance, and if left alone these 'free' students sometimes do not succeed academically and/or socially.

The mentors described some of the issues relating to freedom, including having to deal with having free time and having the freedom to decide what to do with their time. For example, mentor 6 said about one of her friends:

She didn't come for lectures that much, she'd just sleep because in school you know you're actually forced to come and do your work. Whereas here she didn't actually, nobody forces you to do anything.

This freedom from being 'forced' to do something, e.g., attend lectures, is liberating for some students but difficult to come to terms with for others. Students are exercising agency they might not have had previously and this often impedes their chances of success.

Other issues of freedom include having to deal with money on their own, i.e., learning to budget for themselves. For some drinking alcohol was a freedom they had not experienced before, and some students drank excessively. For some the new-found freedom included sexual freedom. With sexual freedom comes the risk of pregnancy, sexually transmitted infections and HIV.

Previous experiences lead to people being able to cope in different ways. The way students have previously experienced the interplay between structure and agency means that they act in different ways in the new environment.

### **6.2.3. Academic issues**

Learning is often seen "in individualistic terms of acquisition of information" (Wenger, 1991, 1). Wenger refers to this as "the myth of learning". This myth is not new but has an enormous influence on how learning takes place. Our curricula are still largely based on 'instruction' – where the teacher teaches what is deemed to be relevant, followed by individual construction – where the student is supposed to make sense of the instruction. We claim that "education is no longer chalk, talk and regurgitation" (Futter and Oltmann, 2007, 38) but often this is exactly what is happening, and Pharmacy education is no exception.

Purdie, Hattie and Douglas (1996, 93) found that students had varying conceptions of learning:

Learning as increasing one's knowledge, learning as duty, learning as means to an end, learning as seeing something in a different way, learning as understanding, learning as social competence, learning as personal fulfillment, or learning as memorizing, studying, and reproducing knowledge.

In a critical realist account, these conceptions of learning result from the underpinning structures and mechanisms the students have been exposed to. In my opinion our students (and possibly also the mentors) would probably come up with a similar list of interpretations of the concept of learning. I did not ask this of the mentors. This may be due to the kind of learning that occurs at school, which tends to follow what has been termed the "IRF structures" (Geisler, 1994, 29), as discussed in chapter 2 (section 2.7). Typically the teacher asks the pupil (or class) a question (initiation), receives a response, and then gives feedback about the response. At university this tends not to happen in the same way. Some lecturers never engage their learners; others do and expect learners to think critically in order to develop opposing viewpoints and differing explanations.

Many [perhaps most] students think there is a direct correlation between the amount of effort and time spent studying, and academic success, i.e., the harder they work the better they should do. Often this is the case but sometimes the effort does not pay off. During our weekly meetings we discussed the difference between 'studying hard' and 'studying smart' and how it was not necessarily dependent on the number of hours the student spent studying but on how 'smart' they were about it. We discussed using methods to construct knowledge as opposed to forcefully trying to learn or memorise. The university favours evidence based and substantiated learning. The knowledge students are expected to engage with is produced according to sets of rules for what can constitute knowledge and how that knowledge can be known - which is discipline based. These 'special' kinds of knowledge



then require different behaviours for engaging with them, e.g., using mind-maps, building models (especially useful when learning chemistry), teaching someone else (the old adage comes to mind: 'the best way to learn is to teach'), using metaphors etc. Mentoring provided the opportunity for mentors to share particular ways of learning with their mentees. These different learning behaviours can be seen as mechanisms that may or may not lead to learning.

According to the mentors' experiences of the empirical then, being a first year student at Rhodes University is potentially difficult. Students have different social, cultural and historical experiences before arriving at Rhodes University, and whilst at Rhodes University.

### **6.3. Discourse analysis**

There are many different discourses in Pharmacy. For example the discourse associated with Pharmaceutical Care which promotes good communication and concordance. There is also the discourse associated with trying to see things from the perspective of the patient/client, and that of health education and promotion. In contrast there is the authoritarian discourse which promotes giving instructions and expecting patients/clients to follow them – the compliance discourse. Each of these discourses construct the pharmacist and the patient/client in different ways and will thus influence the practices and interactions which link them and occur between them.

There are also discursive shifts within our Faculty, e.g., in the Pharmacy Administration and Practice division we engage with the Pharmaceutical Care discourse. In the Pharmaceutics division lecturers tend to engage with what might be termed a 'manufacturing' discourse which again constructs their own practice and the roles they occupy as pharmacists. This can be very confusing for Pharmacy students.

Discourse analysis is a way of explaining how we know the social world. Phillips and Hardy (2002) claim that without discourse there is no social reality. Analysing the discourse and Discourse allowed me to understand and conceptualize what was happening to the mentors, so that I could try and understand the social reality of mentoring. Discourse is my unit of analysis, used to address the question: how do mentors construct mentoring? This involves a number of steps namely: naming the discourse, unpacking it and then using my data to exemplify it. In critical realist terms discourses constitute a mechanism, i.e., the discourses are generative mechanisms that may result in actual and empirical events and experiences, or may be tendential.

In the mentoring context the mentors are categorised as mentors based on the discursive practices of mentoring. This chapter is an attempt at identifying the discursive practices that categorise mentors and the discourses which underpin and give rise to those actions. It is useful to provide a summary in the form of a table of the discourses involved in the construction of mentoring:

Table V: A list of the discourses that gave rise to discourse practices, i.e., the mechanisms that enabled mentors to construct mentoring

Discourses that constructed mentoring:

- Newness
- Been there done that
- Helping
- Not a quick fix
- I'm approachable
- Mentors don't have to be clever people
- Mentors are a source of information
- Mentoring isn't easy but gets better with time
- Initially not know each other
- Becoming friends

Different discourses were identified and given a name. These will be discussed individually in order to determine how mentors construct mentoring.

### 6.3.1. Newness discourse

This discourse relates to how the mentors experienced their first year at Rhodes University. First year students often have high expectations of university, e.g., they may have been told by other students, friends or parents, that they will have 'the best time of your life' and make 'lifelong friends'. This discourse constructs the university experience in certain ways and may not always be productive, e.g., when a student gets to Rhodes University and feels lonely and/or homesick they may start asking themselves why they are not having the time of their life, or making those lifelong friends. The discourse then constructs them as deficient and different from the 'norm' – in Foucauldian terms (Foucault, 1984) it serves to 'other' them. What I have termed the 'newness' discourse relates to the state of being 'new' and the difficulties associated with it. The discourse in turn, then constructs the initial university experience as difficult.

The 'newness discourse' was evident in the data. Mentor 2 described that being new provided a number of challenges:

I lived on the hill<sup>19</sup> so there was the most walking and strenuous exercise I'd ever done, I had to make friends from scratch, and had to learn how to let go of my life that I still had at my home because most of my friends were at home.

She said she had struggled, and it was not easy. She relied on her family to reinforce the notion that things would improve as she got used to being at Rhodes University, and not to lose sight of the fact that she was at Rhodes University for a purpose.

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<sup>19</sup> 'On the hill' refers to those residences on the Rhodes University campus that are built on a hill and require students to walk downhill to the rest of campus, i.e., for lectures and practicals, and uphill to their residences. Although it is neither far nor particularly steep, those who live 'on the hill' often complain of their walk.

This discourse of newness is expressed as struggling not only with the new environment, with having to make new friends, being away from home, family and friends but it also involves academic struggles, as expressed by mentor 2:

... it was my first time experiencing really having to struggle and work hard...  
... with the way varsity<sup>20</sup> work is presented to you and it's the first time you sort of have to work so much on your own.

All the mentors said that it was difficult to learn to work on their own, and those who had been mentees in their first year said their mentor had helped them with this. They said that during their mentoring meetings they found out that their fellow mentees were having similar problems, and this made them feel less isolated. The discussions they had during their mentoring meetings and the advice they received from their mentor helped them develop strategies to cope with this. These discussions and the advice given by the mentors were mechanisms that the mentors employed to help the mentees deal with being new, and with developing strategies to overcome the hurdles. These strategies can also be thought of as mechanisms.

The newness discourse constructs mentoring as being about helping students come to terms with new experiences and helping them to get over the 'university is the best time of your life' discourse.

### **6.3.2. 'Been there done that' discourse**

All mentors said it was important that they knew and understood what it was like to be a first year student in the Faculty of Pharmacy. This is why I recruit third year pharmacy students to become mentors – they have successfully negotiated the first two years of the Pharmacy degree but they are still sufficiently 'close' to first year, i.e., they can still remember what it was like. The mentors had insight and empathy, e.g., mentor 1 said

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<sup>20</sup> Varsity is a South African term for university

I think I'll be good because I had a bad first year. I went through a lot. I know what it's like.

According to Haines (2003) there are important features of the mentors and the programme that must exist in order for mentoring to be successful: the mentors should want to be mentors, the mentor and mentee should have common interests, and the mentor must have some expertise. In Bhaskarian<sup>21</sup> terms these features are structures that need to be in place for mentoring to be successful. The expertise referred to by Haines (2003) need not be in mentoring – our mentors had very little mentoring expertise when they started, but they had the expertise of having successfully negotiated the first two years as students in the Faculty of Pharmacy, at Rhodes University. They had managed to negotiate their way around various structures and mechanisms which allowed them to succeed. This experience allowed them to survive at Rhodes University and led to a discourse which constructs a mentor as someone with experience. For example, mentor 3 (during her first interview) said that being new was difficult:

In first year it was difficult I think... I was not used to studying every day, and doing things that I was not...like you had to supervise yourself and know what you had to do and hand in things and do things.

Mentor 2 had failed a subject for the first time ever when she was in first year and she felt that she could relate to others who experience this. She also had experience with non-academic issues such as travelling and finding friends. Many students have travel issues, e.g., how to book bus or airplane tickets, and finding and making friends is a process all newcomers to Rhodes University have to undergo. Some find it harder than others.

Some of the mentors seemed to think that they could only be good mentors if they themselves had had a tough first year, e.g., mentor 4 claimed that:

I think I will be a good mentor because I've been there, and I know what it's like to be a first year. I know where you need help, and the frustrations you

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<sup>21</sup> By Bhaskarian I mean in relation to Bhaskar's theories of critical realism (as discussed in chapter 3).

have to go through.

He was very sensitive to other's needs and problems. He said being a first year student was "tough and frustrating at times". Mentor 5 expressed similar sentiments:

The reason I think I'll be a good mentor is because I didn't experience the assistance that I would have liked to have received [in first year], so I could help them out in a way that I didn't receive help. Because I didn't choose to get help.

This mentor suggested that if she had been a mentee during her first year it would probably have been easier. In retrospect she regretted her decision not to join the mentoring programme when she was in her first year.

Mentor 6 explained what coming to a new environment such as Rhodes University meant to her, and why she thought the insight would help her be a good mentor:

I think I will be a good mentor because I kind of understand what it is to be first year. I know how it is to miss your parents and I know how it is to come to a place where you actually hardly know anybody and then you're forced out of your comfort zone.

She said she was lucky because she had an older sister at Rhodes University who helped her – much like a mentor might have.

All the mentors said that they could empathize with the mentees, especially because most of them had also had a difficult time in first year. Empathy is not to be confused with sympathy. Sympathy is sharing someone else's emotions. Rogers (1961, 284) defined empathy as:

... an accurate, empathic understanding of the client's world as seen from the inside. To sense the client's private world as if it were your own, but without losing the 'as if' quality – this is empathy.

A mentor with empathy is better equipped to help a mentee than a mentor who merely feels sympathy.

The 'been there done that' discourse facilitated the process of empathy that was necessary for mentoring. It is tendential in Bhaskarian terms. The mentors' experiences enabled them to negotiate and access structures and mechanisms when mentoring, as well as making them available to their mentees. In this way they constructed mentoring.

### **6.3.3. Helping discourse**

As mentioned in chapter 2, the mentoring literature suggests that the most effective mentors are caring, empathic, patient, encouraging, ethical and helpful (Blackburn, Cameron and Chapman, 1981; Cronan-Hillix *et al.*, 1986, Johnson, 2002). Our mentors agreed that these qualities are important in mentoring. During the training of our mentors we use an adapted version of Eagan's (1994) helping model to illustrate how mentoring is about action leading to valued outcomes. A mentee tells their mentor something – let's call it a story. Some mentees are able and willing to tell their story freely, others need prompting. Prompting may include brainstorming, nudging or asking leading questions. The mentor must make sure that mentees are given the opportunity and space to tell their stories, i.e., there need to be structures in place to enable this to happen. The mentor is expected to listen to this story, ask questions if unsure of something, and help and guide the mentee towards their own solutions. It may be tempting to tell the mentee what to do, or what the mentor did in a similar situation, but the mentor is encouraged to allow the mentee to explore their own story in order to come up with viable options. The mentee should be guided by asking questions such as 'how would you like it to turn out?' or 'what do you want to happen?' The next step is to get the mentee to think about whether or not this is realistic. It is important to recognize limited resources (which include time) and to think about the mentee's goals and constraints. It does not help to come up with a plan that is not feasible. The planning stage must be followed by action on the part of the mentee and perhaps also by the mentor. The mentor should check the progress and give feedback where and when appropriate.

According to Herman and Mandell (2004) waiting is an important component of the mentoring relationship, i.e., the mentor should not take over and do things for the mentee - however tempting this may be. Instead the mentor should guide the mentee into action, and during action. This process of waiting is not to be confused with being passive. Waiting is an active process. This way the mentor becomes a “collaborative enquirer” by “learning from, with and for the sake of” the mentee (Herman and Mandell, 2004, 140).

Mentor 4 linked the ‘been there done that’ discourse with the helping discourse:

I got to realize that as a first year you go through a lot of things and you need guidance, and the best guidance you can get is from the person who has been through all those problems that you have to go through.

Guiding someone means the person doing the guiding has to have insight and understanding. This mentor explained that this insight and understanding came from his experience. Mentor 1 described the difference between helping mentees by doing things for them, e.g., helping them academically, and helping them help themselves:

I know many of them wanted me to help them academically but I’ve slowly realized that you can help them academically in some things but then it’s mostly about guiding them, and showing them where things are.

Psychologists suggest that there are two main goals of helping: (1) helping people manage their problems, and (2) helping people become better at helping themselves (Eagan, 1994). Mentor 1 helped her mentees achieve both goals.

The literature and the discourse of helping identified through my data analysis suggest that mentoring is about empathy, understanding, guiding, and helping a mentee. Whilst there are some similarities between mentoring and counselling there are also important differences. Both mentoring and counselling deal with helping people but counsellors are professionally trained to help people with their emotional problems. Counsellors help people address the ‘why’ questions, e.g., ‘why do you feel that way?’ Counselling



focuses on meaning, on feelings, and on helping people understand themselves better (Nelson –Jones, 2004). Mentoring on the other hand tends to address the ‘what’ and the ‘how’ questions, e.g., ‘what do you have a problem with, and how can I help you help yourself?’ Mentoring is about providing a space that is safe, that people are comfortable in, that both supports and challenges them so that they learn with and from each other, and develop (Herman and Mandell, 2004). Mentors are not trained to be counsellors. Instead, mentoring has a more practical agenda, e.g., setting goals, planning, then implementing the plans to achieve these goals, and re-assessing before setting new goals (and so the spiral continues). Mentors are encouraged to refer mentees to professionally trained individuals (such as counsellors) for matters that require interventions outside the scope of practice of mentoring. For example, a few years ago a mentor in our mentoring programme referred a mentee to the Rhodes Counselling Centre when her mentee asked for help after having been raped.

Mentoring is about caring and letting the mentees learn by doing. This relates to what Vygotsky calls the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) where a more knowledgeable other (MKO) – in this case the mentor - guides and helps the mentee by providing scaffolding so that the mentee learns (Van Der Stuyf, 2002). The MKO provides scaffolding so that the learner can build onto prior knowledge. Just as scaffolding is temporary and is withdrawn when it is no longer required, so too the mentoring programme.

The ‘helping’ discourse constructs mentoring as being able to help mentees help themselves. The mentor is expected to be caring, empathic, patient, encouraging, and ethical whilst providing scaffolding and guidance so that the mentee can help himself/herself. Evidence of the ‘helping’ discourse is scattered throughout chapters 6 and 7.

#### 6.3.4. 'Mentoring as a quick fix' discourse

I was under the impression that some of the mentors would think of mentoring as a 'quick fix' solution. However, only one of the mentors said that initially she thought mentoring was a 'quick fix' solution to mentees problems. Mentor 6 said:

Before the mentoring programme started I thought mentoring was about telling them how to do it, what to do and when.

But in her last interview she admitted that it was much more than this:

It's far more. You actually start forming a bit more complex relationships with them. And you start to like them – like more than what you actually thought, and you start to actually develop proper friendships with some of them.

She said that she felt it was similar to caring for a younger sister, and almost like the Big Brother Big Sister mentoring programme (2007) in the USA <sup>22</sup>. Instead of quickly fixing mentees problems she realized that she had taken on a responsibility for the success of her mentees. The discourse had shifted. It was not just a case of helping them and getting to know them, with that came the extra responsibility, and she took it seriously, and personally:

I grew attached to some of them. I actually met a lot of new people, I made more friends, and I'm more worried about them now.... especially for the June exams. Like I'm not only stressing for myself but I'm stressing for them to a certain degree.

Mentees were asked to evaluate their mentor at the conclusion of the programme. In all instances the mentees said that the mentors had explained their role as mentor as: a guide; someone who is there to assist his/her mentees on issues pertaining to campus life; and one who was available to give academic and personal advice while also advising mentees where to go when experiencing problems (or variations of this). None of the mentees seemed to think that the role of the mentor was to supply 'quick fix' solutions for their problems. Mentees were of the opinion that mentors had done everything to offer guidance and having a mentor had made a difference to

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<sup>22</sup> In this mentoring programme the mentees are children, and the mentoring occurs either at school or in their community

their lives. Mentors were praised for, among other things: providing assistance with problems; giving guidelines for studying for tests and exams; giving advice on how to get hold of contraceptives and issues relating to the sanatorium, issues around being Foundation students, while generally acting as a great source of motivation and inspiration to the mentees.

The 'mentoring as a quick fix' discourse was not prominent - only one mentor admitted to its existence before the programme started. Where it was evident it shifted as a result of working within the mentoring programme and as a result of interacting with other structures and mechanisms.

### **6.3.5. The 'I'm approachable' discourse**

The mentors all felt that they needed to be approachable. For example, mentor 1 said:

I am someone who people who have a problem can come to.

She felt that this was a quality mentors should have. According to Zeind *et al.* (2005) there are attributes that are important for mentoring to be successful. One of these is to be caring. The others include wisdom (which is similar to what I have called experience, the 'been there done that' discourse), commitment and integrity (requirements for being selected to become a mentor in our programme), high expectations (for themselves and their mentees), a sense of humour (always helps), and the ability to act as a catalyst (Zeind *et al.*, 2005, 2). The other mentors all described themselves as people who care, and who want to help. They all thought they were approachable. Mentor 6 claimed that she was not just approachable but that her mentees knew that she would take them seriously:

If they actually need something they know that I will put them first before I'll put myself. I will actually try and help them out before anybody else.

Social and cultural issues may come in to play. For example, a young black woman may not find me - a middle aged white woman - approachable, regardless of how approachable I might claim to be.

The 'I'm approachable' discourse facilitated the process of caring and helping that were necessary for mentoring.

### **6.3.6. The 'mentors are clever people' discourse**

At the beginning of the programme two of the mentors asked me why I had chosen them to be mentors since they did not think they were 'clever enough'. Their naïve view of mentoring was that only clever people can mentor. For example, mentor 1 described herself as follows:

I don't think I am as clever as the others.
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She had failed an exam in her second year, which led to her negative assessment of her own academic ability. She said she is hard on herself but that knowing what it is like to fail would be helpful in her mentoring. She felt that failing had affected her negatively at the time, but that now she was able to see a positive side of it – she had the experience, and could thus better understand others who fail.

Mentoring is not about being clever. It is about caring, understanding, having insight and empathy, and helping the mentee help themselves.

This discourse derives from values and attitudes in the university as a whole, where the ability to excel academically is prized above all else. This can lead to exclusion and marginalization particularly as universities grow as a result of massification – as more students are admitted. This is a discourse about mentors and academic values.

Although the discourse of 'mentors are clever people' was never a powerful one, it became less powerful as a result of working within the mentoring

programme, and as a result of the interaction with other structures and mechanisms.

### **6.3.7. Mentoring as a source of information**

Mentor 6 explained that mentoring is much more complex than telling mentees what to do and when:

It's like you are so important as a source of information for them. That's the thing I didn't realize the magnitude of.... I just thought if I'd be a leader, you go, you tell them how, what to do and when. But it's different. It's far more. You actually start forming a bit more complex relationships with them.

She acknowledged the complexity of mentoring. The issue of being a source of information is discussed further in relation to belonging to a Community of Practice, and knowledge management in chapter 7.

### **6.3.8. Discourses that relate to relationships**

According to Levinson *et al.* (1978, 97) “the mentoring relationship is one of the most complex, and developmentally important a person can have in early adulthood”. In our programme both the mentee and the mentor can still be considered to be in early adulthood. Mentoring is about relationships (Archer, 2002; Pierpaoli, 1992) but different mentoring models result in different relationships. For example, in the didactic model the relationship between mentor and mentee is more one of ‘listen to me and do as I say’. In the apprenticeship model relationship the mentee is learning on the job with the help of the mentor. The collegial model implies that both mentor and mentee are colleagues, but the mentee is the junior colleague. In all three models power is an important component in the relationship. The friendship model is probably the only one where power is not an issue.

Brookes and Sikes (1997) suggest that mentoring is a stepped process, i.e., as the mentee learns by doing and becomes more confident, so the

relationship between the mentor and mentee may become one of equal enquiry (White, 2005).

According to Johnson, Geroy and Griego (1999), and Haines (2003), the mentoring relationship typically evolves from the initiation phase when mentors and mentees define their roles and start the whole process. This is the 'mentoring isn't easy at first but gets better later' discourse. Initially the mentors had to work hard at starting the relationship, as mentor 5 explained:

Well in the beginning I found like they weren't so relaxed and talking to me, they weren't so comfortable, they didn't want to speak to me about the things, it was more me prying and trying to get them to talk to me.

During the initiation phase the relationship tends to be weak and is relatively task-driven. For example, mentor 6 explains:

I remember the first two meetings. They were a bit like stiff. Like they [the mentees] weren't very comfortable with me. I kept having to think of things to ask them, or to talk about.

As time passes and mentors and mentees get to know each other they move into the cultivation phase, where both mentor and mentees gain confidence, learn with and from each other, and develop skills. Mentor 6 said:

It was a matter of time and getting used to each other because we were like all different people.

Mentor 3 explained how the discourse changed from 'not knowing each other' to 'becoming friends':

Like now I feel more comfortable with them and then we talk and I feel like we are friends now. Like not the mentee and mentor relationship – we are more friends than the official relationship between us.

