CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 EMERGING RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES WITHIN "THE POSTMODERN"

As the "modernist project" began to dwindle, and as the new postmodern planning theories developed during the past few decades, i.e. the "communicative turn in planning" and the emerging focus on people, human action, planning practice (and power), the theory and practice of research methodology in the field of planning also went through a similar transformation. Not only did the new planning theories prompt new debates and propositions on planning and planning theory, but they also opened up new and more diverse postmodern approaches to research, specifically in the social sciences.

Notwithstanding the general critique on the modernist (planning) approach with its rigid, scientific, structural and rational focus (as discussed in Chapter 2), this approach was also criticised for dominating certain types of research and for not describing human action satisfactorily. This critique, supported and contextualised by the emerging focus on social rationality and "the postmodern", (re)directed the focus of planning research - towards studying planning practice, human action and the complex web of social and power relations. As planning became more concerned with the social sciences (and more part of it), planners increasingly started adopting more of the qualitative methods that were developed and applied by social sciences, specifically within the context of "the postmodern" (Allmendinger 2001). As Watson (2001) argues, "the postmodern" created a space for the emergence of new thinking and the ascendancy of new theoretical claims. Sayer in Allmendinger (2001: 211) qualifies postmodern methodology (within the context of social theory) as a methodology/ and approach that *"refuses all talk of truth and falsity; denies any relationship between thought and the world; rejects the possibility of empirical testing; asserts that we do not 'discover' things empirically but constitute them socially and theoretically; prioritises local knowledge over foundational metatheories; relativizes cultural differences"*[1].

This social focus on planning research and the open and flexible postmodern approaches, raised a concern (amongst others from the old school planners who were moulded in the modernist planning paradigm), that planning would not be able to achieve "scientific results" through social, qualitative research (Forester and Hoch 1996). Harrison (1998) however argues that pragmatists could recognize and adopt many of the potential contributions of postmodernism and still avoid

[1] See also Innes (1995); Allmendinger (2001); and Watson (2001) on the new postmodern types of planning methodology.

those elements of postmodernism that leave planners less able to act effectively. Allmendinger (2001:211-212) also recognises the challenge and concerns regarding the new types of postmodern methodology and discusses ways in which pragmatism and hermeneutics could be applied in postmodern research.

Allmendinger (2001:212) briefly explains the commonalities and the differences between pragmatism and the postmodern and the overlaps between pragmatic thinking and postmodernism. Pragmatic planning theory does not require necessary and certain knowledge - but reasons, descriptions, and beliefs - that others can recognise, understand, and use to guide their actions (Hoch 1996: 32). Hoch in Allmendinger (2001: 212) states that *"pragmatism does not tell us what ends to pursue, but offers a kind of inquiry that compares the value of different courses of action alternatively weighing means and ends - facts and values. It binds together what dualistic thinking keeps apart - knowledge and action or, perhaps a bit more precisely, theoretical reflection and common sense".* Hoch (1996) on Rorty further argues that pragmatists do not find the correspondence between truth and practice, but identify and describe the consequences of action. Hoch (1996: 32) further states that pragmatic orientation provides important insights for the reconstruction of a type of planning that can resist the encroachment of coercive power relations (the core component of this study). Although there are different types of pragmatism (Hoch; Allmendinger; Rorty; and Dewey), the type most applicable to this study (and naturalistic and postmodern research) relates to pragmatic phenomenology and hermeneutics.

Phenomenology promotes the belief that people should be studied free of any preconceived theories or suppositions about how they act (Allmendinger 2001: 214). Hermeneutics on the other hand is more concerned with, *"looking for the meaning behind actions - looking for an appreciation of why things take place rather than trying to explain it"* (Allmendinger 2001: 214; see also McBurney 1994; Hoch and Forester 1996). Pragmatic phenomenology and hermeneutics, like the postmodern, are based on the premise that *"human knowledge is subjective"*. This involves suspending the observer's view of *the world* so as not to contaminate interpretation (Allmendinger 2001: 213; see also Hoch and Forester 1996; Yiftachel and Huxley 2000; and Rorty and Dewey). Pragmatic phenomenology and hermeneutics as a methodological approach, is primarily associated with the so-called participant observation methods and detailed ethnographic studies (and social inquiry) where the researcher becomes part of the world of the subject being studied (see also Moore 1987; Jorgenson 1989; Yin 1994 and Harris and Judd 2002). Rorty refers to *pragmatic inquiry* which critically compares the relative efficacy of different varieties of speech and actions which people use to identify, meet and interpret their goals (Yiftachel and Huxley 2000).

