

A model to revitalise teacher competence

First submission: 9 October 2008

Acceptance: 19 October 2009

South African education focuses on providing equal educational opportunities for all learners by way of inclusive education. This article attempts to address teachers' feelings of incompetence by developing a model to revitalise competence in teachers. The model is based on the teachers' affirmation that they were unable to efficiently implement the required educational change of including all learners in their inclusive classrooms within mainstream education. A qualitative approach, within a theory-generative design, was applied in this study. The article only describes the second phase of the project, namely that of designing a model (based on the findings of phase one), with the aim of empowering teachers to work more efficiently in inclusive classrooms.

'n Model om nuwe lewe in onderwysersbevoegdheid te blaas

Die Suid-Afrikaanse onderwys fokus op die daarstelling van gelyke opvoedkundige geleenthede vir almal, by wyse van inklusiewe onderwys. Hierdie artikel wil onderwysers se gevoel van onbevoegdheid aan die orde stel deur die ontwikkeling van 'n model om onderwysers se bevoegdheid te verhoog. Die model is gegrond op die onderwysers se versekering dat hulle nie oor die vermoë beskik om die vereiste onderwysveranderinge en die insluiting van alle leerders in hulle inklusiewe klaskamers in die hoofstroom onderwys te kan implementeer nie. 'n Kwalitatiewe benadering, binne 'n teorie-generatiewe ontwerp, is in die ondersoek aangewend. Die artikel beskryf slegs die tweede fase van die projek, naamlik van die modelontwerp (gebaseer op die bevindinge van die eerste fase), met die doel om onderwysers te bemagtig om meer doeltreffend in inklusiewe klaskamers te kan onderrig.

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Inclusive education has recently attained considerable prominence worldwide (Stainback & Stainback 2002: 23, Engelbrecht & Green 2001: 4). Since the 1990 world conference on “Education for All” was held in Jomtien, Thailand (Naicker 1999: 13-4), much international emphasis has been placed on the diversity of learners, and an international commitment to education for all learners, regardless of barriers to learning they experience or their abilities. In June 1994, an international conference on “Inclusive Education” was held in Spain, during which UNESCO adopted the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO 1994b), which declares inclusion to be a human right (Naicker 1994: 14).

Prior to 1994 political and historical influences in South Africa resulted in excluding learners with special educational needs – more recently referred to by Flack (2005: 319) as “learners with barriers to learning” – from mainstream schools, and accommodating them in special schools (DoE 1997: 22). However, the election of South Africa’s first democratic government in 1994 paved the way for the establishment of a single, equal, non-racial education system, aimed at correcting past imbalances (Fisher & Ladd 2005: 17).

Since 1994, a sequence of drastic, landmark educational changes have heralded an emphasis on human rights and the development and implementation of an inclusive education policy in South Africa (Landsberg *et al* 2005: 16, DoE 2002: 131, Engelbrecht & Green 2001: 4). Consequently, the new democracy gave rise to new legislation and policies to curb discrimination and the separation of learners who experience barriers to learning from other learners. The focus in South Africa shifted from the expectation that these learners had to adjust to the system to the requirement that the system should be sufficiently flexible to accommodate the diverse needs of these learners in order to alleviate their learning barriers in the inclusive classroom (DoE 2002: 131).

In 2001, the *Education white paper 6* (DoE 2001) provided a framework for inclusive education and training in South Africa (Alant & Casey 2005: 185, Engelbrecht & Green 2001: 4). The new government declared its commitment to provide educational opportunities for all learners, irrespective of culture, gender, race, language,

religion, ability, or infectious disease (including HIV/AIDS). This obligation was based on the premise that all learners, including those who experience barriers to learning, have the right to basic education and should have the opportunity to pursue their potential to the fullest (Fleish 2002: 41).

The policy of inclusion embraces the fact that inclusive classroom educators, namely the teachers, will be the primary resource for achieving the goal of an inclusive educational system. They are challenged to create “an enabling learning environment for all learners” (Engelbrecht & Green 2001: 47). However, recent changes and policies have created much ambiguity and confusion at both conceptual and strategic levels (DoE 2002: 66). The challenge facing many teachers in South Africa is that those trained prior to 2002 were not adequately prepared to cope with the diversity of learners who now enter their inclusive classrooms (Holz & Lessing 2004: 236). The latter was confirmed in recent telephonic conversations with colleagues from three universities. It is clear that learner support strategies for the inclusive classroom were slowly introduced into the syllabus of teacher training programmes from 2002 to 2007. In this regard Engelbrecht & Green (2007: 61) point out that many teachers in South Africa have not yet acquired the skills to create a different, accepting classroom atmosphere, since they only have experience of authoritarian and critical classrooms.