The 'mentoring isn't easy at first but gets better later' discourse existed as a result of mentors and mentees developing a relationship. The result was the 'mentor as a friend' discourse. This is a significant shift in discourse. The changing relationship to one of friendship seems to be an important ingredient in the construction of mentoring in our context. The mentors expressed the

need to feel at ease in each others company (mentors and mentees) for mentoring to be effective. Mentor 5 described it as follows:

The mentees must feel free to discuss things, and know that it's confidential. In the beginning they were less comfortable with doing that, but as time went by they became more and more ok with talking to me about their problems and asking me for advice, and knowing that I was there to help them.

This is the 'feeling free to discuss issues' discourse, which mentors claimed was an integral part of mentoring.

Johnson, Geroy and Griego (1999) suggest that mentors and mentees will have been socialized differently prior to the start of the mentoring relationship, so each will have different experiences, beliefs, attitudes, values, abilities, interests and expectations. They may also have differences in gender, race, culture, language, age, and/or religion. These differences will all influence the mentor-mentee relationship. The outcome may be positive or negative, and the relationship may be successful or not. The success or failure of the mentoring relationship is based not only on the differences or commonalities but also on a clear understanding of the outcomes of the mentoring relationship. If expectations are unrealistic then the relationship is bound to fail.

The relationship between mentor and mentees is a structure that needs to be constructed during the mentoring process. Initially it was a tentative, weak, relatively task-driven relationship since both mentor and mentees were newcomers in the relationship. However, with time the relationship developed into one of friendship, where mentors and mentees felt comfortable in each others company. One of the mechanisms that led to this friendship relationship was regular contact between the mentor and mentees, i.e., regular meetings. Mentors were expected to meet each mentee at least once a week. One of the recurring comments made by mentees when evaluating the programme at the end was the appreciation of the informality of meetings. The informality led to mentees feeling at ease in each others, and the mentor's, company faster. Informality was a mechanism that led to mentees feeling at ease (which is in the empirical domain). Mentors each received R75 to spend on their mentees

in order to promote informality and getting to know each other. How they spent this money was optional: one mentor took her mentees out for coffee and cake, another bought snacks for a picnic. The end result was the same – socialization in an informal environment. This enhanced the formation of relationships, which had a positive effect on mentoring.

Most mentoring relationships end at some point – our programme officially ends at the end of the first semester. This sometimes leads to separation anxiety or feelings of abandonment, especially by the mentees. In some cases the mentoring relationship was re-defined, e.g., it was no longer determined by the programme but evolved into true friendship or a peer-like relationship. This occurred in the latter half of 2007, when some of the mentors maintained contact with some of the mentees despite the official end of the programme.

Initially the mentors had been driving the relationship, which is hardly surprising since the mentors and mentees were new at it. Starting a relationship is difficult, and so the process and the relationship needed a 'leader'. However, with time and as they got to know each other the leadership role played by the mentor changed to one of being a buddy, or a big brother/sister, or a friend. In one instance however the dynamics did not change as much. The mentor was still seen as an elder. This will be discussed in the next section.

### **6.3.9. Discourses that relate to politics within mentoring**

Gee's (2005) use of the word 'politics' in Discourse analysis is not meant in the everyday use - where it refers to the behaviour of governments. Instead, it refers to social relations involving authority and power.

Mouzelis (1995) describes the significance of power relations as being dependent on the distance between the subject and object. In my opinion the mere use of the terms 'subject' and 'object' implies that there are power



relations at play. 'Distance' does not refer to physical distance, but rather to the difference in authority and power between the subject and object. Maughan (2006, 119) describes two ways in which the mentoring relationship can manifest itself: either the mentor thinks of the mentee as a "mind to be trained", i.e., as an object, or as a "total human being", i.e., as a person. If the mentor thinks of the mentee as a "mind to be trained" then the power relations tend to influence the relationship and the outcomes more than if the mentor thinks of the mentee as a "total human being".

According to Lloyd (1996) mentoring can be distinguished from leadership: in leadership the subject has the power and authority over the object. Lloyd (1996, 5) explains that "power, like leadership and management – in general, has been interpreted as the ability to make things happen". Leaders are expected to have power and authority over those they lead so that things happen. Mentors are not supposed to have power or authority over their mentees. What they do have is experience and know-how, which they are expected to share with their mentees. This issue of not having power or authority over mentees is an important feature of the mentoring relationship, and something that most of the mentors said they learnt. They said that initially some mentees were in awe of them, and some mentees were scared of them and/or the other mentees.

Herman and Mandell (2004) warn that mentoring sometimes perpetuates existing power-relations. This is evident in some of the mentoring models used in the business arena where an experienced, established and often more powerful person mentors a relative new-comer (who by implication has less power). Mentoring can reproduce the power of dominant groupings, e.g., it can lead to the oppression of mentees. A good example of this is the abuse of the 'fagging' system in boarding schools, where an older student who is supposed to be mentoring a newcomer instead turns him into a virtual slave. This is something to guard against and was not an intended outcome of our mentoring programme. However, I believe we are inadvertently perpetuating existing power relations because our mentoring programme is mainly designed to assimilate our first year students into the Faculty of Pharmacy,

and into the Rhodes culture. If the mentoring programme became part of the mainstream academic curriculum it could encourage change in the way things are done in the Faculty, based on feedback from mentees. This could have a positive influence on existing power relations.

Several discourses relating to power relations became evident from my data, and will be discussed next.

#### **6.3.9.1. Mentoring as ‘having authority’**

Mentor 1 was aware of the distance separating her from her mentees - she spoke of a gap between her and the mentees, and about there being a scale:

Mentoring helped me be more aware of the fact that I was a third year because I'm mentoring first years so obviously the gap ...it showed me that I'm kind of higher up on the scale.

The gap and scale refer to her being more senior than the first years. She used this gap to remind herself that she was a first year once, and now here she was helping first years. This was positive reinforcement for her, and enabled her to gain confidence and self belief. At no point did I think she abused her seniority. Instead, I noticed how the increased self confidence helped her develop and mature as a mentor. She initially thought being a mentor was about having authority, but then realized it was not:

I expected mentoring to be more like ‘I'm an authority figure and they all listen to me’. But it's not like that. And I find that I kind of learn things from them too.

This mentor recognized that she was helping her mentees understand and adapt to Rhodes University, but in the process she was also learning.

For mentor 5 there was a shift from the ‘I'm an authority’ discourse to an ‘I'm the same as you’ discourse. Initially she thought mentoring was a top-down approach, i.e., that mentees were “minds to be trained” but soon realized differently:

First I thought it would be like a good idea to mostly tell them about myself and how I went through things and how it worked for me, and you know.... why I didn't do well in certain things. But I'm finding now that it helps more to actually focus on them. Not to say that 'Oh because I did it like this, this will work for you'.

This shift in discourse was as a result of other structures and mechanisms, e.g., the change in relationship discussed in the previous section. It would be difficult to maintain the 'I'm an authority' discourse and the 'becoming friends' discourse.

This change in discursive construction led to a change in approach and strategies, and enabled mentor 5 to develop relationships with her mentees that were less about power and more about working together to help the mentees attain their goals. For example, in her journal she wrote about one of her later meetings with her mentees:

I could see not only how comfortable they had become with me, but how they all seemed to be getting on with each other.

This feeling of comfort in each other's company seems to indicate that the power relations were no longer an issue, or there was power sharing, i.e., no single member of the mentoring group had power over the others. Thus the discourse had to shift to allow the politics to shift. This is important because in critical realism structures and mechanisms are tendential, i.e., they come together and act in certain ways. It is the combination of things which is important.

#### **6.3.9.2. Mentoring as 'being a buddy'**

Mentors started off not really knowing what they were getting themselves into, and had to learn as they went along, i.e., they did not know at the beginning what mechanisms they should use, e.g., mentor 1 said:

So I think it's more like a buddy system, kind of like 'big sister', kind of like a friendship thing

The discourse of 'being a buddy' is a little different to that of 'becoming a friend'. A buddy is a close friend, a comrade. By implication being a buddy implies that power relations are not an issue, i.e., that the mentor and his/her mentees are on the same level. This affects the kind of relationship between the mentor and his/her mentees as well as the strategies used by the mentor.

#### **6.3.9.3. Mentoring as 'being an elder'**

This discourse may be similar to the nurturing model described by Buell (2004) where the mentor fulfils the functions of a parent figure. Buell also refers to it as empathetic guidance, i.e., the mentor is acknowledged as being the more knowledgeable. Mentor 4 referred to the mentoring relationship as:

...we [the mentors] are elders. So we give them [the mentees] direction, like an elder sister or an elder brother giving you help.

Generally speaking elders are considered to know more, to have the experience and to be wiser than the average (or younger) person. In this mentor's culture an elder and an older sister/brother is to be respected, and therefore there were some power issues. However, power is not the dominant issue. Wisdom and experience are. There is thus a link between this discourse, the mechanisms constructing mentoring and the politics of the relationships. This discourse probably emerged because of the cultural context - a description of the cultural context of each mentor is beyond the scope of this thesis.

#### **6.3.9.4. The 'be like me' mentoring discourse**

Is mentoring a case of trying to make the mentees "more like us, if not completely like us" (Barron and Zeegers, 2006, 89)? According to Buell (2004) the 'cloning model' used to be an acceptable mentoring model but is now considered to be inappropriate because it tends to be a top-down approach. Were mentees discouraged from merely conforming? None of the mentors said that producing clones was an outcome they hoped to achieve. However,

this may have happened inadvertently especially if one considers that social learning theory suggests that people learn from each other by observing, imitating and modelling (Cunia, 2005c). For example mentor 4 said:

I would say mentoring is about guiding the students, putting them in a right place, get them the help they need. And they come to you asking for what they want, not really asking... like not necessarily asking but seeking for advice.

His reference to “putting them in a right place” may indicate that mentoring was about reproducing mentees similar to him. However, his reference to guiding and helping students detracts from this, and indicates that reproducing clones of himself was not the main aim.

Vygotsky’s research into social learning theories revealed that people learn from social interactions and that learners need someone who knows what they are doing to help them learn (Vygotsky, 1978). However, mentor 5 discovered that simply telling her mentees how she had done things when she was in first year was not going to work. Instead she discovered that she needed to find out what their specific needs were:

...first I thought it would be a good idea to mostly tell them about myself and how I went through things and how it worked for me, and you know.... why I didn’t do well in certain things. But I’m finding now that it helps more to actually focus on them.

Initially some of the mentors constructed mentoring as a ‘be like me’ process but it shifted over time as they realized that there was no need for mentees to be like them. Developing clones of the mentors is not the desired outcome. However, sharing and promoting what worked for the mentors is encouraged because it may lead to mentees succeeding.

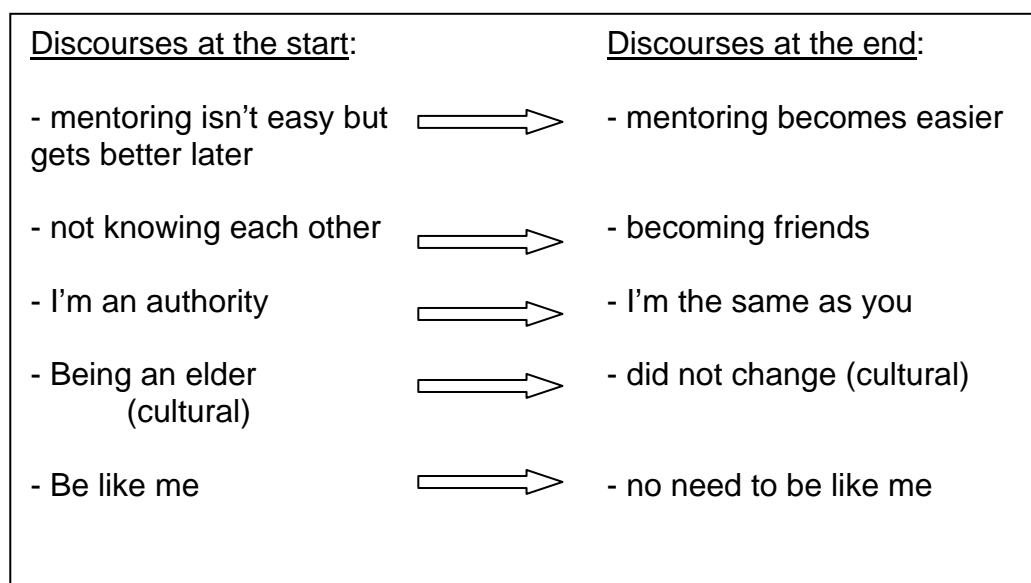
#### 6.3.9.5. Mentoring as ‘friendship’ discourse

The mentoring as ‘friendship’ discourse was discussed in section 6.3.8. It is a discourse that relates to politics in the sense that either there are no power relations between friends or they are not significant.

The ‘friendship’ discourse was one of the most important discourses that gave rise to discourse practices, i.e., what the mentors did and said that resulted in friendships developing. These practices became mechanisms that allowed mentees to access CoPs, both social and academic.

#### 6.3.9.6. Conclusion

It seems appropriate to represent the discourses that relate to politics within mentoring in a diagram (Figure 17) to show how they may or may not have shifted as a result of the structures and mechanisms of the mentoring programme:



**Figure 17:** Discourses that relate to politics within mentoring, and how they may or may not have shifted during the mentoring programme (indicated by the arrows)

#### **6.4. Conclusion**

The mentors thought that knowing what it was like to be a first year student at Rhodes University was an important ingredient for being a good mentor. Their experiences of being a first year student gave them insight into the problems and issues first year students may have, and they felt that this stood them in good stead as mentors. They all expressed the opinion that mentoring is not easy but that it gets better with time, and that mentoring is about helping mentees. Mentoring is about forming a relationship, and is a process, not an outcome. Mentoring is about understanding and empathy, being a source of information rather than providing 'quick fixes'. With regards to the power relations in the mentoring relationship, mentoring in our programme is not about 'having authority' but about being a friend, a buddy, or a brother/sister. The cloning approach to mentoring is not a desired outcome but sharing and providing information about what has worked in the past is encouraged. Mentoring seemed to have had a part to play in changing the mentors. During the mentoring programme they became more competent at mentoring, and more confident.

The next chapter is a discussion of my main research question namely: how does mentoring facilitate access to a Community of Practice (CoP)? Whilst doing this I develop a model of mentoring that applies to the context reported in this thesis.

## Chapter 7: Development of the mentoring model

### 7.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter I analysed discourses to determine how mentors constructed mentoring. My goal in this chapter is to: (1) draw on the insight gained and described in the previous chapter, (2) use critical realism to determine the structures and mechanisms that underlie the phenomenon of mentoring, (3) develop a mentoring model - in order to address the research question: how does mentoring facilitate access to a Community of Practice (CoP)? This involved a process of abduction and retroduction, i.e., searching for explanations and providing them. My research draws on observations, transcribed interview data, reflections by mentors, and discussions with mentors. All these are sources for abduction and retroduction.

According to Danermark *et al.* (2002, 164) “social phenomena emerge from the deep underlying real structures, become actual, and then empirical. Our understanding of these social phenomena goes in the opposite direction: from empirical to actual to real”. Critical realism offers a meta-theory which tells us what structures, entities and mechanisms make up the social world.

Danermark *et al.* (2002) also emphasize that in critical realism it is not the experience or the events that are the most important, but rather the mechanisms involved, as explained in chapters 3 and 6. It is important to remember that the relationship between mechanisms and events/objects is not necessarily one of ‘cause and effect’ (Sayer, 2000).

This chapter starts off with a discussion of how structure, agency and culture interact with each other and other elements in mentoring. I develop a model of mentoring to frame the analysis of data. I refer to this model as a working model, i.e., a model in progress as I interpret the data and adapt the model accordingly. The starting point, i.e., the first version of my working model is based on Bhaskar’s transformational model (Bhaskar, 1993, 155), as described in chapter 3 (section 3.1.3.2.).



## 7.2. The working model

In Bhaskar's original model (1993) structure enables or constrains agency, and agency reproduces or transforms structure. The model of mentoring will be developed as the structures and mechanisms are revealed:

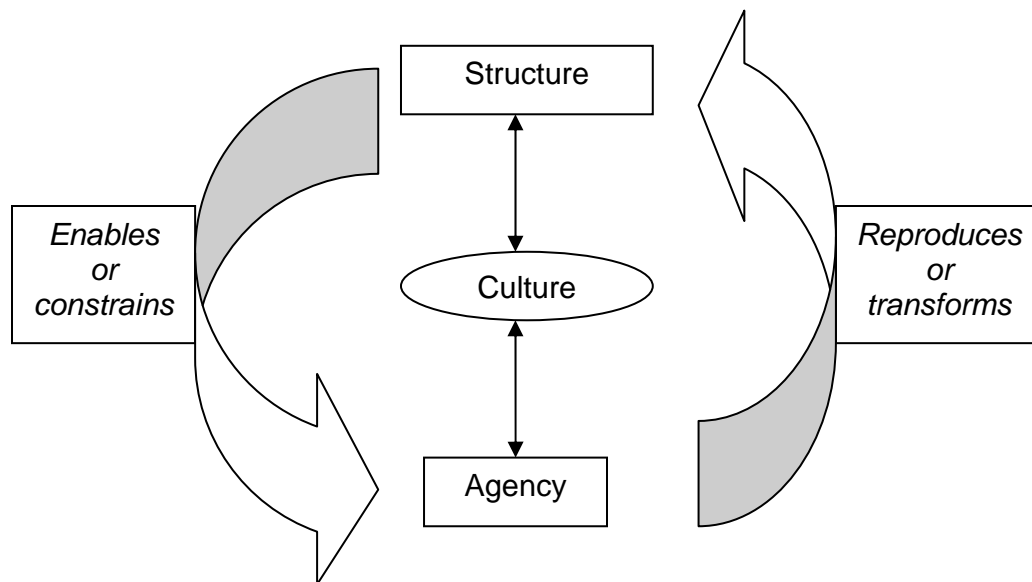


Figure 18: The working model version 1 [based on Bhaskar's transformational model (1993, 155)]

In my model I have positioned culture between structure and agency, with two-way arrows indicating that structure enables or constrains culture, and culture reproduces or transforms structure. Similarly, culture enables or constrains agency, and agency reproduces or transforms culture. Each of the components of the working model will be discussed in order to expand it, starting with structures, then agency, followed by culture.

## 7.3. Structures

As discussed in chapter 3 (section 3.1.3.2.) the term 'structures' in this context refers to social systems. Structures influence people and the opportunities they have. There are levels of structures – some may seem obvious, e.g., Rhodes University is an institution, others may be hidden from consciousness,

e.g., the politics and power play at Rhodes University. Some structures emerge from agency (Danermark *et al.*, 2002). According to Giddens (1984) the action of agents – either individually or collectively – determines whether the structure will remain or change. Thus the action of agents either reinforces and reproduces structures, or transforms them. At the same time structures can enable or constrain agency.

According to Bhaskar (2002), and as already described in chapter 3 (section 3.1.3.7.) both structure and agency are stratified into the empirical, actual and real domains. The real domain contains structures and mechanisms that have causal powers which may be exercised, i.e., they may or may not generate new structures, new forces, new powers or new mechanisms. This is known as ‘emergence’ (Danermark *et al.* 2002). If we understand the mechanisms that may be involved then we can begin to answer the ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions, i.e., how mentoring occurs and why it may or may not serve to facilitate access to a CoP.

Chapter 2 contains a description of the development of our mentoring programme in the Faculty of Pharmacy, at Rhodes University. A description of the programme does not suffice because although events are in the empirical domain and can be observed, the social mechanisms that may be causing the observable are in the real domain and thus not readily observable. Theory and abstraction are required when looking for generative mechanisms (Wikgren, 2005).

### **7.3.1. Mentoring and Humanism**

In the previous chapter I analysed how mentors constructed mentoring. In this chapter I argue that the model of mentoring favoured by the Faculty of Pharmacy is informed by Humanism<sup>23</sup>. Humanism focuses on human freedom, dignity and potential. The Humanist paradigm suggests that people

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<sup>23</sup> Humanism as philosophy and educational philosophy

act with intentionality and to some extent choose their own destiny. One of the Humanists – Maslow – claims that people have different kinds of needs, and that they are hierarchical (Huitt, 2004). These needs range from the basic physiological needs, e.g., needing food for energy, to the psychological needs such as a need to belong and to be loved, to the ultimate need – the need to achieve transcendence. Maslow explains that the basic needs have to be addressed first, before those higher in the hierarchy can be met. One could argue that mentees may also have a hierarchy of needs, and that there is also a bottom up approach. For example, a mentee with physiological needs such as not having sufficient food to eat<sup>24</sup> needs to address these needs first before issues such as feelings of not belonging can be addressed.

In Humanism learning tends to be learner centred and personalised. Self actualization is an important outcome, as is the development of autonomous people. The Invitational Learning Theory is one of the cornerstones of Humanism. I found it useful in my analysis of mentoring in this context.

### **7.3.2. Identifying structures using the Invitational Learning Model**

The Invitational Learning Model (ILM) addresses issues of structure, and is thus useful in this discussion. The ILM is based on the theory that humans have potential, and although it is not always evident, it is waiting to be discovered (Purkey, 1992). Thus, according to Bhaskar's theories of critical realism, it allows us to identify mechanisms, structures and/or agency which are dormant or inactive. Potential translates to agency – this agency can be realized if supportive structural and cultural conditions are in place. The ILM suggests that with careful planning we can create an environment which intentionally allows people to develop and realize their potential (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987). This allows the activation of the mechanisms or structures which will allow agency to operate.

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<sup>24</sup> This could be the case at a South African university

The Invitational Learning Model (ILM) describes six components that contribute to the success or failure of people, and are known as “the 6 Ps”, i.e., people, places, programmes, processes, policies and politics. Following critical realists, people and politics arguably relate to agency, whilst places, programmes, processes and policies relate more to structure. This understanding is incorporated into the working model as follows:

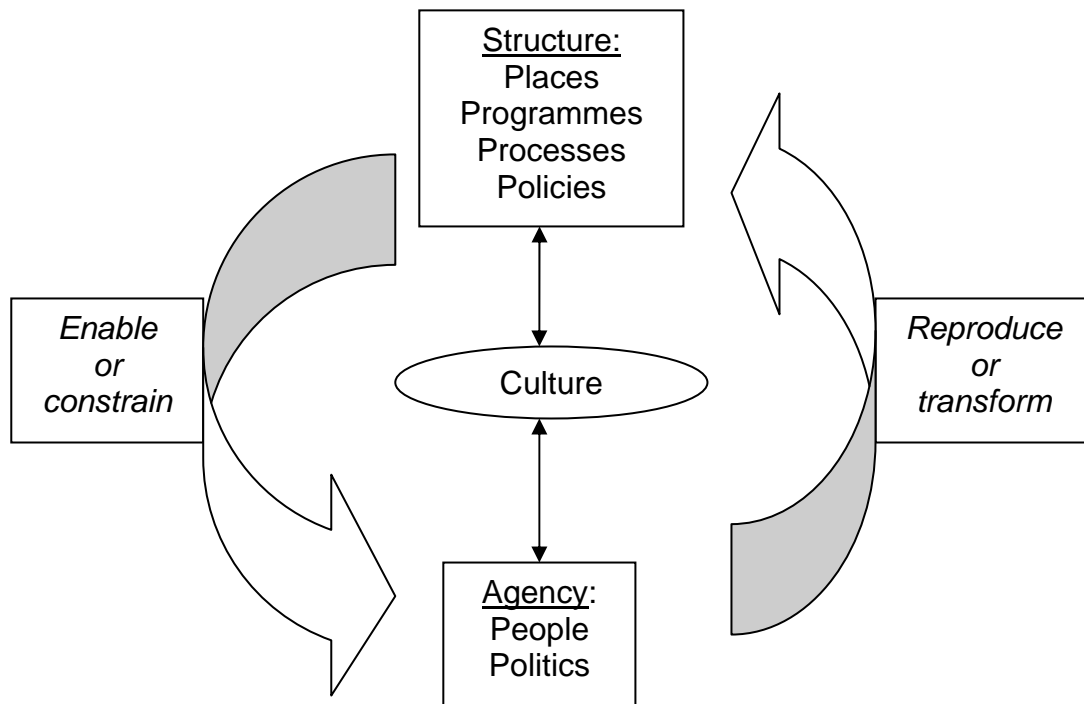


Figure 19: The working model version 2

Politics is located within agency because it relates to the power relations that exist within relationships (Gee 2005). Fink (1992) quoted Burns’ definition of politics:

... to act politically is to raise the aspirations of others through teaching, mentoring and coaching. The ingredients of this process are: honesty, responsibility, fairness, and honouring the commitment (Burns, 1978 cited by Fink, 1992).