Forester (1996: 512) states that science is a cultural form of argument, not a valueless, passionless use of magical techniques (so often found in the rational modernist paradigm). "*Instead of vying with one another to establish the definite rational model, we may do well to settle for the more modest expectations of critical pragmatism*" (Hoch 1996: 43).

3.2 THE PRACTICE MOVEMENT, PHRONESIS AND POWER

So far much has been said about the communicative turn in planning; the new theories, debates and propositions on planning; and the emerging postmodern planning methodologies. Within the context of these new theories and trends, and the new realisation of the lifeworld, it is obvious that a new interest and focus had to develop on the study of practice, the study of human action and behaviour, specifically within the complex web of social and power relations - as is evident in the work of Flyvbjerg (1998 a and b and 2001); Watson (2001); Allmendinger (2001); Hillier (2002); and Lapintie (2002).

This new focus on the study of practice (and people) has gained much attention in recent years and reference is made to *"practice writing"* or the so-called *"practice movement"*. Although *"the practice movement"* is regarded as new theory (Watson 2001), it is more *a* new movement or trend, or a new type of research methodology. The practice movement is not only associated with the study and description of practices and experiences, but also the interpretation and analysis of practice, in such a way that theories are challenged and new propositions are developed (see also Innes and Forester in Watson 2001). Innes (1995: 183) in Watson (2001) also refers to *"the new type of planning theorists"* as those *"who take practice as the raw material of their inquiry"*. She further argues that context-bound accounts of planning practice can give a better insight into the nature and possibilities of planning practice than the previous theories were able to do (Watson 2001). Today, many planning theorists such as Forester, Healey, Watson, Hoch and Innes hold a dominant position within the practice movement[2].

Within the context of the practice movement, Flyvbjerg (2001) in his recent book *"Making Social Science Matter"* presents a contemporary view of the Aristotelian concept of *phronesis*, which can be translated as *"prudence"* or *"practical wisdom"*. He argues that *phronesis* or as he refers to it as *"phronetic social science"* is related to the highest, *"expert"* level of learning as described by the Dreyfus model. According to Flyvbjerg (2001: 63), this phronetic social science is associated with a focus on values; a closeness of authors to the object of their study; a focus on details of practices that "*make up the basic concerns of life"*; extensive use of case studies; the use of narrative as

[2] According to Campbell and Fainstain (1996: 4) most of these theorists were inspired by Habermas.

revelatory tool; and a dialogical slant that allows for other voices than that of the author to be heard. This type of research (similar to the practice movement) is unequivocally practice-oriented as it primarily focuses on practical activity and practical knowledge in everyday situations (Flyvbjerg 2001:134).

This type of practice writing or *phronetic research* has become specifically appropriate in the study of power relations - as is evident by the works of Flyvbjerg (1998), and Watson (2001). Flyvbjerg (2001), largely based on Foucault's power theories, and his former study of power in the City of Aalborg (Flyvbjerg 1998 a and b), combines the principle of power with that of *phronesis*. Within the context of this added (power) dimension, he emphasises *"practical knowledge and practical ethics"* (Flyvbjerg 2001:56) and argues that *phronesis* is a *"sense of the ethical practical"* (Ibid 57). According to Flyvbjerg (2001) this proposition implies that practice is interpreted historically and in terms of politics and ethics. This underscores the need for researchers to use a methodology that takes account of the complex and unstable process according to which discourses can be both an instrument of power and its effect..." (ibid 124).