In addition, schools may not have the necessary facilities or equipment needed by teachers in an inclusive classroom. Those learners who do not experience any barriers to learning in the inclusive classroom could be neglected, due to all the extra time and attention needed by learners who do experience barriers to learning (Flack 2005: 319, Engelbrecht & Green 2001: 147). In fact, inequalities continue to prevail between and in many South African schools, causing more frustration for many teachers (Fox *et al* 2007: 45). Yet it is agreed that the “role of the inclusive classroom teacher is essential in the outcome of quality education” (Ibrahim 2003: 45). The realities discussed above might impact negatively on the teachers’ morale. In this regard, new ways of thinking and behaving will have to be developed through ap-

appropriately designed strategies for teachers teaching in an inclusive classroom (Vlachou 1997: 3).

Andy Hargreaves (2004 & 1994) and Michael Fullan (2004, 2000 & 1993) have written extensively on the meaning and culture of educational change and its effects on teachers, based on their research. Hargreaves (2004: xi) refers to education amidst major change as “education in the age of insecurity”, which in itself is demanding and challenging. Yet teachers are expected to adjust to new models in the inclusive classroom and work more pro-actively and productively (Fullan 1993). Teachers require the right attitude for this.

Teachers are increasingly expected to provide instruction to a diverse learner population. However, many practising teachers in South Africa have not been professionally trained and equipped for teaching in an inclusive classroom. The question then arises whether in-service teachers are adequately equipped to face the demands of inclusive education. Therefore, the first phase of the research involved an empirical study to investigate how teachers experience and perceive inclusive education, and to determine their needs in this regard.

The empirical investigation of phase one was based on the conceptual framework of an eco-systemic approach that illustrates the interaction between all levels of the system in inclusive education (Engelbrecht *et al* 1999). The research was based on a constructivist, interpretive foundation. A qualitative naturalistic, interactive, inductive, exploratory, emergent, flexible, holistic, descriptive, contextual and interpretive approach was followed. The technique of purposive sampling was employed to involve the participants.

The data were collected by means of open-ended personal interviews with eleven teachers, selected by means of specific criteria to include teachers from both gender groups, including Afrikaans-, English- and Xhosa-speaking teachers, with between twelve and thirty-five years' experience. In addition, observations in classrooms and field notes contributed to triangulation. The collected data (tape recordings) were transcribed *verbatim*. Transcripts were analysed and coded into meaningful themes and categories (Neuman 2003). This happened systematically, according to the strategy suggested by Tesch

(Creswell 1994: 155). Two prominent themes with categories and sub-categories were identified, namely that teachers are not in favour of inclusive education for various reasons, and that they have specific needs regarding the successful implementation of inclusive education.

Measures were applied to ensure the trustworthiness of the research, as suggested by Guba (Lincoln & Guba 1985). Note was also taken of ethical considerations, namely informed consent, and the privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of the participants.

Based on the findings of the empirical research done in phase one, the study embarked on phase two, namely the design of a model of in-service intervention to assist teachers with their challenging task, by changing their mindset to believe that they are competent and proficient to do their job, namely to teach effectively in the inclusive classroom.

For the purpose of this article, only the structural description of the model (phase two of the research) will be discussed.

1. Research problem

The research question is formulated as follows: What model can be designed to better equip in-service teachers for the challenges of their current teaching task in an inclusive classroom? The rationale for this question is based on the following argument. The policy of inclusive education is, broadly speaking, concerned with minimising barriers to learning from whatever source, and mobilising the resources that support equal opportunities for all learners (Engelbrecht & Green 2001: 4). The authors believe that all classrooms in South Africa are inclusive classrooms, due to the complexity of our past and our present educational situation. All learners can experience some kind of barrier to learning at some stage of their development, whether it is an emotional, behavioural, physical or scholastic barrier to learning. Therefore no classroom is barrier-free and the principles of inclusive education are relevant to all classrooms, whether or not the learners exhibit obvious barriers to learning. Schools are expected to adjust in order to accommodate and adopt a sense of ownership regarding all learners, irrespective of the barriers to learning they experience and their educational needs (Smith 1998: 23). In the ideal inclusive classroom,

teachers must be able to work with all learners, including those who experience barriers to learning. This requires special skills and calls for distinctive competence from teachers (DoE 2002: 66).