Burns' definition of acting politically is drawing on political fairness. However, the term 'acting politically' may also encompass the possibility of someone acting unfairly because they want to secure their own position of power.

I have located policies within 'structure' because although they influence both people and places they are usually made in relation to programmes and processes (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987), which are located within 'structure'.

A discussion of the components of the structure of the mentoring programme provides opportunities to determine whether the structures enable or constrain agency, and thus mentoring.

#### **7.3.2.1. Places**

Place can have two connotations: either as a physical place or as a Community of Practice (CoPs). The reference to CoPs will be discussed later in the chapter.

As already noted, the mentoring programme which is the focus of the research reported in this thesis is located within the Faculty of Pharmacy, at Rhodes University, in Grahamstown, South Africa. Chapter one (section 1.5.) contains a brief description of the Faculty of Pharmacy at Rhodes University, and chapter two (section 2.6.) describes mentoring at Rhodes University, and in the Faculty of Pharmacy (section 2.7.). The question that needs to be addressed is how 'place' enables or constrains mentoring. I analysed the data and looked for structures and mechanisms that may explain how 'place' enabled or constrained mentoring.

Mentor 2 described how she felt when she was a first year student: coming to a small place like Grahamstown was daunting because she was used to living in Johannesburg, a big city:

I'm from Joburg, big city, and Grahamstown is very small
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She felt that Grahamstown was limiting and restricting. During our weekly meetings the mentors said that some of their mentees were finding Grahamstown boring:

Grahamstown has no social life – some mentees are used to going out a lot, and are bored in Grahamstown

Mentor 4 on the other hand said that coming to a small place was good because he felt it allowed him to concentrate on his studies and not be distracted by city influences:

There is not much to do in Grahamstown, so you have to study

These two mentors felt differently about the fact that Grahamstown is a town and not a big city. On the one hand it had a tendency to be constraining, on the other enabling.

Rhodes University is a residential university – 55% of students live in residences, the other 45% live off campus, often in digs<sup>25</sup> (Rhodes University homepage, 2008). Five mentors were in residence in their first year, whilst one lived in digs. The residence system is geared towards helping the student: “through a well-established structure of wardens, sub-wardens and residence committees, the residences play an important role in overall student development, including developing leadership skills” (Badat, 2007b). At the beginning of each year, before the returning students arrive, one week - called orientation week (or O-week) is dedicated to the new first year students. The residences are only open to first year students and the house committees and sub-wardens. The entire focus is on the first year students. All activities are geared towards welcoming them and encouraging them to participate in residence and university activities, making friends and getting used to the systems and people. These are supposed to be enabling structures, as expressed by mentor 2:

I had a very nice house comm, and they kind of took me under their wing, for the first couple of days. [I was] looked after by house comm and shown the ropes by them.

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<sup>25</sup> Digs is the term used in Grahamstown that refers to students not living in residences but living in the town itself, usually in shared accommodation with other students.

The term “house comm” refers to the residence’s house committee, which consists of a senior student and returning students<sup>26</sup> with portfolios such as entertainment, sport, treasurer etc. Members of the house committee are elected by the residents within that residence, and they are expected to work closely with the warden and sub-wardens. These structures are designed to enable students to be successful, as mentioned on the Rhodes University homepage (2008): “Through the Hall and House Committees, students at Rhodes establish and enforce the rules of social conduct necessary for living together”. Mentor 2 explained that living in a residence was important to her because it gave her a place where she felt she belonged:

... to have a place where you feel, or to have some sort of feeling of comfort or home or place where you know that you can feel a bit ok or welcome ...

If a student is not in residence but in digs, then they miss out on most of these activities and systems, and are left to their own devices, as mentor 3 said:

I had to find digs and move in. So I did not have time to do everything else. I had problems settling in with different people – there were 5 of us and we were not the same thing, from the same place, so we did not understand each other at first.

First year students probably have different experiences depending on whether they are in residence or in digs. They have different opportunities, responsibilities and structures, all of which could influence them – either positively or negatively. For example someone living in digs has to prepare their own meals, whilst someone who lives in a university residence has meals prepared for them. Those who would prefer to prepare their own meals might argue that having meals prepared for them is not necessarily enabling. However, those living in residence do not have to spend time preparing meals and can concentrate on other activities.

Some students adapt to Rhodes University more easily than others. This may have something to do with previous experiences, e.g., whether or not they have been away from home before. Someone who has no experience of

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<sup>26</sup> By ‘returning students’ I mean students who have been in residence for at least a year.

being away from home for an extended period of time may not have the coping mechanisms required to overcome this. At the empirical level they may not be coping, or may merely seem to be coping because in the real domain they may not be able to access the mechanisms needed to cope. However, students can learn how to access these mechanisms. Although mechanisms are independent of human activity, this is where agency could interact. What mentoring does is enable agency. Alternatively, previous experiences, e.g., having been at boarding school may have provided them with the mechanisms required for coping. Thus previous experiences may be enabling or constraining. For example mentor 5 was used to being away from home so coming to Grahamstown was not a problem:

I really enjoyed my first year. It was great being away from home because I was used to being away from home because I was at boarding school.
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The family is a structure which enables or constrains. When one moves away from home that particular structure is removed from the immediate environment. For those students who live in a university residence the residence structure fits in and becomes a home away from home, in that it provides, and in the Rhodes context, possibly even sets out to imitate the structure of the family. For those students living in digs the digs-mates or friends fit in and become the immediate environment, but this is likely to be looser because there are unlikely to be the same rules as in a university residence. In both situations this can be enabling or constraining.

Being in a foreign place, away from the structure of family and/or friends may be enabling or constraining. Some students revel in the fact that they can have a fresh start, others find it difficult and end up feeling lonely and/or homesick. Students going to university for the first time are particularly vulnerable, especially if they have never lived away from home before. Some degree of homesickness is probably healthy but when the student cannot overcome these feelings they often experience loneliness, depression and health problems (Bell and Bromnick, 1998). The new student experiences the loss of familiar surroundings and is exposed to new ones. Some students have the added burden of having to deal with being in an environment where there are also cultural and language differences. Homesickness is a



“ruminative activity” which leads to an inability to “assimilate new experiences” (Bell and Bromnick, 1998, 745). This often leads to a psychological state that makes learning and socializing difficult. In Bhaskarian terms, this psychological state is at the level of the empirical.

During the mentoring programme the mentors were expected to help the mentees deal with issues of loneliness and homesickness. This was a topic discussed during our second weekly meeting between myself (the supervisor of the programme) and the mentors (refer to Appendix B). We discussed being lonely and homesick and they decided the best way to help their mentees was to tell them how they got over it, e.g., by phoning home regularly, by going to talk to a member of the house committee or a friend when they felt that way, or by talking to their mentor. In other words the mentors were advising their mentees how they could access existing structures (like the family at the end of a phone line) or were telling them how to access alternative structures (like the house committee).

The mentors felt that mentees needed to know that being homesick or feeling lonely is normal when in a new environment and that they got over it by actively doing something about it. Mentor 6 said that although she felt lonely in the beginning, she was grateful for being able to get through it because now she realizes what she's gained:

I'd never have met the people I've actually met here. That's the thing. And I wouldn't have grown as a person like if I'd stayed at home I wouldn't have learned how to actually become independent of my family. I wouldn't have learned how to cope and manage by myself. So at least now I have certain skills that I can, I know now that if, if I actually have to leave properly I'll be able to cope without my parents. Rhodes has actually made me grow as a person.

The skills she refers to relate to identifying mechanisms that enabled her to grow and succeed, e.g., phoning home, talking to people about feeling lonely and homesick, thereby finding out that others felt the same way, and that it was normal. The mentoring programme was designed to help mentees engage with: (1) discourses such as the ‘University is the best time of your

life' discourse (which forms part of the 'newness' discourse), (2) mechanisms such as loneliness and homesickness, and (3) also to help them identify structures which would allow their experience of the empirical to be positive. Thus the programme is identifying what is enabling and what is constraining and helping mentees deal with both.

#### **7.3.2.2. Programmes**

'Programme' is one of the six Ps of the Invitational Learning Theory (as discussed in chapter 4). The mentoring programme is designed to contribute to the goals and objectives of the Faculty, the University, and the welfare of the mentees. The specific appointment criteria are that mentors should be able to:

1. listen, empathise and support their less experienced peers;
2. model and communicate effective time and stress management skills;
3. manage their own budget and help mentees develop effective budget management skills;
4. keep a journal which records all interactions between mentor and mentees;
5. evaluate the programme and their own development as a result of being mentors (TAI mentoring outcomes 2008).

Mentors were chosen based on their willingness to listen, empathise and support the mentees. I did not assess their ability to do so (in my capacity as facilitator of the mentoring programme) . Mentor 5 said of herself:

I am helpful and I like to listen to people, I like to get involved with their problems and try and help them out. I actually enjoy doing that.

Although we expected our mentors to be able to listen, empathise and support the mentees, this was something they developed further during the mentoring programme.

The initial training workshop and the workshops on Tuesday evenings (discussed further in section 7.3.2.3.1.) helped mentors model and communicate effective time, budget and stress management skills. As can be seen from Appendix F, time and financial management issues were discussed during Tuesday evening workshops during the first term, whilst stress management was dealt with during the second term, closer to the exams - a stressful period for most mentors and mentees. Mentors helped mentees develop skills and implement strategies for managing their time, budget and stress better. In Bhaskarian terms, the strategies are mechanisms that the mentors helped the mentees access.

The mentors in this programme were invited to become mentors, and there was a programme to guide them whilst they mentored. The mentoring programme was thus a structure for mentors. The mentoring programme was developmental for both mentees and mentors.

### **7.3.2.3. Processes**

There are a number of processes that are critical to a mentoring programme such as ours. These processes identify and access the structures and mechanisms that exist at the level of the real and the actual. The structures and mechanisms are independent of the programme – the programme accesses them. Some structures and mechanisms supported the mentor, whilst others were structures and mechanisms that the mentor helped the mentees access. It seems appropriate to start with the training the mentors received before and during the programme. Seven processes will now be discussed: the training workshops, matching and grouping, mentor and mentee meetings, mentor and supervisor meetings, journals, financial assistance and mentoring strategies.

### **7.3.2.3.1. The training workshops**

Mentors attended a two day training workshop on 17 and 18 February 2007 before the start of the mentoring programme. Appendix E contains the programme of this training workshop. As can be seen from the programme, a number of people were involved, mainly coordinators of mentoring programmes in the Extended Studies Unit, and also a psychologist. The goals of this training workshop were:

- (1) to get the mentors together so that they could learn with and from each other,
- (2) to discuss the processes, procedures and practicalities of mentoring;
- (3) to help the mentors understand what was required of them;
- (4) to discuss real-life examples and to find and discuss possible solutions and outcomes together; and
- (5) to instil confidence in the mentors.

The mentors also had to attend one-hour workshops every second Tuesday evening. Refer to Appendix F for the programme of workshops. These workshops were facilitated by a variety of people, and were designed to provide opportunities for discussions, create awareness and include practical tips that the mentors could pass on to their mentees. The workshops were structures put in place to help the mentors develop, and to serve as the scaffolding necessary for mentors to construct their social learning. According to Vygotsky (1978) people learn from social interactions but it helps if there is a more knowledgeable other (MKO) who can guide them and provide scaffolding. The MKOs include the facilitators of the workshops, the other mentors, and the supervisors of the different mentoring programmes.

During the evaluation of the programme the mentors mentioned that these workshops were useful – they were enabling structures. Mentor 4 said:

I think they [the workshops] do help, like we get some tips that you added to those that we have. For example time management, that thing of scheduling what you're going to do the following week...I think it really helps.
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All the mentors admitted that learning to manage their own time was an enabling mechanism, i.e., it supported them in the mentoring programme and elsewhere. For example, mentor 2 said:

I've realized how to manage my time...what is more important than other things, and what I should do and shouldn't do, and what I can and can't cut out.

However, learning to manage their time was also an enabling mechanism that they helped the mentees access. For example during our weekly meeting on 29 March 2007 the mentors said that their mentees were having problems with time management. This discussion was based on what the mentors had learned at the Tuesday evening workshops, i.e., they were able to guide their mentees and help them find ways to better manage their time. On 3 May 2007 the topic was raised again in relation to the up and coming exams and making timetables for studying. The suggested mechanisms are not 'one size fits all', i.e., individual mentees had different coping mechanisms and different ways of doing things. However, mentors were able to share what worked for them, and thus they helped the mentees access such enabling mechanisms. In Bhaskarian terms this suggests that at school and in the family, young people experience structures which manage their time for them. These structures inhibit agency. At University structures which manage their time for them either do not exist or are different. The mentors had to help the mentees develop their own structures, thereby exercising agency in relation to time. First, of course, the mentors had to do it for themselves. What the mentors were doing was allowing the mentees to exercise control in relation to structure.

#### **7.3.2.3.2. Matching and grouping**

The Pharmacy mentoring programme is different to most of the other mentoring programmes on campus. Although our programme is voluntary we invite students from under-achieving schools to attend. This is based on an assumption that statistically poorer school performance means pupils from those schools are less well prepared for university. Factors that may

contribute to this are deficiencies on the part of schools (as discussed in section 1.2.1) and cultural and language differences between school and university. We acknowledge that school education is a structure which can either enable or constrain success at university.

Matching mentors and mentees was done at the first meeting, where the interested and invited first year students were asked to complete a questionnaire asking them for contact details and information about their interests, hobbies, sports etc. The mentors then gave a brief description of themselves, their interests, what it was like being a third year pharmacy student, and most importantly, what it had been like being a first year student and how mentoring had helped them (most had been mentees). According to Johnson, Geroy and Griego (1999), it is not good practice to choose mentors specifically based on similarities (or differences) with their mentees. So we let the mentees choose their mentor based on whichever criteria they wanted. Some mentors were more popular than others, and I had to ask some mentees to join another group. I stressed to both mentors and mentees that their choice was not 'cast in stone' and that they were welcome to change groups, but only after 2 weeks – to give them a chance to get to know each other. Choice is thus an important mechanism that enables mentoring because it does not confine the mentee to the original mentor or mentoring group.

In 2007 there were 43 males and 48 females in the first year Pharmacy class. Of these 24 males and 25 females joined the mentoring programme. Since the mentees chose their own mentor the issue of same-gender versus different-gender was one they each had to address themselves. Only one of the six mentors was male, and interestingly all his mentees were males too. The other five mentors had both male and female mentees. According to Risman (2004) there are four social scientific theoretical traditions that have evolved in an attempt to explain gender. The first tradition focuses on the differences between sexes, i.e., that there are biological and social differences. The second tradition emerged as a result of reaction to the first, and focuses on behavioural differences. The third tradition focuses on what

Risman (2004, 430) calls “doing gender” and describes social interactions and expectations. The fourth tradition attempts to be more integrative and suggests that gender should be conceptualized as a social structure. Lorber (1994) argues that gender is not just an individual issue but is embedded in all social processes, and that it is used to justify sexual stratification, thereby creating difference. Risman (2004, 432) writes:

As long as women and men see themselves as different kinds of people, then women will be unlikely to compare their life options to those of men. Therein lies the power of gender.... The social structure is not experienced as oppressive if men and women do not see themselves as similarly situated.

Gender differences are a part of life at Rhodes University, e.g., men and women are housed in different residences<sup>27</sup> – for practical reasons. However, regardless of the reasons, this creates social differences and an environment which has different expectations, behaviour and interactions. For example mentor 2 said her mentees wanted to know why there are different rules in women’s residences as opposed to men’s residences, e.g., in women’s residences there are inter-visiting rules – but not in men’s residences. The University claims these inter-visiting rules are enforced for security reasons, i.e., that women students require greater security. This is an example of how gender can be applied to justify sexual stratification and thus difference. I am not advocating that these inter-visiting rules should be abolished, merely pointing out how gender is a social structure.

Research done by Beck *et al.* (1994) in a pharmacy counselling situation, i.e., where a pharmacist had to counsel a patient, suggests that the more feminine women tended to be more comfortable with women pharmacists, and the more masculine men were more comfortable with male pharmacists. Beck *et al.* were assigning femininity and masculinity to people. They were not inherent traits but rather social constructions.

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<sup>27</sup> There is one exception, where male residents live on one floor, and female residents on another.

The results of the research done by Beck *et al.* (1994) in the USA may not be transferable to students at Rhodes University, in South Africa, or to the context of mentoring in the Faculty of Pharmacy. Brown and Hanson (2003) suggest that gender may be an issue in mentoring but that one should not assume that gender necessarily results in different values or constructs of reality. From a Pharmacy profession point of view it is important to foster professional relationships between people of different genders, and so having mentoring groups of both genders may be valuable to both mentors and mentees within the Faculty of Pharmacy. The mixed groups also allowed students to experience structures and dominant discourses (mechanisms) in different ways. If gender is a social structure and dominant discourses say things like 'women/men are happier talking about sensitive things together' then the mixed groups provided a challenge through a different experience at the level of the experiential.

Some mentees chose their mentor based on a common home language, e.g., mentor 4 had mainly Xhosa speaking mentees. They tended to form a subgroup and tended to speak Xhosa with each other. When the non-Xhosa speaking mentees were present they spoke English. Strelitz (2002) wrote a fascinating article about the experiences of local African male students from rural working class and peasant backgrounds whilst at Rhodes University<sup>28</sup>. They had attended educationally-inferior schools, and felt "estranged from the dominant student and institutional culture they experienced at Rhodes University" (Strelitz, 2002, 465). To them, English remained a foreign language, and they preferred to converse in their home language – Xhosa. This may also have been the case for the Xhosa speaking mentees. Like the students in Strelitz' research, the Xhosa speaking mentees may also have chosen to form a shared space<sup>29</sup>, where they could express themselves in their home language, and help them to manage in a culturally alien situation (namely being at Rhodes University). This shared space can be seen as a CoP, as will be discussed in section 7.6.

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<sup>28</sup> This article pertains to media consumption and identity, and is based on research done at Rhodes University

<sup>29</sup> In Strelitz' research the students refer to this shared space as the 'homeland'



All other mentors conducted their mentoring meetings in English, since it was their common language and it is the language of instruction at Rhodes University. However, all mentees may have preferred to form a shared space with a mentor and mentees from the same culture, and who spoke the same home language as them. Using English as the common language is a mechanism that enables mentoring to occur since mentors and mentees had different cultures and home languages. In South Africa, language is an important aspect of identity and culture. The issue of language as an element of culture is shown to interact with structures and mechanisms, which validates my decision to place culture in the centre of my working model.

#### **7.3.2.3.3. Mentor and mentee meetings**

Each mentor had between 6 and 10 mentees and was expected to meet each mentee at least once a week, either individually or as a group. When the mentoring programme started – in 2003 – mentors were asked to meet their mentees at least twice a week. In 2003 there were 7 mentors and only 16 mentees, so each mentor had 2 or 3 mentees. As the number of mentees increased (to 49 in 2007) the number of mentors did not increase proportionally. Instead the number of meetings between the mentor and his/her mentee tended to decrease. The annual evaluations of the programme (done since 2003) indicated that mentors and mentees agreed that one meeting per week is the minimum frequency that promotes mentoring, i.e., frequency of meetings is a mechanism that enables or constrains mentoring: too few meetings may constrain mentoring. Mentors had to record in their journals when they met, who was at the meeting (mentees had to sign a form) and a synopsis of what was discussed. The journals were a means of ensuring that meetings took place. The journals were also a structure put in place to allow me (the supervisor of the programme) to obtain some insight into the frequency of meetings as well as the kinds of issues that were discussed, without breaching confidentiality. Mentor 2 said:

In the beginning I felt a lot of pressure to see all my mentees equally and if they kept on not being able to make it – I would try find another time, and another time and I'd see them often two or three times within a week but different ones

As time progressed the meetings became less sporadic and more routine. This was a mechanism that enabled mentoring to become part of the mentor and mentees' routine. They knew that on a particular day of the week, they would meet at a negotiated time and place. At the end of the programme I asked each mentor what they would have done differently and with regards to frequency mentor 2 said:

I would not have taken as long to get into a routine with them because in the first couple of weeks it was like week to week it would be a different day, just depending on how busy we were and what our schedules were.

Mentors were expected not to spend more than four hours per week mentoring so as not to affect their own studies negatively.

Mentors had to negotiate a contract with each mentee. This is a structure put in place to enable mentoring since it served two purposes: firstly it formalized the relationship, and secondly it presented the mentor with a relevant starting point for initial discussions. Where and when they met, what behaviour was appropriate and any other issues that were relevant were negotiated as part of their contract. Appendix G contains a list of criteria that mentors had to negotiate with each mentee at the start of the programme. Mentors were encouraged to refer to the contract (also Appendix G) occasionally during their meetings in an effort to remind the mentees that they had entered into a contract. Part of this contract was that they would make an effort to attend meetings and if they were unable to attend they would let the mentor know in advance. This did not always happen, as evidenced by mentor 2:

Sometimes it's not just that they can't make it, it's that they're not bothering to make it

The mentors were encouraged to make every effort to arrange meetings at suitable times and venues, and to remind their mentees. For example mentor 6 said:

Now I actually phone my mentees. Because at the beginning I used to message them and then sometimes those SMSs<sup>30</sup> wouldn't go through and they don't actually reply back to you so you don't know if they are actually coming.

These are examples of structures put in place to remind mentees to be at the meetings, thereby enabling mentoring.

The negotiations about appropriate behaviour, which formed part of the discussion of the contract, were not to produce clones of the mentors but to ensure that all members of the mentoring groups understood what would be appropriate, and what not. The mentors did not prescribe appropriate behaviour – it was negotiated. Examples of appropriate behaviour include being on time for meetings, and letting the mentor know if they could not attend meetings. These negotiations led to discussions about the role of the mentor and the mentees in an effort to make the parameters of mentoring explicit and transparent.