South African teachers are hampered by the fact that they are not properly empowered to teach in an inclusive classroom (Theron & Nel 2005: 237, Fisher & Frey 2003: 157). Due to the lack of equipment and competence required for inclusive education, their task is becoming increasingly demanding, causing them to experience feelings of incompetence, intolerance, confusion, frustration and despondence (Holz & Lessing 2004: 236). In phase one of our study (the investigation into how teachers experience and perceive inclusive education, and what their needs were in this regard) it was confirmed that teachers feel incompetent with regard to their ability to teach in the inclusive classroom (Williams 2007: 122). This article does not aim to report the findings of phase one, but rather to respond to the findings by designing a model to address teachers' feelings of incompetence with regard to inclusive education. In empowering in-service teachers for the challenges and responsibilities of an inclusive classroom (Ebersohn & Eloff 2006: 457, Alant & Casey 2005: 185), their professional competence should be further developed (Fisher & Frey 2003: 157). This would include aspects such as self-perception, and their approach to teaching responsibilities in inclusive education (Spinelli 2002: 3, Wood 2002: 168).

2. Research design

A qualitative, emerging, inductive, interpretive (Creswell 2007: 52, Neuman 2003: 537, Holliday 2002: 88), and theory-generative approach was selected (McKenna 1997: 199) for the purpose of designing a training model to better equip in-service teachers. Theory generation entails both a design and a data collection method (De Vos 1998: 81). The research was based on the perceptions of participating teachers (Mouton 2001: 193, Wiersma 2000: 1) regarding the challenges they currently face in their classrooms.

The research was underpinned and steered by a constructivist paradigm, attempting to construct understanding and meaning of

the reality and lived experiences of teachers (Rodwell 1998: 27). The steps of model design were employed during the research (Dickoff & James 1992: 103), based on the work of Chinn & Kramer (1995: 77-123) and Walker & Avant (1995: 38), in order to construct the theory for the model design.

3. Research methodology

This included the following five steps (Wood & Olivier 2008: 240):

3.1 Concept identification

The main aim is to identify the central concept of the model (cf Wood & Olivier 2008: 240). From the findings of the data collection and analysis of phase one (Step 1), it was obvious that participants viewed inclusive education as impractical and therefore perceived it negatively (Williams 2007: 122). This led to the participants feeling incompetent, discontented, incapable and despondent, as confirmed by the research of Holz & Lessing (2004: 237). They were of the opinion that they were simply not adequately equipped and empowered to work in an inclusive setting. They also expressed the need for support in order to execute their challenging task (Theron & Nel 2005: 221).

Revitalising competence was identified as the key concept of our study, based on both the analysis of the data obtained from our research and a study of the relevant literature, on which the model for teachers was consequently based. This key concept encompasses what is needed to combat the teachers' feelings of incompetence and disempowerment. Revitalised competence invites facilitation to ensure that the teachers are able to meet complex demands successfully and with confidence (Johns & Freshwater 1998: 141).

According to Kessler & Strasburg (2005: 19-21), teacher competence provides a focus for development and performance, as well as skills identification and people development. It also provides a set of key behaviours that teachers may use to increase their effectiveness, capability to reach goals, passion and creativity. It also serves as a source of inspiration to others.

3.2 Concept definition and classification

The idea of revitalising competence was subjected to additional definitions and classifications in order to clarify its nature and to specify the context and situation in which it is to be applied (Chinn & Cramer 1995: 107). Concept definition took place by applying the three-step method, as explained by Wandelt & Stuart (1975: 64-8), namely dictionary definitions, applicable subject definitions, and “real live” example definitions. Step 2 involved the in-depth analysis of the identified concept of Step 1, for the sake of clarity, uncertainty and a conceptual definition.

According to Chinn & Kramer (1995: 106; 110), definitions indicate how verbal representations of a concept are expressed in empiric reality and the meanings for the concepts afford the theory its distinctive character. Each term in the key concept, namely revitalising and competence, was defined by applying general and subject-related definitions. A list of defining attributes (main features, elements) were then identified and reduced in terms of the essential and related criteria for each term as well as the complete key concept. Essential criteria represent the criteria that “must be present in order for the concept to exist” (Wood 2004: 167). Related criteria further elucidated and explained the essential criteria.

The essential criteria that were identified as most suitable for describing revitalising competence were restoration of confidence, rejuvenation, proficiency through professional development, and re-inspiration, all of which happens within the framework of reflective practice.

The process of reflective practice relates to having time to engage in sustained consideration and retrospection (or “stock-taking”) of the ongoing process, to think about and form an opinion on its strengths and weaknesses, its successes and failures. The purpose of reflective practice is to improve teaching. By reflecting on what they do in the inclusive classroom and during the intervention, teachers develop the practice of questioning themselves, with the specific intention to advance their teaching (Fletcher 2000: 100).

Quality education is not possible without reflective practice. Craft (2000: 52) cautions that reflective practice can never take place

in a vacuum; it should always be supported by evidence. Teachers should therefore challenge themselves with regard to their inclusive education practice and seek original and improved teaching methods to ensure that all learners, irrespective of their diverse needs, make optimal progress. Reflective practice, therefore, is a dynamic and continuing process in teaching to guarantee quality education.

A theoretical definition of the concept of revitalising competence was then formed by employing the essential and related criteria. It was concluded that the concept revitalising competence signifies four interdependent processes, which should be facilitated simultaneously:

- Reinstating competence invites facilitation to equip teachers to meet complex demands successfully and confidently. A shift towards the correction of existing unsatisfactory circumstances and behaviour should take place, referred to as restoration of confidence.
- Teachers should also be energised to carry out tasks with enthusiasm, passion and exuberance. This can take place by a process of rejuvenation (Pollard 2002: 73).
- By means of a process of training, re-direction, redevelopment, reflection and commitment, they will learn to adapt to new trends, attain goals and perform better than previously (Rychen & Tiana 2004: 12). A continuous process of change and growth will take place, referred to as proficiency through professional development.
- Their performance, capability and effectiveness will serve as re-inspiration (Adaire 2005: 39) to themselves and other teachers.
- All four processes occur within the framework of reflective practice (Rhodes *et al* 2004: 56).

Ultimately the four essential criteria were illustrated by means of a model case narrative. A conceptual definition of revitalising competence was generated. It implies that teacher confidence needs to be restored; they need to become rejuvenated with energy and enthusiasm (Fox *et al* 2007: 50); they need to use opportunities for professional development in order to enhance their proficiency, and their creativity and competence should inspire their colleagues.

In addition, the key concept was evaluated against the following four criteria (Morse & Field 1996: 385): Is it clearly defined? Are its features properly demarcated? Are the pre-conditions and outcomes properly spelled out? Are the conceptual boundaries transparent?

The key concept was also classified in terms of who executes the activity? – the agent. Who is the receiver? – the recipient. In what setting is the activity performed? – the context. What is the end-goal of the activity? – the terminus. What course of action does the activity pursue? – the procedure. What serves as a catalyst of energy for the activity? – the dynamics (Williams 2007: 181).

The relationships between the sub-concepts in Figure 1 will now be clarified. In addition, the interactions between these concepts need to be described, illustrating the manner in which they form the basis of the model.

3.3 Construction of relationship statements

In this study, the key concept was identified, analysed and categorised into essential criteria in Steps 1 and 2 (Wood & Olivier 2008: 242). These were structured in an orderly manner (McKenna 1997: 55) and positioned in relationship with each other to reduce vagueness, and to make them easier to interpret. Relationship statements identify the effect of one concept on another (Walker & Avant 1995: 25), and are concerned with the type of relationship that exists between the concepts of a theory or model and predict the nature of the interactions between these concepts (Chin & Cramer 1995: 96, Walker & Avant 1995: 25). They are often viewed as the “skeleton” or “nucleus” of the theory, the property whereby everything hangs together (Walker & Avant 1995: 82, Burns & Grové 1999: 137). Relationship statements indicate the links between the concepts. They explain whether the concepts are autonomous or whether they need to occur together, and identify the effect of one concept on another (Fawcett 2003: 20). Relationship statements indicate how concepts are linked and how they should form a whole, as the ideas of the theory interconnect (McKenna 1997: 55). They are therefore applied in order to structure the concepts into a theoretical system.