#### **7.3.2.3.4. Mentor and supervisor meetings**

Since the inception of the mentoring programme (in 2003) I realised the importance of regular meetings with the mentors. I met the mentors regularly – every Thursday at 08h40 in the Pharmacy tea room. These meetings helped us find out how the mentoring was going; what problems, issues or questions the mentors had; and it was also an opportunity for us to get to know each other. Appendix B contains a summary of my field notes, specifically a summary of the topics we discussed at these meetings, as well as comments and/or action taken after discussion. These field notes are part of my data. These meetings were structures put in place to enable mentoring by allowing the mentors the opportunity to share their experiences, ask questions and problem solve together. The meetings also gave me week-by-week insight into what was happening from a mentoring point of view. The regular

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<sup>30</sup> Text message via cell phones

meetings also helped the mentors understand their responsibility in the mentoring programme, the process, the outcomes, the importance of creating a trusting relationship with their mentees, and confidentiality issues. All mentors agreed that the weekly meetings were useful because they learned with and from each other. Mentor 1 said that she was able to use information from the other mentors in her meetings with mentees:

I wouldn't have gotten half the ideas that I used if it hadn't been for what the other mentors tried first.

Interviewer: Ok, so it's sharing of ideas.

Mentor1: I think that the sharing of ideas is invaluable because I know that I poached many of the ideas.

Interviewer: There's no copyright.

And mentor 2 said:

...I ask them [my mentees] questions that I've heard the other mentors bringing up...

The meetings served to expose mentors to the practices of others. According to Lave and Wenger (2007) this is known as learning through participation in a Community of Practice (CoP). They argue that learning is not so much about the acquisition of knowledge but occurs with and from each other by participating in CoPs, i.e., through social participation. The nature of the CoP will significantly impact the social participation, and thus the learning that occurs. The members of a CoP share experiences, knowledge, ideas, and memories (Wenger, 1998a) and in doing so share ways of doing and approaching things. This is known as 'praxis', and is not simply action based on reflection. Praxis requires that a person "makes a wise and prudent practical judgement about how to act in *this* situation" (Carr and Kemmis, 1986, 190). This is why the mentors as a group can be thought of as a CoP, as will be explained later.

I have an open-door policy and mentors were encouraged to speak to me at any stage during the programme, i.e., they did not have to wait for our Thursday meetings. This occurred on a number of occasions, e.g., when mentors were concerned about particular mentees, or when they needed to

discuss something that needed to be kept confidential. I also gave them my cell-phone number for emergencies. On one occasion a mentor telephoned me on a Sunday morning because she felt that one of her mentees was not dealing with her loneliness and homesickness. Being available for consultations is a mechanism that enables mentors to feel that there is always someone to turn to themselves if they need to or want to.

#### **7.3.2.3.5. Journals**

Mentors were asked to keep a journal, where they documented their meetings with their mentees, and reflected on them. As mentioned previously (in sections 7.3.2.2. and 7.3.2.3.3.) this was a structure put in place to enable mentors to reflect on their practice and their learning. They were asked to reflect on their understanding of what their mentees were going through, how they had dealt with issues raised by their mentees, and what they had learned from mentoring. Reflection in their journals was considered to be an appropriate mechanism to help them come to terms with mentoring, to have a hard-copy of their reflections, and to give me (the supervisor) an idea of their learning when I read through their journals half way through the programme, and again after its completion. Their reflection gave me insight into their thinking, experiences, and development. Some mentors were better at reflecting than others. I had hoped that reflecting on mentoring in their journals (another structure put in place to enable mentoring) would help them come to terms with mentoring and how they were changing, but there was not much evidence of this. Most journal entries were reflections of the meetings and interactions with the mentees, i.e., superficial descriptions, and little evidence of personal reflections. I could have activated a mechanism such as sharing their journal entries with each other during our weekly meetings. We could then have engaged with their experiences and writing and this may have enabled better reflection and reflexive practice.

#### **7.3.2.3.6. Financial assistance**

In 2003 we received money from the pharmaceutical company - Adcock Ingram - to start the programme and to offer each mentor a bursary known as a mentorship. This money lasted until 2006. In 2007 we received university funding to continue the programme. This money was allocated as follows in 2007: each mentor received a “mentorship” of R6000. From this they were paid for attending the training workshop and R400 per month from March to May for mentoring a maximum of 16 hours per month. Essentially this was considered pocket money or to be used for living expenses. The remainder of the R6000 was paid into their student account in October to pay for outstanding fees. There is some debate about paying mentors: some feel that it is wrong for a person to be paid and feel that mentoring is based on goodwill. Others feel that payment is a form of recognition and compensation for time and effort (Glover and Mardle, 1995). At Rhodes University we are of the opinion that financial assistance is a form of recognition and compensation for time and effort, and therefore a mechanism that provides extrinsic motivation. It also put the Faculty in the position of employer, and therefore better able to negotiate mentoring conditions.

#### **7.3.2.3.7. Mentoring strategies**

Mentoring is about dealing with issues that the mentee deems as ‘real’ (Archer, 2002), i.e., there are issues that the mentee is experiencing at the level of the empirical. Unlike tutoring, where the tutor deals with issues that he/she determines are important, i.e., issues are pre-determined, mentoring deals with issues as they arise. Since mentoring deals with personal experiences the issues are varied. That does not mean that mentors were not expected to prepare for their sessions with their mentees. They were expected to prepare by thinking about the setting so that mentees would be comfortable, by being optimistic, sensitive and inviting the mentees to share their feelings.

The strategies used by the mentors changed as they mentored. During his second interview I asked mentor 4 about some of the strategies he'd used whilst mentoring to help his mentees deal with issues they deemed as real. These included suggesting to his (all male) mentees how they could find and make friends:

...if he goes to the common room and gets involved in sport and plays some sport. Ja, I think sport and going to the common room – ja, he can truly make friends. Because in the common room you meet people. It's all about talking to people.

This last comment is particularly interesting coming from him because he describes himself as someone who does not talk much. In this instance he is suggesting something to his mentees that he could have benefited from himself when he was a first year student. These strategies are mechanisms that the mentor identified as useful to him when he was a first year student. Such mechanisms can be categorized as either mechanisms that mentors found useful for themselves or mechanisms they helped their mentees access.

Mentor 5 explained that the structures and mechanisms she helped her mentees access are the same as the ones she accessed when she was a first year:

I will have a look at the type of notes she's taking down, and um, then I'll see like where the problem is because I know with Stats like if you don't do your tutorials properly and if you don't go for help in the tuts you'll fall behind and once you fall behind there's – it's really, really difficult to get back on track.

She also explained that the ability to 'hang in there' is an important mechanism for success:

You just have to hang in there for a little bit. And it'll be worth it because second year is much better than first year

The second year is the first of the professional years in the Pharmacy degree. Many students feel that the first year is not yet Pharmacy because it consists mainly of Science subjects. It is only when they start their second year that they feel they are finally studying Pharmacy.

When mentor 1 was in her first year at Rhodes University and experienced academic problems she asked for help from the ADP tutors. She suggested to her mentees that they do the same, and offered to help them find this help:

I can help her to find ADP help, like I did.

The ADP tutors are paid by what used to be the Academic Development Programme (now called the Centre for Higher Education Research in Teaching and Learning - CHERTL), and are located within the cognate departments. These tutors are usually post-graduate students who tutor first year students. They have time slots allocated for tutorials with first year students, who have to book a time slot. First years can either have one-on-one tutoring or group tutoring, depending on their preference. The availability of these ADP tutors means the mentors in our programme did not need to tutor. Mentors were advised to refer their mentees to these ADP tutors and to concentrate on social and emotional issues. Making use of the ADP tutors to help the mentees with academic issues was a mechanism that enabled success at Rhodes University.

Mentor 6 explained how she listened to her mentees and then guided them or gave them advice:

It's basically being like the silent helper. Silent as in you're not actually going to tell them what to do. But you'll just be there, you're going to listen to what they're actually going to say and then you'll offer them like not choices but you'll give them advice, like constructive advice from which they will take it and then ultimately they have to make up their own mind. Like if they have a problem, also to help them settle in to Rhodes, get used to the environment and the place.

At first glance her explanation seems to contain a contradiction. First she says "you're not going to tell them what to do", but later she says "and then you'll offer them like not choices but you'll give them advice". However, there is a difference between telling someone what to do (being authoritarian – the expectation is that they then do as they've been told) and giving them advice, which they can either take or leave. This is an important distinction to make.



None of the mentors expressed the typical naïve “red-pencil mentality” described by Hoffmeyer, Milliren and Eckstein (2005, 55), i.e., none of them were of the opinion that mentoring is about identifying and correcting the mistakes made by their mentees. Instead, they helped their mentees “to go beyond, to stand on their shoulders, and to see and create a better world” (*ibid*).

#### **7.3.2.4. Policies**

In the Faculty of Pharmacy at Rhodes University we acknowledge that students have to come to terms with their new environment. As a Community of Practice, school is very different to the university. Each is underpinned by different attitudes and values about what can count as knowledge and how that knowledge can be known. Boughey (2000, 281) describes university education during the apartheid years:

In the past, a university education was reserved for an educated elite who had been prepared for the experience in schools that did not differ too much from the university itself and in homes that did not differ from those of their lecturers and professors.

Since the 1994 democratic elections there has been a “massification of tertiary education” (Boughey, 2000, 281) which has resulted in a “multicultural, multilingual student body in place of one that is monocultural and monolingual”:

... the disruption in education caused by the struggle of the late apartheid years means that many of the young people currently seeking access to the institution arrive with ways of thinking and being that are even more different to those staff are accustomed to meeting (Boughey, 2000, 281).

This difference may be enormous, e.g., for a person who attended a school in a rural area in the Eastern Cape, whose home language is Xhosa, who is new to Rhodes University, where the language of instruction is English, and the culture is still similar to what it was when Rhodes University was a Historically White Institution. However, evidence suggests that other students - not only Xhosa speaking people - also find it difficult. According to Wenger (1994, 2) a new student has to come to terms with “the enactment of an understanding of institutional practices” as the student learns to live within the institution. Thus in theory at least - the better a student understands and adapts to their new environment, the more chance of success. Lloyd (1996, 6) writes “for any organism to survive, its rate of learning must be equal to, or greater than, the rate of change in the environment”. This relates to acculturation.

#### **7.3.2.4.1. Acculturation**

Acculturation is also known as cultural assimilation and refers to what happens when people from different cultures come into contact with each other and are forced to accommodate each other (Padilla and Perez, 2003). Much of the research has been done in the USA looking at the ways in which immigrants learn to accommodate themselves to the dominant group, as well as what effects the immigrants have on the dominant group. Acculturation does not occur automatically. It is not a simple process - it is about choices made by people involved in the process. People decide what elements of their culture they want to keep, and what elements of the other culture(s) they want to incorporate. According to Berry (1980) individuals have a choice in how far they are willing to be acculturated. Sometimes groups decide not to be assimilated, and maintain their original culture. Sometimes groups become completely acculturated and become part of the dominant culture.

When acculturation does occur there are a number of factors that influence the way people are assimilated into a culture. Padilla and Perez (2003, 39) mention the following factors: “family structure and function, adherence to certain religious beliefs and practices, gender, power relationships between

the majority and minority groups, personality characteristics, and age of onset of inter-group contact". For example my ancestors came from Germany to South Africa in 1856. They were Lutheran missionaries who settled in KwaZulu-Natal. They established and built churches and schools wherever they settled, and many of these are still in existence – four generations later. My family still speaks German at home, and we are still Lutherans. However, we are South Africans, not Germans. We have been assimilated into the South African culture and yet we choose to maintain some of the original practices, e.g., speaking German, celebrating Christmas on the 24<sup>th</sup> of December. This is an example of additive acculturation, where the first language (L1) and the original culture (C1) are maintained whilst other languages (L2, L3 etc) and cultures (C2, C3 etc) are learned (Roosens, 1995). In subtractive acculturation L1 and C1 is discouraged, and newcomers have to learn L2 and C2 in order to adapt to their new environment. In additive acculturation newcomers can keep their own language and culture whilst participating in L2 and C2, thus creating a multi-lingual and multicultural society. In subtractive acculturation newcomers must 'become like' the members of the dominant group, and trying to create a multicultural society is seen as a "waste of time and money and can only lead to interminable conflict" (Roosens, 1995, 4).

Individuals choose the extent to which they want to remain attached to their original culture or the dominant culture. They have different reasons for their decisions, e.g., my great grandfather and grandfather were Lutheran ministers, and my parents still participate actively in the Lutheran church. This is their community, and they choose to belong to it. My siblings and I no longer feel this attachment to the Lutheran church, or to maintaining the original German practices to the same extent.

The degree to which new students are acculturated at Rhodes University depends both on the student and on the dominant group. A new student from a culture similar to the dominant culture at Rhodes University will probably find it easier to become acculturated into the Rhodes culture. A student from a culture which is very different to the dominant culture at Rhodes University

may find it more difficult. And the extent to which choosing not to become acculturated has the potential to impact on academic success at Rhodes University. If a student is merely assimilated into the Rhodes environment the implications are that the student may learn to fit in and adapt, and the status quo will remain. If we agree that mentoring is a mechanism that can help in this process of assimilation, then mentoring will merely reproduce social structures, i.e., Rhodes University will continue to exist as it always has and there will be no transformation. However, as discussed in chapter one, tertiary institutions in South Africa – such as Rhodes University - have to be transformed in order to address equity and redress. According to the Minister of Education – Naledi Pandor (2005):

The most difficult thing to change is institutional culture, that way of doing things, those invisible patterns of power and influence that determine that because a thing has been done like this since time immemorial it should continue to be done so, because it benefits a few, an entrenched few .... This positive diversity on our campuses helps democratic South Africa by ensuring that our commitment to Africa and to African solutions is reflected in the culture, organizational ethos, and curriculum framework and content of our higher education institutions.

Our mentoring programme was essentially designed to assimilate newcomers into the environment, since the outcomes of the programme are:

- ❑ having students who are better equipped to cope with the unfamiliar demands of an academic institution and its social environment,
- ❑ to improve academic performance, and
- ❑ to develop a greater awareness of the needs of these students,

thus reproducing existing social structures. Thus our mentoring programme is a structure put in place to facilitate success and access in the Faculty of Pharmacy but transformation is not the main aim. Rhodes University prides itself as being a place “where leaders learn” (Rhodes University, 2008). This should apply to all students at Rhodes University. The vision statement of Rhodes University is as follows:

Rhodes University's vision is to be an outstanding internationally-respected academic institution which proudly affirms its African identity and which is committed to democratic ideals, academic freedom, rigorous scholarship, sound moral values and social responsibility (Rhodes University, 2008).

One of the University's outcomes is to graduate more South African students from previously disadvantaged backgrounds – specifically from the Eastern Cape, the province Rhodes University is situated in. In its mission statements Rhodes University states that to achieve its vision it should "... contribute to the advancement of international scholarship and the development of the Eastern Cape and Southern Africa" (Rhodes University, 2008). A further mission statement reads that Rhodes University will "... acknowledge and be sensitive to the problems created by the legacy of apartheid, to reject all forms of unfair discrimination and to ensure that appropriate corrective measures are employed to redress past imbalances" (*ibid*). This suggests that additive acculturation is encouraged, and that Rhodes University will be transformed as a result of this. At the moment, mentoring can be seen as a structure put in place to reproduce students who are assimilated into the Rhodes culture, i.e., the main aim is assimilation into the existing culture. Any transformation that may occur is a by-product as opposed to an intentional outcome. Mentor 5 explained how mentoring helps the first year become assimilated:

I think it's not only helping them academically, it's to like sort of make them feel comfortable with being a first year, being here away from home, and being at a new university. It's a whole different world now, and just to help them like get, find their bearings basically and help them socially, academically and emotionally to like make everything easier for them.
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Mentor 2 explained how mentoring had given the mentees the tools to become assimilated:

They were helping each other solve their own problems and I feel like that's what's important about mentoring... they can go on without mentoring for the rest of the year

These mentees not only learned to get along with each other, they learned to help each other solve problems. They had learned how to access structures and mechanisms that led to successful outcomes.

The next sections deal with people, politics, and relationships and thus relate to agency.

#### **7.4. Agency**

The terms structure and agency are widely used in sociological discourse. However, there seems to be much debate about a shared definition. One thing most agree with is that it is not possible to have structure without agency, or agency without structure. According to Giddens (1984) structure and agency are dependent on each other, i.e., there is neither upward nor downward conflation. According to Archer (2000) – another critical realist - it is important to analyse structure and agency separately. Having discussed some of the structures involved in mentoring it is now necessary to discuss agency. According to Hays (1994) structures are created by people, but at the same time structures mould people. Thus in discussing agency one needs to do this in relation to structures.

Danermark *et al.* (2002) define an agent as someone who can set goals and try to achieve them, i.e., someone who has intentions. Everyone has some degree of agency but in this research the main agents are the mentors as they construct mentoring. The mentees also exercise agency, e.g., by attending meetings, or deciding not to. The structures enable or constrain the mentors, the mentees and mentoring, and the mentors, the mentees and mentoring reproduce or transform structures. These are not neat, linear processes where a cause necessarily has an effect. Instead they involve

generative mechanisms (within the real domain), which may or may not have observable effects (in the empirical domain).

Agents are people, who form relationships, and accumulate social knowledge and experience throughout their lives. Wherever relationships exist there are power relations at play, and thus politics is important in agency. The working model has evolved as follows:

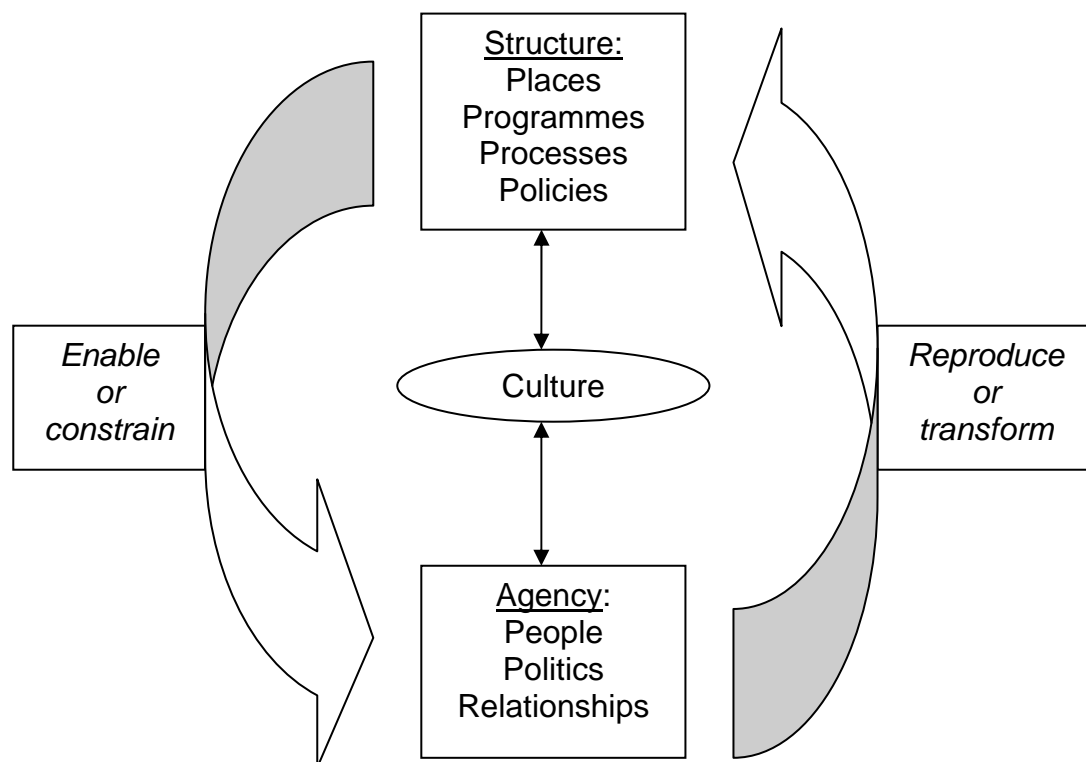


Figure 20: Working model version 3, which shows the relationship between structure, culture and agency.

#### **7.4.1. People, politics and relationships**

People, politics and relationships were discussed in detail in chapter 6. An aspect of people, politics and relationships that was not addressed in chapter 6 is status. Being a mentor has some status attached to it since the Faculty and the University acknowledge the contribution the mentors make, as

demonstrated by an awards evening at the end of each year where the Vice Chancellor personally thanks the mentors, as well as a financial incentive (the mentorship). These can be considered to be structures put in place to motivate and reward the mentors, rather than to elevate their status within the Faculty or the university. This extrinsic motivation can be seen as a mechanism that may or may not enable them to be effective mentors. There is always the chance that the mechanisms may develop a tendency for mentors to become status hungry and develop inflated egos. That is not the intention but may be an unwanted side effect, which could constrain mentoring. This is an example of how structures are put in place to supposedly enable agency. However, the resulting mechanisms, which are within the real domain, may lead to positive or negative mentoring experiences observed in the empirical domain, depending on what happens in the actual domain, and what tendencies are active or inactive. The mentors in this study all claimed that mentoring was a humbling experience, and this humbling experience enabled mentoring.

#### **7.4.2. Optimism, respect, trust and intentionality**

Optimism, respect, trust and intentionality are the four main elements of the Invitational Learning Model (as discussed in section 4.6.2.1.). Purkey and Novak (1984, 10) wrote: “humans need invitations the way flowers need sunshine”. The Invitational Learning Model (ILM) suggests that an invitational relationship must exist for learning to occur. This relationship has to be optimistic, respectful, trusting and intentional. Without these the relationship is not an inviting one, and people may not realize their potential. Each of the elements will be discussed individually.

##### **7.4.2.1. Optimism**

As mentioned in chapter 4, the basis of the Invitational Learning Model (ILM) is an acceptance that people are “valuable, able, capable of self-direction, and



should be treated accordingly” (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987, 8). In this context, optimism is an attitude and belief that people have un-tapped potential, and that we may be able to help people develop their potential. All mentors volunteered to be mentors, and were chosen based on their insight and desire to help the first year students. Thus the optimism was there from the beginning, almost by default.

I was interested to find out if the mentors thought optimism was an essential component of mentoring. They all agreed, although some said it was sometimes difficult to maintain a high level of optimism. Mentor 2 suggested that she is optimistic and indirectly that optimism is important. She also mentioned the reciprocity of mentoring:

I see myself as a responsible person, as someone with a very open mind, and ja, I see myself as an optimist. Most of the time. I am sort of open to change. I find that with any interaction with people you learn something from them – there’s so many different kinds of people, different kinds of ideas, and I might be putting forward a suggestion or a kind of life-style tip that’s completely different to somebody else’s and they would just open my mind to a different way of thinking.

During her last interview mentor 1 expressed concern about perhaps not having been as optimistic initially as she should have been. She was nervous and shy in the beginning, and this she admits may have affected her level of optimism:

When I first got together with this mentoring thing I wasn’t really sure whether my mentees would like me because sometimes I’m not comfortable in a social situation when I don’t know the people.