It is essential to view theoretical relationships within the specific context of the model, in this instance the revitalisation of competence. This will assist in empowering the teachers to teach within inclusive settings. Table 1 explains how these criteria relate to each other in order to create the concept of revitalising competence.

Table 1: Essential and related criteria of the concept revitalising competence

Essential criteria	Related criteria
Restoration of confidence	Repair, revive, reinstate, reform Restore latent capability Develop confidence in one's abilities
Rejuvenation	Invigorate, refresh and revive strength Energised Gusto, <i>joie de vivre</i> , pizzazz Vivacity, exuberance Enthusiasm
Proficiency through further professional development	Reform and redirect efforts Retrain to improve performance Devise new strategies to attain new goals Affirm worthiness and show commitment Process of achieving continuous improvement in performance Take personal responsibility for one's actions Ability, know-how, expertise to meet complex demands Able to meet performance standards Progress towards a deliberate, reflective and holistic approach Professional and personal growth, culminating in job-satisfaction Inspire others by means of creativity, capability and performance and by attaining goals
Re-inspiration	Strong relationship with others Stimulate courage, adaptation and commitment

3.4 Description, discussion and evaluation of the model

The model was structured and described in context (Wood & Olivier 2008: 243), and subjected to an expert review and evaluation. Once the concepts and criteria were identified, classified and placed into relationship statements, the focus turned to the description of the structure of

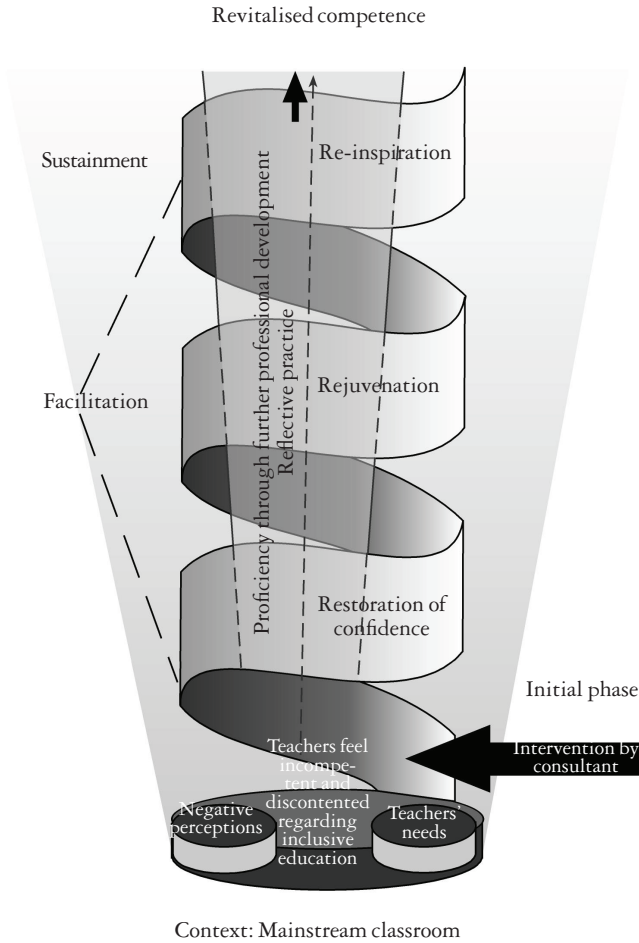
the model as it represented the theoretical concepts (McKenna 1997: 12). A model is a conceptual tool designed to display innovative structuring in order to obtain a perspective on, and deal with, complexities (Chinn & Kramer 1995: 106). The model was based on the relationships between relevant concepts and criteria (Chinn & Kramer 1995: 112). The model emerged as a diagram, bearing the main aim in mind, namely to revitalise competence in teachers, to enable them to work more efficiently in their challenging inclusive classroom settings.

The descriptive elements, explained by Chinn & Kramer (1995: 127), were employed as a means to evaluate the model, using the following criteria: how clear (understandable), simple (straightforward), general (scope for applicability), accessible (available) and important (imperative) the model is. The description of the model was structured according to the following elements: purpose (to empower in-service teachers); assumptions (the underlying notion that in-service teachers need to be empowered further); context (the current challenging mainstream teaching setting of in-service teachers); the theoretical definitions of concepts (of step 2); the construction of relationship statements between concepts (of step 3); the structural description (of step 4), and process (the operationalisation in terms of the initiation, facilitation and sustainment phases of step 5) (Chinn & Kramer 1995: 106-19).

The model was cautiously scrutinised by professional specialists in the field of research, theory generation and model design during an academic seminar across different faculties of the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University (NMMU). Several consultations also took place with individual academics at the university who were experienced researchers. The suggested revisions and adjustments were performed and the structure and description have been refined accordingly. The model is illustrated in such a way that it schematises specific meanings in the teaching context (cf Figure 1).

The schematic model is read from the bottom upwards. It indicates that the teachers lack confidence, are discontented and feel incompetent (as illustrated by the shape of the figure, depicting an empty glass) (Williams 2007: 202). The small circle on the bottom left refers to the negative perceptions teachers display regarding

Figure 1: Diagram of a model to revitalise competence



inclusive education. The small circle on the bottom right marks the fact that teachers have certain needs with regard to the implementation of inclusive education. This implies that an intervention is needed and that it is essential that it should take place, because of the negative perceptions and feelings, as well as the prevailing needs of teachers (Alant & Casey 2005: 185). Regarding structured interventions, Hastings & Beck (2004) contend that “implementing any form of more structured intervention appears to have a positive impact over no support.”

Revitalising competence is achieved through the intervention of a trained consultant with specialised skills and knowledge, of the specific context, beginning with reflective practice. The consultant is portrayed by the dark arrow at the bottom right of the model.

The consultant will steer the process of revitalising competence in teachers. S/he will initiate contact with the school and recruit teachers for exposure to the model. This will serve as the initiation phase. The consultant will initiate the process by using applicable experiential learning techniques within a group setting. The process of revitalising competence involves the four interrelated processes of (essential criteria for) revitalising competence, namely the restoration of confidence; rejuvenation; proficiency through further professional development, and re-inspiration. All this is happening within the framework of reflective practice.

The main structures constituting the schematic model (cf Figure 1) illustrate what the teachers experience (in the form of an empty glass), as the model is directed at transforming the teacher's incompetence and discontentment to reach revitalised competence (the full glass). This phase is referred to as the phase of facilitation and is demarcated with a dotted line on the left-hand side of the model.

The processes (represented by the spiral ribbon) of restoration of confidence, rejuvenation and re-inspiration will be reinforced by the process of growing proficiency, by means of further professional development (the central pillar). All of this should be happening within the framework of continuous reflective practice (represented by the dotted arrow, running through the centre of the model, from

the bottom to the top of the glass). The ribbon represents the teachers' perceptions, attitudes and feelings, and the pillar their need for skills and knowledge in order to teach in an inclusive classroom.

The restoration of confidence, represented by the lowest section of the spiralled ribbon, involves the acquisition of self-reliance. This will enable the teacher to gain a positive attitude and develop confidence in his/her own abilities. As the teacher becomes more confident, s/he will become re-charged to be able to function more effectively. Rejuvenation is represented by the central section of the spiralled ribbon and takes place by means of a process of invigoration to revive the teacher's strength and efficiency, leaving him/her feeling refreshed to carry on his/her task with enthusiasm and energy.

The top section of the spiral ribbon represents the process of re-inspiration. Teachers will hopefully become infused with energy and be able to inspire others by their performance, confidence and efficiency. In this regard, the idea of researchers (Fox *et al* 2007: 45, Hastings & Beck 2004: 1338) of peer-run group support and networks is useful. Strong relationships with peers may influence the attitudes and performance of colleagues and help them to perform more confidently and competently. Teachers will feel that they can influence others positively and inspire them to become committed to efficient teaching within the inclusive classroom.

The fourth stage, namely proficiency through further professional development, with a focus on improved skills and knowledge, is represented by the strong central pillar running throughout the length of the model. The teachers will be helped to repair and reinstate their abilities and expertise to meet complex demands. The teachers will also restore their capabilities and performance in order to meet performance standards in an inclusive classroom, resulting in personal and professional growth.

The three parts of the ribbon and the pillar running lengthwise through the centre of the model schematise that the four essential criteria for revitalising competence are all integrated, interdependent and do not occur separately. They have to develop simultaneously, as each process reinforces the other. Therefore, they cannot be arranged in chronological, or linear sequential order.