This apparent lack of self esteem was soon replaced by a quiet confidence. Hardly surprising then that she expressed cautious optimism about being “liked” by her mentees.

During the initial training workshop and our weekly meetings the different levels of optimism became apparent. Initially it seemed to be a desire to help

the mentees, but as time passed each mentor became more competent and gained confidence, which resulted in greater optimism. The structures put in place, i.e., the workshops and weekly meetings resulted in mechanisms coming into play.

Optimism is also an important element for creating positive messages (Schmidt, 2004). An optimistic mentor is more likely to instil optimism and confidence in his/her mentees, and this may help the mentees' progress. Optimism can be thought of not only as an outcome (in the empirical domain) but also as a generative mechanism.

#### **7.4.2.2. Respect**

Respecting someone means we acknowledge that they are valuable, able and responsible. In order for mentoring to be successful both mentor and mentee have to respect each other even if they do not understand the complexity of their relationship. Respect involves being civil, polite, courteous, caring, and responsible.

During the second interview mentor 4 said the following about his relationship with his mentees:

I'd say it's still formal because they still respect me...
--

He linked respect with formality, which is interesting. In his culture respect and formality are linked, e.g., respecting an elder means behaving in a particular, formal way (like not making eye contact). These cultural conditions could constrain the development of a successful mentoring relationship, e.g., if a Xhosa speaking mentor expects his/her non-Xhosa speaking mentees to show the kind of respect expected in his/her culture but they do not show it, then this could constrain mentoring. Also, if a mentee is too respectful then power comes into play, and this could constrain mentoring. The different relationships between respect and different cultures are beyond the scope of this thesis.

Respect is not a simple concept to define. It can be seen as both a mechanism that either enables or constrains mentoring, and/or as the result of other generative mechanisms, i.e., respect is the outcome in the empirical domain. For example, mentor 6 expressed numerous forms of respect. She said that she respected the mentees because she remembered what it was like being a first year, i.e., she could empathise with them. At the same time she was irritated when some mentees did not arrive for meetings, and in her opinion they were not respecting her. She felt that they required more commitment, and they should respect her by being at the meetings:

... I felt that one or two of them didn't realize that "fine you're in a programme, it's not compulsory but to a certain extent you are committed to the programme so you must show up".

In this instance the mentoring programme is a structure put in place to enable mentoring. Mentor 6's attitude has an authoritarian ring to it, so perhaps there were some underlying power issues that I was not aware of. Perhaps this had something to do with the explanation she gave about respecting elders, especially educators because her parents are both teachers. Perhaps she was seeing herself as an educator, and thus this required respect from her mentees? This also shed some light on her apparent nervousness during our first interview:

Ok, my parents are teachers so I was brought up believing that anybody that does educate ...you must respect them, you shouldn't say things that you...I don't know how to put it. Like just respect them.

Thus when her mentees seemed not to respect her, this conflicted with the way she was raised by her (educator) parents.

During the last interview mentor 4 linked the respect he was getting from his mentees to the respect he is hoping for as a qualified pharmacist. This seems to link respect with professionalism, an important concept in the practice of pharmacy:

Having to stand up in front of them, helping them out, there's that respect you get...which is the thing you are going to do when you are a qualified pharmacist.

However, it may also indicate that he has made a link between being a pharmacist and the potential power this brings with it.

Mentor 1 made an interesting observation when she said (during her third interview):

One of them was like “you know you’re the only person that understands, that’s why I keep coming to chat to you” and then she just stopped so I was kind of like thinking ‘you were espousing all these things about how great I am and how helpful I am to you and then you just stopped. So does that mean that I’ve stopped becoming helpful or what?’

She felt that the mentee’s behaviour was inconsistent with what she was saying, i.e., there was incongruence, and this potentially affected the level of respect she had for the mentee. She discussed the apparent incongruence with the particular mentee, who said that she no longer felt the need for mentoring, and her non-attendance was her way of showing the mentor this. The mentee then officially withdrew from the programme. This withdrawal was a positive result for this mentee, who felt confident enough not to require further mentoring.

#### **7.4.2.3. Trust**

Trust is the third of the four elements essential in any inviting relationship (Purkey and Novak, 1996). Trust is about a pattern of action (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987), i.e., not just one incident but a repeated pattern of action, which takes time to develop.

Although trust is embedded in most descriptions of mentoring it has rarely been studied (Hezlett and Gibson, 2007). Burke (1984) reports that trustworthiness on the part of the mentor is one of the characteristics mentees admire in their mentors. The other characteristics include respect, being liked, and admiration. Johnson, Geroy and Griego (1999, 388) describe how mentoring is based on trust: “when an individual gives to another, they do so assuming that the other member will reciprocate”.

Maughan (2006) describes the importance of the relationship -the mentor and mentee have to cooperate and collaborate to establish a trusting relationship. Mentoring depends on trust in people and in the process. Purkey and Schmidt (1996) describe the necessity of trust in the counselling arena, and although mentoring is not the same as counselling (as explained in section 6.3.3.) trust is also an important element in mentoring. In the mentoring relationship the mentee is the client:

Without a reasonable level of trust, the client will not self-disclose, explore new options, or take the risks necessary to find new ways of being (Purkey and Schmidt, 1996, 92).

Mentor 2 described how trust is developed whilst developing relationships, and that this takes time:

I had all these ideas about how long it would take me to get a good relationship with my mentees and they'd be able to trust me. That also took a while.

She had preconceived ideas about mentees instinctively trusting her because she thought of herself as trustworthy. The Invitational Learning Model is based on two foundations: perception and self-concept. This mentor's concept of self (as it relates to being trusted) was different to the perceptions of her mentees. Reflecting on her experiences made her realise that trusting someone takes time. She reflected in her journal about an incident with a mentee. She realized that she needed to listen to the mentee, needed to let him talk, and to earn his trust:

I could tell that he wasn't really looking for advice, just to talk – and so I listened. He really trusts me and that makes me feel good.

The feeling of being trusted is linked to the feeling of intimacy. Intimacy refers to the closeness between the mentor and mentee (Hezlett and Gibson, 2007). This closeness affects the degree to which mentor and mentee disclose to each other – cognitively and/or emotionally.

In Pharmacy, trust is an important element of Pharmaceutical Care, which involves creating a caring, trusting and open relationship between the pharmacist and the client/patient, whilst maintaining confidentiality. The mentors and mentees who established a trusting relationship had the opportunity to discover and practice what they will be doing once they become interns and later pharmacists – at least with regards to trust.

#### **7.4.2.4. Intentionality**

Intentionality is the fourth element of the Invitational Learning Model. It implies that a person does something with a sense of purpose (Parker *et al.*, 2003).

By definition an invitation implies intention because there is a purpose.

Mentoring is about inviting the mentee into a relationship with the mentor. The Invitational Learning Model emphasizes that people, places, policies, programmes, processes and politics should be such that they invite development. I argue that the same applies to mentoring. However, as explained in section 4.6.2.2. there is more to intentionality than merely inviting someone into a relationship. For example, what one person finds inviting may not be inviting for another – it all depends on perceptions. Purkey and Schmidt (1987), and Schmidt (2004) categorize intentionality into four levels, namely: intentionally dis-inviting, unintentionally dis-inviting, unintentionally inviting, and intentionally inviting. Obviously in a mentoring situation one would hope that the mentors are all intentionally inviting. I was not present at any of the mentor - mentee meetings and thus have no evidence to gauge the level of intentionality. However, in my opinion based on our weekly meetings, personal communication with mentors and mentees, and evaluation - none of the mentors were intentionally dis-inviting. I have no evidence that suggests that they were deliberately discouraging, demeaning, negative, discriminatory or destructive. Being unintentionally dis-inviting (level II) usually involves well-meaning people who's behaviour is contradictory to their 'well-meaningness', and is often described as being "insensitive" and/or "uncaring, chauvinistic, condescending, patronizing, sexist, racist, dictatorial, or just plain thoughtless"

(Purkey and Schmidt, 1987, 10). Again, I have no evidence to suggest that any of the mentors were unintentionally dis-inviting.

Being unintentionally inviting (level III) is more acceptable in the inviting relationship than the first two levels. Here the person is successful but doesn't know why. Typically "they know *what* they are doing, but they do not know *why*" (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987, 11). In my opinion three of the six mentors may fit into this category.

Being intentionally inviting (level IV) is the level everyone strives to be at. In my opinion three of the mentors were intentionally inviting, and knew it. For example, when I asked mentor 1 why she would be a good mentor she said:

Because I listen, and I give good advice. I am fair and I don't judge people. I think I'll be good because I had a bad first year. I went through a lot. I know what it's like.

These are admirable qualities, and important in mentoring, and when I challenged her about these she said:

I have a tendency to put other people's needs above mine, kind of. So I think it's just my natural like gravitation towards wanting to help people and I suppose even though I'm helping them because it doesn't seem that big to me I feel like I should be doing more.

When one is in an inviting relationship there are several intentional choices one can make when interacting with other people. These include: "sending, not sending, accepting, and not accepting" (Purkey and Schmidt, 1987, 19; Schmidt, 2004, 32 - 33). As discussed in section 4.6.2.5. sending refers to the purposeful transmission of a "message, signal or action" (*ibid*). There will be times in the inviting relationship when it is appropriate to send a message or signal to the other person or to act in a particular way (intentionally). For example mentor 2 spoke about physically sending messages:

With some people you need to make an effort and knock on the doors, and phone them, and fetch them and then make sure they are next to you and then you know, keep on asking them if they're ok, until they kind of feel like

they can let their guard down a bit.

She also mentioned other ways in which she sent positive messages:

The friendship aspect and the support aspect would come in where I'd offer to take her there myself, give her a lift, sit with her, chat with her before or afterwards about what the doctor said or the counsellor but play more of a listening role.

There may be times when it is appropriate not to send a message, but I have no evidence of any such instances during the mentoring process.

Accepting refers to accepting an invitation, e.g., agreeing to be in an inviting relationship. The mentees accepted our invitation to join the mentoring programme. Not accepting means the person declines the invitation and opportunity, e.g., the other members of the 2007 first year Pharmacy class who decided not to become mentees.

Appropriate behaviour encourages an inviting relationship, whereas inappropriate behaviour does not. Mentor 2 described how one of her mentees felt that he was more important than the other mentees, and that he deserved special attention all the time. Initially this caused some stress in the group – especially for the mentor, who initially decided to ignore his demands (an example of not sending a message when perhaps she should have). However, she soon realized that it was disrupting the whole group. She and I discussed the best way forward, and decided that she needed to give him his time and space but not when the others were there. So for a while she had one-on-one meetings with this mentee. Eventually he was willing and able to integrate back into the group. This mentor used intentionality and the available structures, namely having both group and one-on-one mentoring sessions, to alleviate the problem, and thereby enable mentoring for all mentees. Intentionality was thus a mechanism and an outcome.



### **7.4.3. Collective agency**

In chapter 3 (section 3.1.3.1) I discussed the relationships between society and the individual. I referred to four different sociological theories (known as models) that highlight the ongoing debates. This led to a discussion of structure and agency in section 3.1.3.2. There is a further debate about individualism and collectivism as described by Archer (in Archer *et al.*, 1998) which is relevant. Individualists are seen to be reductionists, as Archer explained when she quoted Bhaskar: “a tribesman implies a tribe, the cashing of a cheque a banking system” (Archer *et al.*, 1998). Collectivism suggests that individual human agency shapes and is shaped by social relationships and structures. People are not independent individuals but inter-dependent social agents who affect each other (Barnes, 2000). Although people are considered to be free agents who act voluntarily, they are accountable to each other. This is known as collective agency.

Collective agency is relevant to mentoring. The actions of mentors and mentees had individual and collective effects. In this case collective refers to the mentors, the mentees (all 49 of them) and possibly also to the rest of the first year class because although not everyone in the class was a member of the mentoring programme it is not inconceivable to think that some of the mentees may have shared information and knowledge with students who were not mentees.

There are other examples of collective agency, e.g., the actions and effects of the mentors as a group. They discussed the problems, issues, progress and strategies they employed with each other and with me (during our weekly meetings). Similarly mentees spoke to each other and compared what was happening during the mentoring sessions. This resulted in knowledge being constructed and shared.

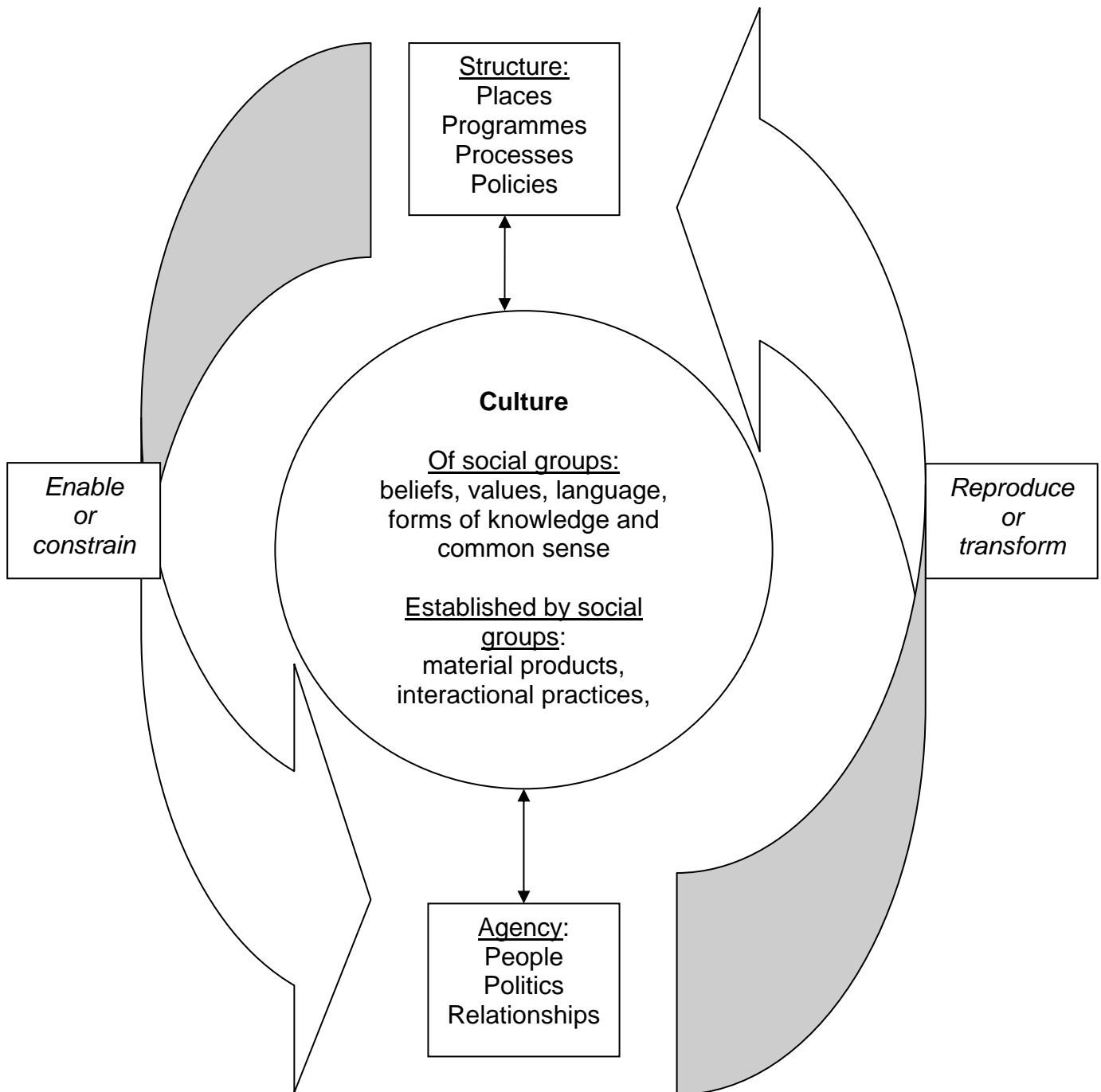
The next section deals with culture since it is the centre of my model, linking structure and agency, and being linked to each.

## 7.5. Culture

Culture is a complex issue. According to Schwartz (1981) culture gives structure to social life. Archer (1995) suggests that structure has a social and a cultural component. Sewell (1992) and others argue that culture and agency are more likely to be placed in the same category. To avoid this debate I decided to place 'culture' in the centre of my model, i.e., culture is a social structure that allows agents to think and behave in certain ways. Social structures and cultures are created by people but at the same time structures and cultures mould people. Agency explains how social structures and cultures are created, re-created and transformed. Hays describes culture as:

... both the product of human interaction and the producer of certain forms of human interaction. Culture is both constraining and enabling. Culture is a social structure with an underlying logic of its own (Hays, 1994, 65).

Culture is affected by and affects both structure and agency, which is why it is in the centre of my model, and the double headed arrows indicate this relationship. The next version of my working model follows. It is my final model:



**Figure 21:** The final model of mentoring, which describes the relationship between structures, culture and agency.

In section 3.1.3.3. I referred to a system of classification of social structure into:

(1) systems of social relations, and (2) systems of meaning – known as culture (Hays, 1994). Some of the components of systems of social relations have already been discussed, e.g., relationships and gender. In this section I refer to culture as systems of meaning. It is beyond the scope of this thesis to do an in-depth analysis of the systems of meaning (culture) at Rhodes University. My analysis is thus limited to the significance of the Rhodes culture to mentoring.

### **7.5.1. The Rhodes culture**

Prior to 1994 the dominant culture at Rhodes University was mainly that of the white, male dominated, western, English speaking middle and upper class in South Africa. Rhodes University was labelled as an elitist Historically White Institution (HWI). Since 1994 the culture has become more diverse with regards to race, gender, and class as it strives to become an African university. According to the Rhodes University Digest of Statistics (2008) the racial composition of students at Rhodes University in 2007 was 5% Indian, 42% African, 4% Coloured (, i.e., a total of 51% Black) and 49% White. Since 1994 there has been a steady increase in the number of Black students. However, to truly be an African university Rhodes University needs to increase its number of Black<sup>31</sup> students to reflect the demographics in South Africa. The gender composition of Rhodes University has also changed since 1994, when it was still mainly male dominated. In 2007 58% of students were women (Rhodes University Digest of Statistics, 2008).

Of the 6069 undergraduate and postgraduate students registered at Rhodes University in 2007, 1406 were international students, i.e., 23%<sup>32</sup> of the total student population. Of the total number of international students 1256 (i.e. 89%) were from other countries in Africa, mainly from Southern African

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<sup>31</sup> The term “Black” is used as per the Department of Labour legislation.

<sup>32</sup> The Vice Chancellor's welcome on the university's website refers to 25%

Development Community (SADC) countries such as Zimbabwe (736)<sup>33</sup>, Namibia (204), Botswana (58), Kenya (46), and Zambia (37).

During the initial training workshop mentors were asked to describe what they thought the 'Rhodes culture' was. There were many different descriptions: some related it to race, e.g., they said it was predominantly a white culture, others said there was a big Zimbabwean influence. Many were of the opinion that the 'Rhodes culture' is changing as the demographics of the university changes. Some described the social aspects of culture as that which used to be the norm when Rhodes University was still predominantly a white, male dominated institution, and said it was about partying and drinking alcohol (a popular description of the 'Rhodes culture'). One mentor thought it referred to being 'academic' and behaving accordingly. This indicates that the term 'culture' means different things to different people and perhaps also that different students experience different cultures at Rhodes University. There was no consensus about a description of the 'Rhodes culture'.

I asked the mentors about the perception that there is a 'Rhodes culture'. Mentor 4 interpreted the 'Rhodes culture' as the combined culture of Rhodes University although he did acknowledge that people come from different cultures:

We come from different cultures so we have different beliefs and behaviours. But when we come here we have to be united and we just understand what one is not supposed to do. I think it's all about that. We know that this person is supposed to be like this. But if his culture doesn't allow him to do that but when we get here we understand what ...if this person doesn't understand your culture you have to adapt him to Rhodes.

He acknowledged that students arrive with "different beliefs and behaviours". South Africa has eleven official languages, and many more cultures. He said that students should try and understand each other's cultures, beliefs and behaviour, but at the same time they are expected to adapt to the 'Rhodes culture' because they are now members of an institution which has its own

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<sup>33</sup> The numbers in brackets indicate the total number of students registered at Rhodes University from the named country, in 2007

identity (and therefore culture). This relates to additive acculturation, i.e., new students are not expected to give up their own culture (and language) but are expected to become assimilated into the dominant culture. Our first year students have to learn to live within Rhodes University.

Mentor 1 was of the opinion that the dominant culture at Rhodes University is one of going out and partying:

It's about drinking and going out. I don't do those things. Some people call me boring because I don't go out. But you know what? I don't care. I would tell the first year that they don't have to join the "Rhodes culture". They must find other people like him. For example people who play sport or are in the same society<sup>34</sup> ...

This mentor is displaying agency, i.e., she has not been assimilated into the dominant culture. She is confident in herself and her own capabilities, especially when it comes to saying 'no'. That may not be so easy for a first year student who is apprehensive and wants to 'fit in'. This example illustrates the relationship between structure, culture and agency.

Boughey (2000, 282) explains that there are different conceptions of learning, e.g., in South Africa there is a common conception that knowledge "is a commodity that is 'sold' by the university", i.e., if you can pay the university fees then you must get your degree. This conception leads to learning as that "which reproduces or gives back what the lecturer has 'given out' to the student" (Boughey, 2000, 283). This links in with the kind of learning that we typically see in many South Africa schools, namely where the teacher asks a question, receives a response and then gives feedback about the response (Geisler, 1994). At university this tends not to happen in the same way. Students are expected to engage with the material, and are expected to be critical.

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<sup>34</sup> At Rhodes University there are a variety of different sporting clubs and societies to which students may belong. At the beginning of every year these clubs and societies make a concerted effort to attract and sign up members. Many students find like-minded students in these clubs and societies, and end up making friends that way.

Some say Rhodes University has a culture of 'those who make it' versus 'those who don't', i.e., a distinction is made between succeeding and failing. Learning is a social construct and the University favours particular ways of learning. Students are expected to construct their own knowledge as they interact with lecturers, texts, the environment and other students. This is very different to the kind of learning that occurs at most schools, and thus many first year students find the transition difficult. For example, mentor 4 had been accepted into the Pharmacy degree at the Dean's discretion. This put him under pressure in first year, as he explains:

It's just that we [he and friends in a similar situation] were working hard and we used to fail - especially Physics. That was our problem. We used to work hard and end up failing.

Some students focussed on other things instead of their academics. For example, mentor 5 said she so enjoyed first year that she was not sufficiently focused on the academic side of being a student, and subsequently failed. She said:

I was more there to have a good time than anything else. So um, ja, it was a good learning experience... it's the reason I am where I am right now...because I learnt a lot in my first year.

Interviewer: like what?

Mentor 5: like uh where my focus should be ... and how hard it is for my parents to be sending me here and how I am ... I was a disappointment because I was wasting their money and their time and because of that I got to realize exactly how hard my dad was working to send us here and I had basically wasted that. So, ja I learned a lot. The value of family, the value of time, the value of getting a degree in the first place.

Failing was a humbling experience for her, and together with her parents' disappointment and anger she learned to value what she had. She learned from her mistakes, and was able to help and guide her mentees so that they would not make the same mistakes she had made.

A popular belief at Rhodes University is that if a student fails then it is their own fault. I asked the mentors what they thought of this conception. Four of them disagreed, one said it was, and the other was ambivalent. Of the four who said it was not the student's fault, all said it was mainly because of being new at Rhodes. For example, mentor 5 said:

It's very difficult to be at Rhodes in the beginning, like not knowing anyone, it's a whole new environment compared to what you were used to. So of course it's like a huge jump. I'm sure the failure rate is quite high because it's such a different scene to where you were used to. So I don't blame the person because there's no way you can know what to expect before you come to varsity. Like you have no idea what it's like until you get here. So you can't really blame anyone for circumstances or issues that they don't exactly have control over. Like if they are trying and they are working but still nothing is going their way – like you can't blame them for it.

This mentor highlighted the difficulties some first year students may experience when coming to a new environment, and this is what Weidman and associates (2001) refer to as the stage of anticipation, where the newcomer becomes aware of the new environment, and how he/she is expected to behave. During this stage they tend to learn by observing and mimicking others. Who they observe and mimic is crucial. One of the roles of the mentor is to be a role model, who can guide them and help them through this stage until they are no longer a novice. This mentor is correct in saying that “you have no idea what it's like until you get here” - each first year student will have expectations and will have imagined what it will be like, i.e., they will have constructed their own imagined reality of what coming to Rhodes will be like. Sometimes what first year students imagine (and expect) is very different to what they experience, i.e., the reality that emerges is different to the imagined reality because the generative mechanisms cannot be predicted. This mentor said that the first year student cannot be blamed for failing if “nothing is going their way” – implying that otherwise it would be their fault, but now that “nothing is going their way” it wasn't. This statement has a fatalistic ring to it, i.e., that it is out of the hands of the first year student. This is precisely why we designed this mentoring programme, to help first years



realize that there is help available but that they must be willing to help themselves, they cannot simply blame fate.

Mentor 2 went on to explain that there could be many different reasons why a student might fail, from an academic point of view:

I do feel that sometimes it could happen that the lecture style, or the lecturer doesn't work for you, or the format of the notes that they give to you, or the fact that you have to do things electronically ... It might be so new to you, or so foreign to you, or difficult for you to learn.

This mentor has highlighted the importance of style, i.e., the style of lectures, the lecturer, and notes. Kolb (1984) defines four learning styles: accommodating, diverging, converging, and assimilating. Everyone tends to have their own preferred learning style and if the lecturer, the lectures and/or the notes don't appeal to the student's preferred style, or if they are different to the style the student was used to in school, then this may lead to difficulties. However, the student is expected to take ownership and responsibility for their own actions, and to find a way of dealing with the different style(s). Mentors can help by using structures and mechanisms that worked for them, and/or by helping the mentees access these and other structures and mechanisms.

According to Boughey (2002, 295) many academics are of the opinion that the reason why under-prepared black students from historically disadvantaged backgrounds do not do well in their subjects is because English is an additional language for them. They thus blame everything on language problems, when in fact it is probably a case of not being "familiar with the literacy or 'deep rules of [academic] culture'" (Boughey, 2002, 296). Here literacy refers to being able to master a Discourse other than the primary Discourse. If we accept Gee's definition of Discourse as "ways of combining and integrating language, actions, interactions, ways of thinking, believing, valuing, and using various symbols, tools, and objects to enact a particular sort of socially recognizable identity" (Gee, 2005, 21) then we can describe the academic environment at a university as a secondary Discourse. Students are expected to use specific language – often referred to as academic

language - and discourses, and have to act, interact, and think in a specific way when at university. Some of this they learn by observing and mimicking. However, some students remain at the periphery and struggle to come to terms with the new way of doing things. This is where a mentoring CoP is useful. The student is helped by a mentor to move from being a peripheral member of the CoP to becoming a main member, learning with and from others in the CoP. This will be expanded upon in the next section.

Mentor 3 said that in first year there are so many tests that the student should know how they are doing:

By the time you write the June exam<sup>35</sup>...after writing so many tests... like in first year you have too many tests, so you know how you are going. If you are still hitting 25% and you've been hitting them since your first test that means it's your fault that you're not pulling something...you're not even trying I think.

Here the implication is that if a student does not do well then they will seek help. This assumes a level of maturity and insight that the student may not yet have, and so in practice this does not always happen. According to Duncan-Hewitt (2005) "many students are advanced adolescents who have a shaky framework for comprehending responsibility, accountability, and contracts". Mentors can help first years develop the maturity to become responsible and accountable, and to take action when required, e.g., if they are constantly failing to find out why, and to do something about it.

Johnson, Geroy and Griego (1999, 385) suggest that the mentoring relationship is "a knowingly created relationship between two people that is intended to enhance the development of one or both parties". In my opinion the process of mentoring is about accessing a Community of Practice (CoP).

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<sup>35</sup> At Rhodes University undergraduate students write two sets of formal exams: in June and November each year. Our academic year starts in February and ends in December.

## **7.6. Mentoring facilitates access to a Community of Practice (CoP)**

I discussed Communities of Practice (CoPs) in chapter 4 (section 4.7). CoPs are not new – some say the medieval guilds are examples of CoPs. However, Wenger and Lave coined the term in 1991. CoPs focus on “intentional and systematic knowledge management” (Hartnell-Young and McGuinness, 2005, 2), and many organizations have discovered the importance and potential of CoPs. According to Wallace and Saint-Onge (2003, 3) CoPs were initially identified as tools to deal with specific challenges within an organization but they have since become “an integral element of a high-performance organization’s fabric”. They are often complex structures. Austin and Duncan-Hewitt (2005) describe how CoPs could be created in pharmacy education to help improve learning. They suggest a curriculum based on blended learning and interdisciplinary collaboration, facilitated by the formation of CoPs.

Rhodes University is an organization made up of six faculties, including the Faculty of Pharmacy. The mentoring programme which is described in this research is located within the Faculty of Pharmacy. Within this mentoring programme there are at least two CoPs namely: the mentoring groups (consisting of the one mentor plus his/her mentees) and the mentors as a group:

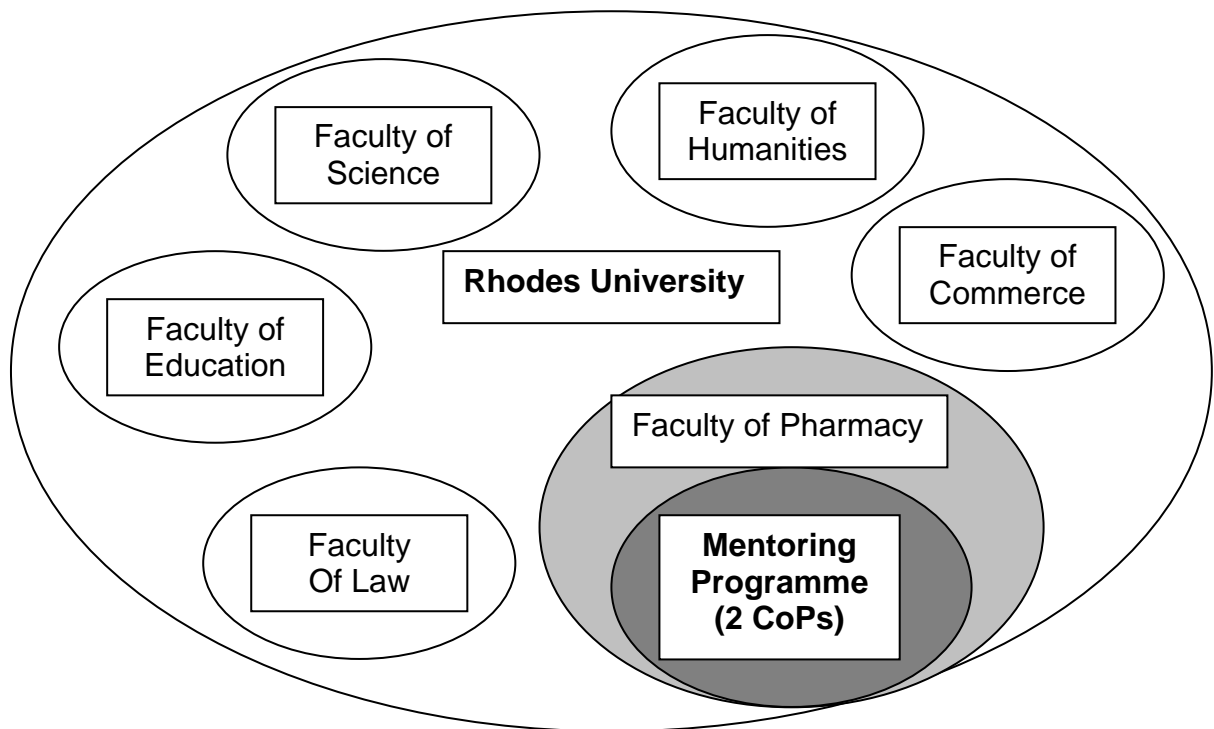


Figure 22: a diagrammatic representation of Rhodes University, the six faculties – one of which is the Faculty of Pharmacy, in which the mentoring programme described in this research is located.

In this study the mentors belonged to the two CoPs that formed part of the mentoring programme: as part of mentoring groups, i.e., mentors and their mentees, and as part of the group of mentors. Why do I argue that they are CoPs? First of all, they both have the required infrastructure, namely (1) there are opportunities for engagement, (2) there are “materials and experiences with which to build an image of the world and themselves”, and (3) there are “ways of having an effect on the world and making their actions matter” (Hartnell-Young and McGuinness, 2005, 2). In Both CoPs the mentoring programme provided opportunities for engagement: mentors were expected to meet their mentees at least once a week, and mentors had to meet as a group once a week. These meetings provided a ‘place’ for mentoring to occur (as discussed in section 7.3.2.1.) and also a ‘shared space’ (as discussed in section 7.3.2.3.2.). During these meetings they facilitated engagement by

bringing people together and by promoting discussions, sharing of experiences and knowledge, and problem solving.

Mentors had to engage with their mentees and with their fellow mentors. Mentors all said that they formed relationships with their mentees (refer to section 6.3.8.) This thesis is littered with evidence suggesting that the mentors made a difference in the lives of the mentees. Their actions mattered.

Most of the mentors also belonged to other CoPs. For example, one mentor was part of a house committee; another belonged to a study group, a third was very active in the church choir. What they learned from each of these CoPs influenced them as well as the other CoPs - either directly or indirectly. What they would have experienced and learned as a result of this would have differed from the other mentors.

In section 7.3.2.3.4. of this chapter I described how mentor and supervisor meetings served to expose mentors to the practices of others. The mentors learnt with and from each other. They shared experiences, knowledge, ideas, and memories and in doing so shared ways of doing and approaching things relating to mentoring. Wenger describes what belonging to a CoP means:

For *individuals*, it means that learning is an issue of engaging in and contributing to the practices of their communities.

For *communities*, it means that learning is an issue of refining their practice and ensuring new generations of members.

For *organizations*, it means that learning is an issue of sustaining the interconnected communities of practice through which an organization knows what it knows and thus becomes effective and valuable as an organization (Wenger, 1998a, 7).

By engaging with the mentees (via mentoring) the mentors contributed to the learning of the mentees as well as their own learning, and ensured a new generation of pharmacy students successfully negotiated their first year. For

the Faculty of Pharmacy this led to refined practices and ensured a new generation of Pharmacy students.

Constructivists believe that learning normally occurs within an activity, context and culture. This is known as situated learning, which is related to Vygotsky's theory of learning through social development (Lave and Wenger, 2007).

CoPs are examples of where situated learning occurs. In our programme the mentors learned whilst mentoring, i.e., whilst immersed in the activities of mentoring. CoPs are important because knowledge and information only becomes meaningful when it is seen in the context of social practices, and when the individual engages in the practices and activities of the community, e.g., in one or more CoP. As mentioned previously, the mentors in our programme were engaged in at least two CoPs. In each of these they were main members, engaged in mentoring activities and practices.

According to Wenger (1996) learning is fundamentally a social phenomenon, and it happens all the time. Learning is not just about information but about the social context of the information. For example one mentor described how two mentees asked her where the university's student fees office is. She showed them, and then realised that they needed to know for two different reasons (contexts): one to fetch proof of payment, and the other to organise funding for herself.

Learning changes who we are. For example, as coordinator of the mentoring programme I am always amazed how mentors develop confidence whilst mentoring. During the last interview mentor 1 said:

I would say I've become more grown-up. And more responsible. And I didn't think I could handle the responsibility because I wasn't that confident but now that I have I can see I can do it.
--

Learning is about engaging in practice, i.e., not just doing things but also thinking about and internalising what we have done and learned. The main issue about belonging to CoPs is that we learn by being a part of them, by participating. For example, the mentoring process made mentor 6 realise she

had time management issues. She realized that she needed to balance mentoring, her social life and her academic life:

My idea of mentoring has obviously changed. It's more responsibility. ...I have to learn to manage my time with this programme as well as with my social life, and then my academic life. I'm finding it a bit difficult. But that's one thing I'm going to start changing – I have to learn to manage my time.

Mentoring made mentors realise there are boundaries, e.g., when they agreed to become mentors they crossed a boundary - they stepped into the mentoring CoP. For example, mentor 3 described the mentoring journey as follows:

At the beginning I did not know what to expect, really, I just went there thinking I must come up with something to talk about, and try to look confident, and try to look a bit cheerful so that they don't get intimidated, and then um...they got to know me and I got to know them so we felt comfortable and then we talked about things and it was easy discussing issues and then at the end I really felt like we were close friends like we could talk and discuss and they could ask me questions and I could just meet them and they would talk and we don't feel that tension that um not knowing like you don't know the person.

Some of the boundaries are differences between people, e.g., in culture, language, perspective etc (Wenger, 1996). Mentors had to learn to deal with these differences.

CoPs are structures which have hidden rules and conventions (Wenger, 1996). Mentoring is about making these rules and conventions overt. My field notes of the weekly meetings I held with the mentors (Appendix B) provide evidence of how the mentors made seemingly hidden rules and conventions overt. For example mentees wanted to know how to approach lecturers to ask them questions. They knew how it was done at school where they put up their hand to ask but were unsure what the convention is at university. Some mentees asked questions about books. At school they were either given books to use for the year, or they had to buy them. At university they are

given lists of books but no-one told them which books to buy or what the difference between suggested and additional texts was. After the first year students had written their first tests they wanted to know what happens if someone fails a test. Some said that at school the teachers would talk to pupils who had failed a test, some teachers would suggest remedial work, others would offer extra help after the normal school hours. But at university no-one seemed to notice – at least that is what the first year students felt. Not all issues related to academic rules and conventions. For example, mentees had questions about the process to follow before they went on their first vacation (in April). Some of those who lived in residences were asked to ‘pack up their room’ so that visitors to the university could use their room. This meant packing all their personal belongings into boxes or other containers before leaving. Those mentees who were not going away during the vacation asked questions about staying on campus. These are all issues that the mentees deemed to be real, and mentors addressed them during their mentoring sessions. During our weekly mentor and supervisor meetings each mentor was asked to share how the mentoring was going, what issues their mentees had – this was done without breaching confidentiality – and any other issues. Thus the mentoring program enabled mentees to gain access to hidden rules and conventions.

The next section deals with social capital and a description of mentoring not only as facilitating CoPs but also as developing social capital.

### **7.6.1. Social capital**

The theorist most commonly associated with the term ‘social capital’ is Pierre Bourdieu. Social capital for him involves values, attitudes, ways of behaving and so on which facilitate access into a CoP. He describes it as follows:

Social capital is the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition –



or in other words, to membership of a group – which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectively-owned capital, a ‘credential’ which entitles them to credit, in the various senses of the word (Bourdieu, 1997, 51).

People bring social capital from other spaces, i.e., from different CoPs, and often from home. According to Lesser and Storck (2001) CoPs can be considered as developing social capital, i.e., investing in the development of people. People within a CoP are linked to each other – either directly or indirectly, either as main members, or as peripheral members. They may also be linked to people outside the CoP. These connections can be thought of as social networks. Although social capital is not the same as developing social networks, the development of the social networks is a resource that facilitates the development of social capital. The initial sponsors of the mentoring programme invested in order to develop social capital in the form of mentors. Their commitment to the programme was so as to develop mentors who could not only mentor whilst at Rhodes University, but who could be mentors once they were working as pharmacists, in whichever field of pharmacy they found themselves.

Mentoring is also about knowledge management: mentors and mentees share information, insight and experiences, and mentors help mentees access the necessary structures and mechanisms that enables mentees to succeed at Rhodes University.

### **7.6.2. Knowledge management**

In my opinion a mentoring programme can be seen as a form of knowledge management. Our mentoring programme is located within the Faculty of Pharmacy and processes are in place to make it work. The practitioners in the mentoring programme are the mentors. They came into the programme as new comers, received some basic training and then learnt as they practiced. They gained the knowledge and skills as they mentored, i.e., it was *their*

knowledge, and they knew how it affected their ability to be mentors. But the knowledge of practitioners is also about individual practitioners interacting, sharing, and learning with and from each other in their own CoP.

In order to find out what they had learned from mentoring I asked them to relate to a scenario: “let us assume some time in the future when you’re a qualified pharmacist someone says to you: ‘you used to be a mentor when you were at Rhodes University. We want you to start a support group for people on Anti-Retro-Viral medication (ARVs)’. Assuming you have all the relevant knowledge about HIV and ARVs, could you apply what you’ve learnt from being a mentor to this scenario?”

Mentor 1 compared the HIV positive people requiring ARVs to her first year mentees, i.e., both groups of people are unsure of their environment or personal situation:

I think people who are HIV positive, especially people who have been newly infected, who don’t know anything, are quite the same as first years who don’t know anything about university.

Then she went on to qualify her statement by saying that both groups would require information, guidance and help in order to learn and understand the situation they are in, and how to cope within it. She also identified the skills that she would use to help both the first year students and the HIV positive people who require ARVs, i.e., providing emotional support; listening, sharing, and helping; help them cope; be empathetic:

- providing that emotional support ,
- I think it’s about being there for someone, for listening, for sharing and helping,
- help them find their feet and learn to manage it [HIV] and live with it,
- helping them cope with stigma and things like that,
- to listen, to be empathetic and listen to their problems and to advise.

She identified the importance of social capital:

Have group sessions because I can only help them understand ... I mean I can only help them to a certain point but if they had someone who is going

through the exact same thing, has the exact same family situation or something like that that would be more helpful. So I think part of the mentoring thing has also been helping them network with each other.

She realized that mentoring is about empowering others so that they can help themselves. One way of doing that is by helping them develop a network of people.

Mentor 2 mentioned that the skills she learned whilst being a mentor are transferable:

- time management – I would know how to plan meetings,
- also have people who have been on ARVs, and people who know what they are talking about, or have some sort of idea and can relate to it,
- I think everything would apply. How to listen sometimes and not say anything - not having an answer, but just listening.

She also understood that mentoring is not about making people reliant on her (the mentor). Mentoring is about helping mentees help themselves, not about doing it for them:

... a sense of support but knowing how to not make them completely reliant on me. Like I've learnt how to do that. How to make them understand that 'listen I am here for you and I will help you but my life isn't completely at your beck and call. Like let's compromise, let's draw up some sort of, let's come to an arrangement that you understand that this is what you expect of me and this is what I expect of you, so that one of us isn't taking advantage of the other and so that one of us doesn't take it personally if something else comes up because we've already made arrangements for that'

In her opinion there would be a need to formalise roles and the expectations. She also stressed the need not to take things personally.

Mentor 3 emphasised that the communication skills she developed whilst mentoring were transferable, that small groups are better than large ones, and that confidentiality is important. Furthermore, she highlighted the need for a relationship with every member in the support group. This relationship should be based on understanding and empathy:

Try to be on the same wavelength with them instead of being the pharmacist and them the patient. Try to be part of them, try to understand where they are coming from and I think that, ja, and enter into a relationship, and you must build a relationship with every member of your group.

She felt strongly about building a relationship in which there is confidence and trust, so that the person taking the ARVs will also trust their treatment. This is an important concept for pharmacists to understand.

Mentor 4 described the need for ethics and morals, the need for helping people, for having empathy, and the ability to teach others how to manage stress:

- So if you know ethics and morals and your morals are good..... and you know how to help people, you've been helping people, so you'll definitely be able to help people,
- Empathy is important
- Stress management I can teach them.

He identified stress management as an important strategy that both groups of people (first year students and HIV positive people about to start ARVs) would find useful. Although the stressors would be different, I suspect the strategies could be similar.

Mentor 5 described the need to communicate differently with different people, and the need to adjust techniques and strategies depending on the person:

You need to try and gauge what kind of person each of the members are so that you know how to get through to them.

She is an intentionally inviting person, so it did not surprise me when she mentioned the importance of communication and the different techniques. She 'reads' people well, and is able to adjust according to the other person(s).

Mentor 6 stressed the need to build relationships. She learned how to do that in a relatively short period of time during the mentoring programme, and believed that she could do the same in the context of the support group:

- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- build relationships with people over a very short period of time,</li><li>- communicate with different people – people who I've never met before</li></ul> |
|--|

All the mentors agreed that the mentoring skills that they had developed were transferable to this scenario and to future practice. I was pleased that they felt that the generic mentoring skills that they had developed were transferable into a Pharmacy setting. This implies that they understood the domain, the community and the practices of mentoring.

### **7.7. Conclusion**

Mentoring involves structure, agency and culture - as illustrated by my mentoring model. According to Invitational Learning Theory structures incorporate place, programmes, processes and policies that either enable or constrain agency and mentoring. Agency involves people, politics and relationships, which either reproduce or transform structure. Culture affects structure and agency, and is affected by structure and agency. My model serves to indicate that this applies to mentoring.

Mentoring facilitates access to CoPs by providing: a shared space, opportunities for engagement, for developing relationships, and for learning with and from each other in a social context. Mentoring is about social capital and providing opportunities for knowledge management. The mentors developed the knowledge, skills and attitude that allowed them to be mentoring practitioners: interacting, sharing and learning with and from each other. The knowledge, skills and attitude are transferable to mentoring in Pharmacy, and are not limited to higher education.

## **Chapter 8: Conclusion**

The research described in this thesis is a critical realist account of mentoring within the Faculty of Pharmacy, at Rhodes University. It incorporates Discourse analysis and Invitational Learning Theory as methodological and theoretical tools. This thesis is making a contribution to social theory in Pharmacy education by describing how mentoring facilitates access to Communities of Practice (CoPs) and by developing a model of mentoring in the context described in this thesis.

There have been many changes in South Africa since becoming a democracy in 1994. In chapter 1, I discussed some of the changes in higher education, in healthcare and in Pharmacy. One of the results of these changes is an increase in the number of students admitted to tertiary institutions, specifically of previously disadvantaged students. At Rhodes University we are committed to increasing our intake - specifically of Black working class students from the Eastern Cape Province. Given the particular history of our country, race and class are conflated. Since 1994, the black middle class has grown enormously in the country and black students gaining entrance to Rhodes University are overwhelmingly of privileged socio-economic classes. Situated in one of the poorest provinces in the country, the challenge for the University is not to admit black students, but to admit black students who are poor and working class. Since these students have experienced the inferior schooling which still remains as a legacy of apartheid and since their social backgrounds are often very different from the white middle class one which dominates, this often means they struggle socially and academically when at Rhodes University. They may feel alienated by the new environment at Rhodes University, where the culture and language may be different to the one they are used to. Mentoring is a strategy for equity and redress.