The teacher will at the same time be aided with re-training, devising new strategies to attain goals as well as professional and personal growth by means of new skills and knowledge. The process of proficiency by means of further professional development (schematised by the pillar running through the middle of the spiralled ribbon) continues even after revitalisation of competence has been achieved. This is indicated by the arrow at the top of the pillar, which proceeds into the area at the top, representing revitalised competence.

The abovementioned stages or processes will all be progressing and sustained within the framework of reflective practice, which should be initiated in order to facilitate introspection and retrospection. The teachers will be assisted by means of a process of retrospection and constantly reflecting on their teaching experience in an inclusive classroom and their professional and personal development, in order to learn from their experiences and improve their practice. Reflective practice is integral to the implementation of the four processes applied in this model.

Initially, the consultant will play a significant role in facilitating the process and assisting the teachers to reflect. However, as the teachers develop through the four components, the consultant will become progressively redundant. The teachers will gradually develop the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes to proceed with the process without consultation. Teachers who are “internally focussed” and aware of their assets and capacities, as well as the advocacy of teachers, can serve as an impetus for sustainability (Ebersohn & Eloff 2006: 462). This represents the phase of sustainment at the top of the glass representing the teachers, feeling incompetent (at the bottom of the figure), gradually feeling “enlightened” at the top of the glass. This schematises that the teachers are starting to continue the process independently, to become further revitalised and competent. This indicates that revitalised competence will have a positive effect on the teachers, who will hopefully display increased confidence, a better self-concept, contentment, greater energy and stamina, increased performance and higher proficiency.

Revitalisation of competence needs to be developed and sustained on an on-going basis. This on-going process of sustainment,

schematised by the short arrow at the top of the central pillar, the dotted lines on both sides of the rim at the top of the glass, as well as the continuation of the dotted arrow at the top of the ribbon, ensures that teachers sustain their revitalised confidence in an inclusive classroom.

3.5 Guidelines for operationalisation of the model

It is suggested that guidelines be developed for the successful implementation and operationalisation of the schematic model in practice (Wood & Olivier 2008: 249), in particular for in-service teachers. In addition, guidelines for a training programme for the specific area of operation, namely in the sphere of inclusive teaching, is suggested. This should be explained in terms of objectives and strategies for each of the phases, namely initiation, facilitation and sustainment. This is not presented in detail due to the limited scope of this article. However, a very brief description will now follow.

3.5.1 Initial phase

This phase is vitally important. The consultant must be suitably equipped and should have knowledge and experience of the model. The objectives during this phase are to ensure that the consultant takes full responsibility for the process and that s/he should create an environment conducive to group work. Strategies to reach these objectives during this phase should ensure that the consultant obtains approval. S/he should prepare to facilitate group interaction by driving the process and helping to maintain focus.

3.5.2 Facilitation phase

During this phase, the consultant must ensure that the group works well together and that the skills are employed to ensure development and growth. The group members should focus on attaining set goals. The objectives for this phase will be to immerse teachers in a network of interpersonal relationships and to promote the revitalisation of competence in the group members (the teachers) by means of guided reflection. These goals will be achieved by ensuring that the consultant maintains effective interpersonal and working relationships within the group, through a process of guiding and assisting. S/he should identify aspects

relevant to the goal of revitalising competence in teachers and intervene to assist the group members in making relevant changes.

3.5.3 Sustainability phase

Since revitalising competence is an ongoing process, the revitalised competence needs to be sustained once the facilitation phase is completed. It is vital, therefore, that the consultant should prepare the group members to take responsibility for continued development and sustainability. During this phase the focus should be on applying all learning in practice, through facilitation, by ensuring that teachers are able to implement what they have learnt through the intervention process. Monitoring by the consultant, as well as the teachers themselves, should occur on a regular basis and according to clear criteria, determined and set by the consultant, as part of the evaluation of the intervention, in order to maintain effective behaviour.

4. Conclusion

This article explained the development of a model to revitalise competence in teachers teaching in an inclusive classroom, using a theory-generative design, consisting of five consecutive, but integrated steps. The revitalisation of competence in teachers is needed in order for them to be able to develop the necessary competence (attitudes, skills and knowledge) to implement inclusive education successfully. The value of the model lies in its applicability to other similar challenging teaching contexts.

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