In the Faculty of Pharmacy at Rhodes University we identified the role of mentoring as a strategy for success – specifically (but not limited to) previously disadvantaged students. In 2003 we initiated a mentoring programme (the topic of this thesis) to help first year Pharmacy students

succeed. As already noted, I was intricately involved in the planning and implementation of this mentoring programme and have been facilitating and supervising it since its inception. Over the years I have observed mentoring closely, and have been fascinated by it, particularly in the development of mentors as a result of mentoring. This led to the research reported in this thesis.

My main underlying research question is: 'how does mentoring facilitate access to a Community of Practice (CoP)'? Linked to this is the question 'how do mentors construct mentoring?' since mentors are clearly key actors in any act of mentoring.

In trying to determine how mentors constructed mentoring and how mentoring facilitates access to a Community of Practice (CoP) I had to do more than just describe mentoring because social mechanisms are not readily observable; they require theory and abstraction (Wikgren, 2005). Critical realism rejects the idea that the appearance of things corresponds directly with the way things are, and thus critical realism helped me look more deeply at what was happening, and why. I developed a model of mentoring that describes the relationship between structures, culture and agency. It reveals structures and mechanisms that either enable or constrain mentoring, thereby reproducing or transforming the culture at Rhodes University.

### **8.1. Constructing mentoring**

I used Discourse analysis to determine how mentors construct mentoring. Chapter 6 provides evidence of the different discourses and mechanisms accessed when constructing mentoring. My findings suggest that mentoring is about understanding, empathy, guiding and helping mentees. Mentoring involves providing a shared space that is safe, that the mentors and mentees are comfortable in, and that supports and challenges both the mentors and mentees. The mentors and mentees learn with and from each other within this shared, safe space, this CoP.

Discourse analysis suggests that it is important that the mentor knows and understands what it is like to be a first year student at Rhodes University. Three discourses relate to this: (1) the 'newness' discourse, which constructs mentoring as being about helping mentees come to terms with being new. (2) The 'helping' discourse, which constructs mentoring as being able to help mentees help themselves, and (3) the 'been there done that' discourse, which facilitates the process of empathy.

Other discourses that construct mentoring include: (4) mentoring is not a 'quick fix' solution to mentees problems. Where this discourse was apparent it shifted as a result of mentoring, as mentors took on the responsibility for the success of their mentees. (5) The 'I'm approachable' discourse also facilitated the caring and helping processes, as well as information sharing. (6) It became apparent that mentors do not need to be clever people. Mentoring is about being willing and able to help mentees deal with issues that the mentee deems as 'real'.

(7) Mentoring is about building relationships (Archer, 2002, Pierpaoli, 1992), which takes time. Initially mentoring was not easy, but it 'got better' with time. One reason for this was that friendships developed. Friendship was identified as a critical component of mentoring in our programme, and mentors and mentees felt comfortable in each others company. Various structures and mechanisms led to this. For example the frequency and informality of meetings were enabling structures in the mentoring process. There were various types of friendships that occurred. For example, some mentors and mentees became buddies, others developed more of a big brother/big sister relationship. One mentor's relationship was one of 'being an elder', possibly due to cultural expectations.

(8) Power relations are important in mentoring. Initially some of the mentors felt that power was an issue but this discourse shifted as mentors realised that they were not an authority, and as friendships developed. In friendship power relations are not normally an issue. However, in the case of the mentor seeing



himself as an elder it might have been. There was however, no evidence to suggest that it affected the relationship negatively.

(9) Mentors realised that mentoring was not about developing clones, and the 'be like me' discourse shifted to one of 'there's no need to be like me'.

As the mentoring programme progressed mentors became competent and their self confidence increased. The mentors learned with and from each other and their mentees. Mentoring is a reciprocal, developmental relationship for the mentors and the mentees.

## **8.2. Structures and mechanisms**

Social structures influence people and the opportunities they have. According to Invitational Learning Theory four structures are particularly relevant to mentoring: place, programmes, processes and policies. Each of these was analysed as it pertained to our mentoring programme. These structures either enabled or constrained mentoring. I interpreted place to represent two different concepts: (a) the physical environment, i.e., the Faculty of Pharmacy at Rhodes University, Grahamstown, and (b) the shared space of a CoP. The physical environment was enabling for some students but constraining for others. However, as a shared space within a CoP - space was enabling, as it enabled mentoring to occur.

Processes important to the mentoring programme included: (1) the training workshops, which were identified as structures that help mentors develop, and served as scaffolding for social learning within the CoP. Following critical realist ontology, they were identified as being enabling structures. (2) Matching and grouping of mentors and mentees was an important process that allowed mentees to choose their mentor, and was thus an enabling structure. (3) Mentor and mentee meetings were where mentoring occurred. This was identified as a CoP. Mentors had to meet their mentees at least once a week, and this frequency was seen as an enabling structure that

facilitated mentoring. The routine of weekly meetings and the negotiated contract were also enabling structures. (4) Mentor and supervisor meetings were identified as another CoP where mentors shared experiences, and problem solved as a group – within the CoP. Mentors were exposed to the practices of the other mentors, which allowed them to learn with and from each other. (5) Mentors were expected to keep journals, where they documented the mentor and mentee meetings, and reflected on their praxis. Journals were thus seen to be structures that enabled reflection – although in practice there was not much evidence of this. (6) Financial assistance in the form of a mentorship was meant to recognise and compensate the mentors, as well as being an incentive and extrinsic motivation, thus enabling mentoring.

I found sufficient evidence in my data that supports Schmidt's (2004) suggestion that optimism is an important element of mentoring. Interestingly respect can be a mechanism that enables or constrains mentoring, or an outcome in the empirical domain. My evidence suggests that mentoring is built on trust – in the people and the process - and mentoring is an intentional relationship.

The strategies that mentors employed changed as the mentors mentored. They are seen as mechanisms that the mentor found useful themselves, and/or they helped the mentees access. Mentors help make hidden rules and conventions overt by sharing their knowledge with the mentees. They are an important source of information.

### **8.3. Mentoring facilitates access to CoPs**

According to Wenger (1991) CoPs organise themselves around what matters to their members. In the mentoring situation this relates to what matters to mentors and mentees. Typically members choose to join a CoP (Storck and Hill, 2000). Our mentoring programme is voluntary: mentors volunteer to

become mentors, and mentees join the programme voluntarily. Mentees also choose their own mentors.

CoPs are characterised by having a shared domain, a shared community and a shared practice (Wenger, 1998a). The shared domain referred to in this thesis is mentoring, the community refers to the mentors and mentees within this mentoring programme, and the shared practice is the practice of mentoring. Both the mentor and mentee groups as well as the group consisting only of mentors have these three characteristics in common, and are thus CoPs.

Furthermore, the mentoring groups and the group of mentors can be thought of as CoPs because they fulfil the requirements identified by Wenger (1998a), namely: (1) practitioner-orientation, (2) autonomy, (3) informality, and (4) crossing boundaries. Practitioner-orientation relates to the members of both CoPs having similar interests since they are all Pharmacy students, and to mentoring being about dealing with issues that the mentee deems as 'real'. Although the mentoring programme is a structured programme both CoPs have relative autonomy in that what happens during the meetings is not stipulated or prescribed. During the initiation phase of mentoring the mentor and mentee meetings may have started off being relatively formal but as they developed a relationship they tended to become more informal. This informality was described as being an enabling mechanism that promoted mentoring and the formation of friendships. Crossing boundaries refers to what happened when mentors and mentees joined the mentoring programme, i.e., when they joined the CoP.

Mentoring facilitates access to a CoP by providing opportunities for engagement, i.e., providing a shared, safe space in which mentors and mentees can engage with each other and learn with and from each other, as they develop. This involves a sharing of experiences and knowledge, as well as promoting discussion and engagement. The mentor helps the mentee move from being a peripheral member of the CoP to becoming a main member, i.e., becoming active, learning with and from others within the CoP.

Lave and Wenger (1991) coined the term 'situated learning' which describes what happens when members of a CoP learn by participating in the practices of the CoP, i.e., learning with and from each other. This certainly happens in the mentoring context, as explained in chapter 7.

CoPs can be considered to be developing social capital (Lesser and Stork, 2001). Mentoring is an investment in the development of people, and is about knowledge management: mentors and mentees share information, insight, and experiences. My research also suggests that the knowledge, skills and attitude developed by the mentors within this study may be transferable to other aspects in Pharmacy.

#### **8.4. The future of our mentoring programme**

Learning is fundamentally a social phenomenon (Wenger, 1996) - it is not just about information but about the social context of the information. As discussed in chapter 7, learning normally occurs within an activity, context and culture. In our mentoring programme the mentors and mentees learned whilst mentoring, i.e., whilst immersed in the activities, context and culture of mentoring. Since our mentoring programme is voluntary many first year students missed out on such learning, and thus I believe that our mentoring programme should become part of the curriculum, i.e., it should become compulsory for all first year students in the Faculty of Pharmacy to be a mentee in the mentoring programme. I believe many of our first year students are either not mature enough to understand the potential benefits of joining the mentoring programme, or are ignorant or even arrogant in thinking that they will not benefit. A compulsory programme would be different to our current programme, e.g., it would not be inviting in the same sense that our programme currently invites participation. We would need more mentors, which would have financial implications and would make supervision more difficult. In order for a compulsory mentoring programme to be effective it would require buy-in from the whole Faculty. But these are not insurmountable obstacles. With careful planning it could be done. Perhaps

this would enable institutional and Faculty transformation instead of reproducing existing social structures.

### **8.5. Directions for future research**

Our mentoring programme was essentially designed to induct newcomers, i.e., first year students into the Rhodes University culture. Mentoring is thus a structure put in place to facilitate this process of induction. Given the need for the University to transform its dominant culture if it is to become the 'home for all' envisaged by the newly appointed Vice Chancellor (Badat, 2006) this is a limitation of our programme. As the programme is developed further, there is a clear need for some thought to be expended on its ability to empower students to experience their difference in positive ways and not simply to try to assimilate them into the dominant culture. The mentoring programme could be helping to transform the Rhodes culture thereby addressing equity and redress issues.

Future research should also address how mentoring can be applied and adapted in other Pharmacy settings. For example, in section 2.8.1. I described how mentoring could be useful during the internship programme. And in section 2.8.2. I discussed some of the Human Resource issues in Pharmacy in South Africa. In my opinion mentoring could be an effective strategy employed to help in the training of pharmacists and pharmacist's assistants – particularly in the public sector. Mentoring could also be useful in the development of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) portfolios by pharmacists, especially since the South African Pharmacy Council is planning to make this mandatory for registration. Mentoring could help transform the structures and culture of pharmacy in South Africa.

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*The \* symbol next to a reference indicates that it is to be found on the CD which accompanies this thesis. The main author's name and publication date were used as filename. Most of these are readings available at HTML sites, and since HTML documents often do not have page numbers I assumed an A4 page size and numbered accordingly.*

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## **Appendix A: Interview questions**

### **First semi-structured interview of mentors**

Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_ Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: Carmen Oltmann

Date of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Venue of interview: Carmen's office

Consent form: please read through the consent form carefully. Having read it, do you have any questions? If yes, please ask them. If there are no further questions than please sign the consent form.

1. Describe what it was like to be a first year at Rhodes. How did you handle it? What about your friends or other people in your class?
2. Tell me how others see you.
3. Tell me how you see yourself.
4. Why do you think you will be a good mentor?
5. What do you think mentoring is all about?
6. What are your expectations from the mentoring program?
7. How would you deal with the following situations: one of your first year mentees comes to you and says:
  - (a) she is failing all her subjects
  - (b) she's homesick

- (c) he hasn't made any friends yet, and is lonely
- (d) he doesn't like the "Rhodes culture"
- (e) she doesn't know if pharmacy is the correct choice
- (f) she's just found out she's pregnant and it's not planned

8. How do you see yourself changing between now and the end of the mentoring program?

Anything you'd like to add, or ask, or clarify?

Thank you. Interview terminated at \_\_\_\_\_

## **Second semi-structured interview of mentors**

Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_ Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: Carmen Oltmann

Date of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Venue of interview: Carmen's office

1. What do you do differently now?
2. Have your mentoring sessions changed? Explain and give examples [operational].
3. Has the way you relate to the mentees changed? Explain and give examples [relationship].
4. Has the way the mentees relate to each other changed? Explain and give examples [relationship].
5. How has your understanding of mentoring changed?
6. Has mentoring changed you? If so, then how, and why?

Anything you'd like to add, or ask, or clarify?

Thank you. Interview terminated at \_\_\_\_\_

### **Third semi-structured interview of mentors**

Interviewee: \_\_\_\_\_ Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Interviewer: Carmen Oltmann

Date of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Time of interview: \_\_\_\_\_

Venue of interview: Carmen's office

1. Briefly describe your mentoring journey.
2. Would you do it again if you knew then what you know now? Explain why.
3. What would you do differently if you knew then what you know now?
4. How did mentoring affect you:
  - emotionally
  - socially
  - academically?
5. What aspects of mentoring did you:
  - like most
  - like least?
6. Did the mentoring program meet your expectations? Refer to their individual responses to Q 6 in their first interview (which occurred before any training and before the program had started). I had asked them: "what are your expectations from the mentoring program?" Discuss their responses and ask for clarity.
7. Have you changed? Refer to their individual responses to Q 8 of their first interview: "how do you see yourself changing between now and the end of

8. What do you think about the following statement: “at Rhodes if a student fails then it’s their own fault”. [This is referred to as the “individual view of learning”]
9. Here’s a scenario for you....some time in the future when you’re a qualified pharmacist someone says to you: “you used to be a mentor when you were at Rhodes. We want to start a support group for people on ARVs. You start it and run it”. Assuming you have all the relevant knowledge about HIV and ARVs could you apply what you’ve learnt from being a mentor and apply it to this scenario?

Anything you’d like to add, or ask, or clarify?

Thank you. Interview terminated at \_\_\_\_\_



## Appendix B: Field notes

### Synopsis of the topics discussed at the weekly meetings between mentors and Carmen (the supervisor), and the comments or possible action taken

Topics discussed	Comments and/or possible action to be taken after discussion
<p><u>22 February 2007</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Some mentees find it difficult to keep up</li> <li>▪ Physics: mentees are finding it difficult, and pracs were taking extremely long</li> <li>▪ Mentees asked about ADP in the various subjects</li> <li>▪ Mentees asked what tutorials are in the various subjects</li> <li>▪ Some mentees in digs were having problems with transport to and from campus</li> <li>▪ Some of the Foundation students wanted more information about their program</li> <li>▪ Some mentees wanted to</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mentors to discuss how they handled this, strategies</li> <li>▪ Do preparation work for prac, ask demonstrators if don't know, keep up</li> <li>▪ All subjects have AD tutors, mentors to show mentees how to book a session with an AD tutor, discuss reasons for attending AD tutorials</li> <li>▪ Explanation of tutorials in the different subjects, NB to keep up to date</li> <li>▪ Referred to Rhode Trip</li> <li>▪ Carmen discussed this with the Dean, who supplied information, which Carmen gave to the mentors to give to the Foundation students</li> <li>▪ Mentors told them to either ask</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What to do if they didn't have a text book</li> <li>▪ Can't find a text book for Statistics at UPB (bookshop)</li> <li>▪ Are there any venues on campus where students can study?</li> <li>▪ Where can they get test and exam question papers from?</li> </ul>	<p>during class, or immediately after the lecture, or make an appointment to meet the lecturer in his/her office.</p> <p>Stressed that most lecturers are approachable and friendly</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ If you can then buy one (perhaps they can find a second hand book), or find out if you can borrow one from someone else, or find one in the library</li> <li>▪ Ask the Statistics department</li> <li>▪ Yes, in the library, and gave them a list of tutorial rooms that stay open after 5 pm for people to study in</li> <li>▪ Some the students can download, others they can buy from the department</li> </ul>
<p><u>1 March 2007</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discussed the contract and what they should do with it</li> <li>▪ Get cell numbers from them</li> <li>▪ What to do if mentees don't pitch up for meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ They should read through it carefully and if they are happy with it then we sign it</li> <li>▪ Received</li> <li>▪ Find a way to contact them, keep inviting them, ask the other mentees to keep</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Physics is still causing problems</li>   <li>▪ Physics pracs: demonstrators concentrate on some students but don't have enough time to help all. Some demonstrators don't know what they're doing</li> <li>▪ What do class representatives do?</li>   <li>▪ Some mentees are going to ADP and finding it very useful</li> <li>▪ Some mentees find lecturers intimidating</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discussed going to ADP, speaking to lecturer, reading the prescribed text book, discussing in groups, doing the tutorials, preparing for pracs, keeping up to date, reading ahead</li> <li>▪ Carmen to speak to Dr .... about this, so that demonstrators are trained properly</li>   <li>▪ They represent the class at meetings, have to feed back to the class when asked to, have to feed info to lecturers when asked i.e. are the channel of communication between lecturers and the class</li> <li>▪ Excellent. Encourage the others to go too</li> <li>▪ Try not to. After a while they will get used to the lecturers.</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chemistry is going well</li> <li>▪ Cell Biology going well, especially the first prac</li> <li>▪ Where can mentees pay for printing i.e. where do they put money into their printing account</li> <li>▪ Some mentees are relaxed and enjoying Rhodes but some are stressed, some are homesick and just want to go home</li> <li>▪ Some mentors are meeting mentees individually, others in groups</li> <li>▪ Taking responsibility for your own learning and actions</li> <li>▪ Spending much time studying but not necessarily doing well</li> </ul>	<p>Tell them how you got over this when you were in first year</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Good, encourage continuously</li> <li>▪ Good, again keep encouraging them</li> <li>▪ At the Student Bureau, discussed how this is done</li> <li>▪ Keep an eye on those who are ok, but take special care of those who are stressed and homesick. Refer if you feel the need to.</li> <li>▪ This is ok because it's personal preference and also what your mentees want. Do what works for you and your mentees</li> <li>▪ Discussed why this is important</li> <li>▪ Study smart – what does this mean? Discussion</li> </ul>
<p><u>8 March 2007</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contracts between mentor and mentees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discussed, negotiated, and signed them. Mentors to keep them and to remind mentees of them every now and again, change if necessary</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mentees had two tests on same day</li> <li>▪ Past papers: for both tests and exams</li> <li>▪ Statistics lecturer just talks, doesn't ever ask if they are getting along</li> <li>▪ One group discussed contraceptives because now that they are at university they are free to have sexual intercourse with anyone</li> <li>▪ Accommodation issues: those students living at Celeste are in a double room but paying full price</li> <li>▪ Foundation students wanted to know why they are paying the full BPharm degree price</li> <li>▪ Foundation students are unsure about the subjects they</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ask them to ask their class representatives to intervene if this happens again</li> <li>▪ Where to find them, either from the department or download them from Student zone</li> <li>▪ Discuss with them that this is what it's like at university, different to school, here they have to ask for help themselves, no-one is going to check on them. Make use of ADP. Ask for help!</li> <li>▪ Mentor discussed this with them, both from a pharmaceutical point of view i.e. what contraceptives are available, how they work but also about STIs and HIV and how to make sure to prevent transmission</li> <li>▪ I took this up with D.... who will correct it and the students will be charged the double room rate</li> <li>▪ I brought this to the Dean's attention. He will make sure this is corrected as soon as possible</li> <li>▪ I need to find out myself, and feed it back to the mentors so</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Chemistry lecturer is going so fast</li> <li>▪ Heaters in res have not been switched on yet but it's cold some days</li> <li>▪ One mentor discussed what they can do with their Pharmacy degree after graduation</li> <li>▪ One mentee didn't know where to photocopy, or how</li> <li>▪ Failed Chemistry test</li> <li>▪ Mentees didn't know who the ADP tutors in Cell Biology are, or even if there are any</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ask him to slow down, or get class reps to ask him</li> <li>▪ Mentees to discuss this with their warden and/or their house committee</li> <li>▪ Good discussion as a group. Many students seemed naïve about possibilities. Needs to be discussed in class too. Bring to attention of first year co-ordinator</li> <li>▪ Mentor took the group to the library and showed the whole group how to</li> <li>▪ Discussed this with the individuals, and then generally later with the whole group. What to do if fail a test. Important not to leave it. Must do something about it! Discussed what they can do, the options</li> <li>▪ Carmen to discuss with HoD of Cell Biology, and information to be passed on to all first years, with encouragement to use the ADP tutor</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Some students fall asleep during lectures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How to prevent this! Get enough sleep, sit in front during lectures, concentrate</li> </ul>
<p><u>15 March 2007</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Some first years are complaining that they spend so much time learning and then do poorly in their tests</li> <li>▪ All Foundation students to meet Mrs S... on Monday at 8:40</li> <li>▪ Mentors workshops: how are they going?</li> <li>▪ One mentee started to flirt with the mentor – what should she do?</li> <li>▪ Cell Biology scientific write-up: mentees don't really know</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discuss with the first years that it is not how much time one spends studying that matters but how smart one studies. Give them examples and make sure they understand. They have to understand and internalize what they are learning. Cannot simply rote learn – it's not the same as school.</li> <li>▪ Foundation students know this</li> <li>▪ Let R.... know that my mentors did not think she was managing her and their time well</li> <li>▪ This led to a good discussion amongst the mentors and myself about what they can do if this happens</li> <li>▪ Mentors will all go through the expectations and requirements</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What to do with mentees who are always late for meetings</li> <li>▪ Is it ok to meet with mentees casually?</li> <li>▪ Some of the mentees who did A levels are not working as hard as they should be</li> <li>▪ What to do if the mentees have nothing to discuss</li> <li>▪ Mentees are now starting to discuss other issues i.e. it's not just a platform to complain</li> <li>▪ Physics pracs: still taking too long</li> <li>▪ Chemistry pracs don't seem to be linking up with the theory</li> <li>▪ Stats tutors can't answer the questions during the tutorials</li> <li>▪ One mentee felt that the way the class reps were chosen was not fair</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discuss it with them, lay down the ground rules</li> <li>▪ Yes, provided there is still the official meeting too</li> <li>▪ Find out if they are bored or are there other reasons for this? Warn them of the dangers</li> <li>▪ Always have something you can bring up with them i.e. before each meeting have one or more issues you want to discuss with them</li> <li>▪ This is an interesting and important development, for the mentees and the mentors!</li> <li>▪ Mentees have to familiarize themselves with the equipment and the methods before the prac</li> <li>▪ Mentors explained where and how they will link – and soon</li> <li>▪ Carmen to mention to Stats department</li> <li>▪ Mentors to discuss the process and the responsibilities of class reps with the mentees, and whom she can complain to about the process</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Entertainment money (R75)</li> <li>▪ Intervisiting rules: some mentees didn't understand the intervisiting rules, and why they are different for man's and women's residences</li> <li>▪ Rhodes University Pharmacy Students Association (RUPSA): mentees don't know what it is, what it does or why they joined</li> <li>▪ Grahamstown has no social life – some mentees are used to going out a lot, and are bored in Grahamstown</li> <li>▪ Mentees told one mentor they now appreciate her</li> <li>▪ South African students think students with A levels have an easier time</li> <li>▪ Importance of understanding your work</li> <li>▪ Mentees are getting along better with each other now</li> <li>▪ Vacation is coming up: some mentees don't know what</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mentors to use this to treat the mentees, or if they want to donate it then that is their decision</li> <li>▪ Mentors explained reasons to them after we discussed them as a group. I was a warden until recently so was able to share my insight with them</li> <li>▪ Get the chairperson of RUPSA to speak to all first years about what they do and how the first years can get involved</li> <li>▪ Discuss other options of entertainment with the mentees</li> <li>▪ Mentor feels good about this, and other mentors will hopefully also feel good</li> <li>▪ This may be true in first year, but after first year there is little difference</li> <li>▪ It's no good simply going through past papers if they don't understand the work</li> <li>▪ Good, encourage this further, take note of interactions</li> <li>▪ Good idea to discuss issues such as booking transport to</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ What about mentees who are not going away for the vacation</li> </ul>	<p>PE, booking busses, what it means to have to pack up your room in res etc</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Describe what happens if they stay in res i.e. have to pay extra, how and where to pay, otherwise what to do</li> </ul>
<p><u>22 March 2007</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ How to research for the Cell Biology assignment</li> <li>▪ Chemistry now ok – no longer complaining, getting used to the lecturers style</li> <li>▪ Vacation: further discussion about procedures</li> <li>▪ Career counselling: what to do if someone not sure Pharmacy is for them</li> <li>▪ Some mentees are feeling overwhelmed by work</li> <li>▪ Take responsibility</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discussed the different options: library, internet...</li> <li>▪ Good, encouragement required</li> <li>▪ Continue discussions</li> <li>▪ Discuss either one-on-one or as a group, and refer either to a lecturer (like me) or to the Careers centre</li> <li>▪ Discuss either one-on-one or as a group, and refer either to ADP, or lecturers or to Counselling centre – careful not to take on other peoples problems, rather refer</li> <li>▪ Some mentees are not coping and blaming everyone else for this – need to discuss how they can take responsibility for</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Some mentees feel overwhelmed</li> <li>▪ Physics pracs still taking so long, and lecturer takes too long to explain</li> <li>▪ Meetings between mentor and mentees now seem to take longer and are more comfortable, even the quiet ones are speaking, and mentees are starting to help each other</li> <li>▪ One mentor has a mentee who talks too much and monopolizes the whole meeting</li> </ul>	<p>themselves, refer if need to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Take life a day at a time but do something, don't be passive</li> <li>▪ Carmen to discuss with Dr ... again</li> <li>▪ Very interesting and important development and observation</li> <li>▪ Suggest to rather have one-on-one meetings with this mentee, so as to let him speak his mind (within reasonable time) and to not let him dominate the group discussion</li> </ul>
<p><u>29 March 2007</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Next term is exam term, so need to prepare the mentees for exams</li> <li>▪ Some mentees were not impressed that the mentor knew their marks, but only those who failed one or more tests</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Good to have discussions</li> <li>▪ That needs to be discussed with these mentees. The mentors are expected to look out for their mentees, and this includes finding out how they are doing academically.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cell Biology assignment: what progress being made</li> <li>▪ Plagiarism</li> <li>▪ Some mentees who were not doing well in Physics got together and started working in a group, are now doing better and passing</li> <li>▪ Some mentees are meeting their mentor almost every day, for casual chats, relationships are now stronger and less formal</li> <li>▪ Group dynamics are changing: now less formal, mentees discuss more as a group, everyone is getting to know each other</li> <li>▪ Mentees looking forward to the vacation</li> <li>▪ Time management: discussed ways of managing their time</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discuss progress, don't leave till last minute, have a plan</li> <li>▪ Discussed what it is, how to not plagiarise</li> <li>▪ The others in the group will hopefully now also try learning in groups. Positive results tend to rub off onto others. Mentees are learning from each other!</li> <li>▪ Interesting and important development for mentors and mentees!</li> <li>▪ Interesting and important developments</li> <li>▪ This is important</li> <li>▪ Some mentees decided to follow some of the suggestions, others were more sceptical. Time will tell</li> </ul>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Budgets: how to control your own budget</li> <li>▪ Vacation: some are going home, others elsewhere, and some are staying</li> <li>▪ Foundation students seem to be mixing better now</li> <li>▪ Encouragement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Most found this useful</li> <li>▪ Discussed what it might be like to go home – remember that they have changed and friends and family at home probably haven't. Don't get bored if staying here, find things to do</li> <li>▪ Interesting and important development</li> <li>▪ Mentors encouraged their mentees to do as well as possible academically, also discussed rebate system i.e. reduction of fees if do really well = incentive to do well</li> </ul>
<p>Vacation</p> <p><u>19 April 2007</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ All enjoyed the vacation</li> <li>▪ Some who went home said it felt different – they had changed</li> <li>▪ One mentee who wanted to leave Rhodes is now more positive about staying</li> <li>▪ Discussed how to reference their Cell Biology assignment</li> </ul>	<p>Vacation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Good, because the second term is hectic</li> <li>▪ Interesting and important development</li> <li>▪ Important realization for the mentee, and good for other mentees to hear</li> <li>▪ Important to learn how to reference correctly</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mentees living in Celeste were given 25% reimbursement but those in double rooms were still paying the full amount</li> <li>▪ Tuition fees for Foundation students still not clarified</li> <li>▪ Some mentees are not attending meetings anymore – what should the mentors do</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Some are happy mentees. Carmen to discuss the double room fees with Mrs ... and get back to the mentees</li> <li>▪ Carmen to discuss up the Dean again</li> <li>▪ Find out why they are not attending anymore, discuss this. If the mentees feel they no longer require mentoring then they can officially leave the program. Then they must discuss this with the mentor.</li> </ul>
<p><u>26 April 2007</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Exam time table</li> <li>▪ Exam venues</li> <li>▪ Exam procedure</li> <li>▪ Swot week</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discussed the process of how draft timetables come out, how students must check so that no clashes and where to report clashes</li> <li>▪ Mentors took their mentees to the different exam venues and explained how they are set up</li> <li>▪ Mentors discussed what happens before, during and after an exam, what they may bring, what not to bring etc</li> <li>▪ Discussed what swot week is, that there are no lectures, that they must start studying now,</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Physics prac exam</li> <li>▪ Mentees appreciate this info</li> <li>▪ Cell Biology assignment due this week. Some mentees left it till this week</li> <li>▪ Some mentees are not yet stressing for exams, others are</li> <li>▪ One mentor invited her mentees to her digs and they had lunch together</li> <li>▪ One mentee has problem with her sponsors – they are not paying her rent on time and she may be evicted soon</li> <li>▪ Social function with all mentors and mentees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Discussed what this is, how it works, that they are given time before the prac exam to familiarize themselves with all the equipment, that they will be under time constraints, that they must prepare properly for it</li> <li>▪ Good</li> <li>▪ Time management issues</li> <li>▪ Need to start learning for exams now, don't panic</li> <li>▪ Good initiative by mentor and appreciated by mentees</li> <li>▪ Mentor suggested ways of solving this problem</li> <li>▪ Discussed the logistics. Mentors to ask mentees when it would suite them. Carmen to organise</li> </ul>
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### 3 May 2007

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Social function</li><li>▪ Exams: more discussions about topics mentioned last week</li><li>▪ Leave of Absence (LOA): what it is and how to get one</li><li>▪ Chemistry: is now difficult. Some mentees stressing</li><li>▪ Making study timetables for exams</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Discussed possible dates and venues, all keen</li><li>▪ Good to discuss again</li><li>▪ Important information</li><li>▪ Keep up, read your text book, ask questions, do past papers, discuss with friends, group studying, do tuts, don't give up</li><li>▪ Discussed the pros and cons of these, and how to stick to them</li></ul> |
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### 10 May 2007

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Social function</li><li>▪ Exams</li><li>▪ One mentor forgot a meeting with her mentees, will apologize and set up another meeting</li><li>▪ Mentors are very busy with</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ Looking forward to it, discussed menu options, venue and date</li><li>▪ More explanations and discussions especially about seating, cell phones, fines, student cards etc</li><li>▪ Not good, was discussed as a group – mentors have a responsibility and are being paid. She felt bad, so point made.</li><li>▪ I know, but they must</li></ul> |
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cell Biology prac: can they practice before their prac exam?</li> <li>▪ DP: what is it and how do they know if they have it or not</li> </ul>	<p>remember they have a contract with their mentees, not to falter, make a plan, take responsibility</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mentors said the mentees should find out: important development – the mentors are now empowering the mentees to find out for themselves. Previously the mentors would either have asked me to find out, or would have done it themselves. Now they are making the mentees take ownership. Fascinating development</li> <li>▪ Discussed what it is, and they will be told if they have been refused their DP, and what the consequences are</li> </ul>
<p><u>17 May 2007</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Social function went well, enjoyed by all</li> <li>▪ Exams: more discussions</li> <li>▪ Stress management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ I'm glad. Mentors and mentees socialized well with each other, 46 of the 50 mentees and all mentors attended</li> <li>▪ Good</li> <li>▪ Discussions on how to deal with stress, practical tips, own experiences</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Counselling centre</li> <li>▪ Don't stress too much and don't burn out</li> <li>▪ Foundation student fees: under investigation</li> <li>▪ Physics prac exam: remember to go and practice</li> <li>▪ Don't sleep too much during swot week – it's very tempting</li> <li>▪ Help each other</li> <li>▪ Mention to mentees that program is coming to an end, discuss how they feel about this</li> <li>▪ Discuss whether or not they can come to you even though the program will be over soon</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Where it is and how to make an appointment</li> <li>▪ Good advice</li> <li>▪ I can't believe it's taking so long. I discussed it with the Dean again, who will chase up admin again</li> <li>▪ Good advice</li> <li>▪ Good advice</li> <li>▪ Good advice, and discussed how</li> <li>▪ Important to do this now</li> <li>▪ Important to set boundaries but also not to let go completely. Mentors were mainly sad about the imminent end.</li> </ul>
<p><u>24 May 2007 (last meeting)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Final meetings with mentees ranged from relief to sadness at coming to the end</li> <li>▪ Remind mentees to complete the evaluation forms</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Depends on individuals and on relationships developed.</li> <li>▪ Important to get this feedback</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Some mentees stressing for exams: discussed the importance of not stressing too much</li> <li>▪ Mentors thanked mentees, and mentees thanked mentors</li> <li>▪ Supper with mentors</li>   <li>▪ Thank you to all mentors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mentors could use what they had learned at their workshops plus their own experiences to help</li> <li>▪ Good way to complete the program</li> <li>▪ I would like to take the mentors out for supper in the third or fourth term to thank them</li> <li>▪ I thanked the mentors for being good at mentoring, and for being my subjects for my research.</li> </ul>
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Ms Carmen Oltmann  
Pharmacy Mentoring Programme  
Pharmacy Department

Dear Carmen

### **Pharmacy Mentor Evaluation**

Thank you for administering an evaluation to elicit feedback from your pharmacy mentees about the effectiveness of the mentoring system. This report is not intended to be a quantitative exercise but rather an attempt to draw on some of the positive and negative comments arising from the open-ended surveys to guide the continued development and fundraising efforts of the mentoring programme. I shall base my discussion on the following questions which formed the basis of the questionnaire.

1. Did your mentor explain what was expected of him/her? Did you mentor explain what he/she expected of you? Please explain what you understood (a) your mentor's role and (b) your role to be.
2. Did you sign a contract with your mentor? What was contained in the contract?
3. Did your mentor organise weekly meetings? Did your mentor attend the meetings regularly? Did you attend regularly?
4. Did your mentor listen to your issues/problems and offer guidance or direct you to people who could assist you. Explain.
5. Did having a mentor make a positive difference in the way you adjusted to university life? Give examples.
6. We would appreciate any other comments or suggestions about the mentoring programme ...either good or bad

- 1. Did your mentor explain what was expected of him/her? Did you mentor explain what he/she expected of you? Please explain what you understood (a) your mentor's role and (b) your role to be.**

In all instances mentors had explained what was expected of themselves as well as that of their mentees. Among other things mentors described their role as that of: "a guide"; one who is there to "assist his/her mentees on issues pertaining to

campus life” and one who was available to give “academic and personal advice” while also advising mentees “where to go...when experiencing problems”. Mentees understood their role as that of asking questions and accepting advice during the process of adjusting to university while also needing to show respect for both their mentor and fellow students in the group by attending meetings regularly and contributing to discussions.

**2. Did you sign a contract with your mentor? What was contained in the contract?**

All except one mentee indicated that they had signed a contract with their mentors. Mentees reported that the contract included guidelines for appropriate behaviour in the group (for example respecting the confidentiality of the group members, behaving courteously etc.). Issues such as time, place and venue were also confirmed in some instances.

**3. Did your mentor organise weekly meetings? Did your mentor attend the meetings regularly? Did you attend regularly?**

All except two mentees indicated that their mentors had organised weekly meetings; the remaining two indicating that they had met regularly (although not on a weekly basis). Both mentors and mentees indicated that all in the group attended regularly.

**4. Did your mentor listen to your issues/problems and offer guidance or direct you to people who could assist you. Explain.**

Mentees were very positive that mentors had done everything to offer guidance regarding academic and other problems they were facing. The common sentiment was perhaps best summarised by two mentees who stated (respectively):

“He did listen to everyone’s issues...and he came up with mutual solutions; he even told us how to make use of the internet to get past exam papers”.

“Yes, she was absolutely stunning; she was patient, loving, caring and intelligent...she really guided me”.

**5. Did having a mentor make a positive difference in the way you adjusted to university life? Give examples.**

Having a mentor made an enormous difference to the lives of mentees. Mentors were praised for, among other things,: providing assistance with problems; giving guidelines for studying for tests and exams; giving advice on how to get hold of contraceptives and issues relating to the san, issues around being

“foundation students” while generally acting as a great source of motivation and inspiration to the mentees.

**6. We would appreciate any other comments or suggestions about the mentoring programme ...either good or bad.**

Mentees were unanimous that the mentoring programme was really valuable. Feedback (once again) is perhaps best summarised by one of the mentees:

“The mentoring programme is worth it; it enables one to make friendships not only with the mentor but with the group as a whole; that in itself is a positive way of adjusting to the new environment. I wish it could run until the end of the year...”

**Concluding Comments**

Comments from this evaluation suggest that mentoring programme in Pharmacy has been an undisputed success, having a very positive effect on the lives of the individuals involved. Clearly, the mentors fulfilled their responsibilities towards their mentees with many going beyond the “call of duty”, making themselves available to offer advice regarding an array of personal as well as academic problems.

Thank you again for your enormous contribution to the success of the mentoring programme and for giving me access to information arising from these evaluations.

Kind regards

**Rose Grant**

## Appendix D: Consent form

### How do mentors come to construct mentoring over a period of time?

#### Consent form

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this research project aimed at finding out how mentors come to understand mentoring over a period of time. The research is important to the future of mentoring programmes in the Faculty of Pharmacy and to mentoring *per se*. You will also benefit from the research because it will enable you to track your progress and reflect on it.

The research will involve the following:

- (1) being interviewed three times: interviews will take place in the researcher's office - once before the programme starts, once about half way through the programme, and the last one at the end of the programme. Interviews will be semi –structured and will be recorded and transcribed before being analysed. The interviews will probe how you understand mentoring initially and how that understanding may change over time.
- (2) You will be asked to reflect on what you are experiencing and learning, and on selected questions that the researcher will pose.
- (3) You will also be asked to participate in weekly meetings during which any issues or problems arising from the mentoring process will be discussed.

Each mentor will be allocated a code. Mentors' confidentiality will be maintained at all times except that the researcher – Carmen Oltmann – will know your name

and will be the only person who has access to both your name and your allocated code. No information gathered will be made available so that you can be identified by anyone except the researcher. No information you give to the researcher will be made available to anyone other than the researcher unless you give written consent.

Once the interviews have been transcribed, the transcripts will be made available to you to for comment and clarity.

You are free to withdraw from the project at any stage. This will not jeopardize your participation in the mentoring programme. However, you are requested to discuss your withdrawal with the researcher before doing so.

**Attestation of agreement and confidentiality**

I, Carmen Oltmann (the researcher) do hereby swear that all information obtained as a result of this research will be treated in such a way that the confidentiality of the mentor will be maintained.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (mentor participating in this research) do hereby acknowledge that I have been informed of the nature, method and purpose of this research project. I give informed consent to participate in this project provided that my confidentiality is observed.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Appendix E: Initial training workshop**

### **TROJAN ACADEMIC INITIATIVE MENTOR DEVELOPMENT WEEKEND 17-18 FEBRUARY 2007 EDEN GROVE, SEMINAR ROOM 1, RHODES UNIVERSITY.**

#### **Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> February**

- 08:30 - 08.45 Introduction & Welcome (**Rose Grant**)
- 08:45 – 09:30 Understanding mentoring at Rhodes and identifying ‘Rhodes Culture’ (**Rose Grant**)
- 09:30 – 11:00 What do I bring to mentoring? (Self-exploration exercise) (**Roelf van Niekerk**)
- 11:00 – 11:30 Tea
- 11:30 – 12:20 Needs of first year students (**Michelle Wait**)  
*Discussion:* (**Rose Grant**)
- 12:20 – 13:00 Helping Model (**Rose Grant**)
- 13:00 – 13:10 One Minute Paper (**Rose Grant**)
- 13:10 – 14:00 Lunch

#### **Sunday, 18<sup>th</sup> February**

- 09:00 – 09:10 Counselling centre (**Sarah Green**)
- 09:10 – 10:30 *Panel discussion:* Trouble-shooting within a mentoring relationship (**Rose Grant (Chair), Carmen Oltmann, Nompilo Tshuma, Michelle Wait, Gill Wylie**)
- 10:30 – 11:00 Tea
- 11:00 – 11:45 Journal writing and reflection skills (Carmen Oltmann)**
- 11:50 – 12:30 Code of Conduct, Administration and Evaluation (**Gill Wylie, Rose Grant**)
- 12:30 – 13:00 *Supervisors to meet with mentors*
- 13:00 – 14:00 Lunch and closure

## **Appendix F: Tuesday evening workshops**

### **TAI Mentor Calendar of Activities for 2007 Eden Grove Seminar Room 1: 6pm -7pm (Tuesdays)**

<b>Workshop Dates</b>	<b>Workshops</b>	<b>Presenters</b>
17-18 February	Training Weekend	Various
27 February	Salary Details finalized Issues arising	Rose Grant, Gill Wylie,
13 March	Time Management	Rose Grant
27 March	Budget and Financial Management	Gill Wylie
<i>V A C A T I O N</i>		
17 April	Bill of Rights	Melissa Lewis
2 May	Communication Skills	Heather Yule
15 May	Stress Management	Sarah Green
<i>V A C A T I O N</i>		
31 July	Programme Evaluation	Rose Grant

## Appendix G: code of conduct and mentoring contract

### Trojan Academic Initiative (T.A.I.) Mentor Code of Conduct

As a Mentor in the Trojan Academic Initiative Mentor Programme at Rhodes University, I commit myself to behaviour that:

- always respects the dignity and rights of the mentee(s) with whom I will be working;
- respects the right to confidentiality of information regarding any interaction between myself and my mentee(s);
- is directed toward the growth and personal development of my mentee(s);
- is worthy of the trust placed in me by my mentee(s), Supervisor and the University;
- honours the contracts established between myself and my mentee(s), and myself and the T.A.I. Mentor Programme;
- recognizes the need for balance between my own academic and social commitments, with the needs of my mentee(s) and the requirements of the programme.

As part of that commitment, I will:

- be honest with my mentee(s) regarding what can be expected of me and seek to identify what my mentee(s) expect of me,
- **enter into a formal written contract between myself and my mentee(s),**
- **meet with my mentee(s), regularly and punctually as agreed in my contract with them,**
- make clear arrangements with my mentee(s) to facilitate communication between us,
- **meet with my Supervisor**  
.....
- contact my mentee(s) and Supervisor in good time if I am unable to keep an appointment or attend a pre-arranged meeting,
- **attend all development sessions** and Faculty-based Mentor meetings arranged for Mentors in the programme,
- **maintain a regular and complete journal** in which I shall record essential details\* (see below) of all contact with my mentee(s), and commitments to the Mentor programme (with due recognition of my mentee(s) rights to privacy and confidentiality),
- keep the boundaries of my relationship with my mentee(s) strictly within the requirements of the Mentor programme
- avoid any behaviour that may be construed as sexual harassment of my mentee(s)
- **submit my journal to my Supervisor** when requested to do so

- inform my Supervisor or, in an emergency, any other responsible University authority immediately should I be concerned for the safety or health of my mentee(s)
- refer my mentee(s) to professional assistance where necessary and support them in accessing that assistance
- inform my Supervisor or Co-ordinator immediately should I become aware of any issue which may impact on my continued participation in the Mentor programme.

\*(date, attendance, topics and other issues to be discussed with mentees).

Signed by.....(Mentor) and

.....(Supervisor)

on this.....day of .....2007, at Grahamstown.

# Mentoring Contract

The following is intended as a guideline/sample: adjust it to best fit your situation.

This is a critical part of your first discussion: DO IT, DON'T AVOID IT.

- The process of writing, clarification and agreement on expectations has proven to be one of the most valuable and powerful tools for helping the relationship to be mutually satisfying.

## The Process:

1. Print two copies of this form; one for you and one for your mentee.
2. At your next meeting, the mentor and mentee each completes the form individually.
3. Jointly review and discuss each person's answers and reach agreement.
4. Print a new copy of the form and have the mentor/mentee write in the agreed answer.
5. Both mentor and mentee sign and date the new copy of the form.
6. Both are responsible for keeping a copy of the form in their journal/diary and reviewing/updating it as the need arises.
7. One month from your first meeting, jointly review your agreed-to answers and give your mentoring relationship a check-up and agree to any needed changes.

What type of assistance does the mentee want from the mentor?	
What expectations does the mentor have of the mentee?	
What expectations does the mentee have of the mentor?	
How often will you meet? (weekly or fortnightly)	
When and where will you meet?	
For how long? (minimum time)	
Who will be responsible for scheduling your meetings?	
What will be the ground rules for your discussions? (e.g., confidentiality, openness, candour, truthfulness, etc)	

<p><b>If problems arise how will they be resolved?</b></p>	
<p><b>Are there any concerns the mentee wants discussed and resolved?</b></p>	
<p><b>Are there concerns the mentor wants discussed and resolved?</b></p>	
<p><b>We have agreed that our initial meetings will focus on these three topics:</b></p>	<p>1.</p> <p>2.</p> <p>3.</p>
<p><b>Any additional areas/issues you want to discuss and agree to?</b></p>	
<p><b>Mentee Signature</b></p>	<p><b>Date</b></p>
<p><b>Mentor Signature</b></p>	<p><b>Date</b></p>