The relationship between the study of practice and power is further supported and illustrated by the works of Foucault. Foucault in Faubion (1994:10) refers to *"the archaeological and genealogical methods of research*" and his desire to write *"histories of the present"* and histories about practices and institutions (and power). Foucault's *"histories of experience"* were based on the perception that *"something is terribly wrong (intolerable) in the present"* (e.g. current social circumstances in an institution). His primary goal was not to understand the past, but to understand the present - or to use an understanding of the past to understand something that is wrong in the present. However whereas, the *archaeological method* is more concerned with writing the history of thought (as is evident in Foucault's book *"The Archaeology of Knowledge"* (Foucault 1969, translated by Sheridan in 1972) his *genealogical approach* is specifically related with the analysis of power and power relations and the imposition of power on bodies (See also Foucault in Faubion 1994:10). Foucault also supports the argument that the study of practice and power should be from the bottom up and not the top down (Allmendinger 2001). His theory that states that power is omnipresent in the everyday life further highlights the relationship between the study of practice and power. There seems to be some agreement that any analysis of power must not be done from a specific context - it must proceed from the diversity and uniqueness of the social and political contexts under consideration (Kogler 1996: 219; Flyvbjerg 1998; Watson 2001; and Hillier 2002: 47).

3.3 EXPLORING THE PRACTICE AND POWERS IN THE CITY OF TSHWANE THROUGH NATURALISTIC CASE STUDY RESEARCH

The Tshwane study is about people, people's behaviour, social and power relations between different people – it is about what people say; how and why they do and say certain things; how and why they act in a certain way; how they feel; etc. It is a story of people and change in a specific local authority (*real life* situation) during a 12 year time period. The Tshwane study is inherently a study of planning practice and power - hence the rationale for locating the study within the ambit of the practice movement, phronesis and the pragmatic phenomenology and hermeneutics as discussed in the foregoing paragraphs.

This type of practice writing is also typical of the naturalistic/ qualitative research methods[3] found in the social sciences and more specifically the case study method[4]. Gillham (2000: 5) states that the naturalistic style of case study research is a legitimate method of inquiry that makes it appropriate to study human phenomena in the *lifeworld*. Erlandson *et al* (1993: 14) refers to the shift to the new naturalistic paradigm that assumes that there are multiple realities, with differences among them that cannot be resolved through rational processes. Qualitative methods enable the case study researcher to carry out an investigation where other methods - such as experiments - are either not practical or not ethically justifiable. These methods have the potential to explore complexities that are beyond the scope of more controlled approaches. This seek to 'get under the skin' of a group or organisation - to find out what really happens and to see the case from the inside (Gillham 2001:11). Case study research stresses the holistic examination of phenomena (and the real life) and seeks to avoid separation of components from the larger context (Gillham 2001: 11; see also Yin 1994: 3; Erlandson *et al* 1993: 14; Flyvbjerg 2001:135 and Watson 2001).

The value of case study research is further underscored by Flyvbjerg who describes case study research as *"a method of learning"* and a process which produces the type of knowledge that makes it possible to progress from the lower levels of human learning to the higher levels (Flyvbjerg 2001:71). He (ibid 82) further argues that detailed closeness to real-life situations offered by *phronesis* case studies is helpful in developing a nuanced view of reality.

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[3] Tuffy *et al* (1996: 4) (based on a definition of Robert Emerson on field research) defines qualitative research as: *"the study of people in their natural environments as they go about their daily lives. It tries to understand how people live, how they talk and behave, and what captivates and distresses them...More importantly, it strives to understand the meaning people's words and behaviours have for them".*

[4] Yin (1994: 13) defines a case study as an empirical enquiry that *"investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real - life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident*" See also definitions by Moore (1987); Gillham (2000: 1); and Moore and Ormrod (2001:149).

Unlike some of the traditional social research methods such as historical research, case study research as defined above has the ability to cover a wider range of contextual conditions, through multiple sources of evidence and a range of research methods (Gillham 2000:13; Moore 1987; and McBurney 1994; and Yin 1994)[5]. It is not only an all-encompassing research method but also a primary research method in its own right (Yin 1994:8).

Participant-observation

Participant-observation is a very common and popular case study method, specifically in cases where the researcher is in the setting in some active sense - perhaps even working there. This method is all about "keeping your ears and eyes open", noticing things that you might normally overlook (Gillham 2000; see also Moore (1987); Erlandson *et al* (1993:28 - 29); and Hoyle, Harris and Judd (2002:392). Through participant observation, it is possible to describe what goes on, how things occur - at least from the standpoint of participants (Jorgenson 1989:12). This method creates the distinctive opportunity to view or perceive the reality from the viewpoint of someone from "inside" the case study (Yin 1994:87). This participant-observation method has exceptional value for studies, which focus on processes, relationships between people and events, continuities over time and patterns (Jorgenson 1989: 12; and Moore 1987). The method is appropriate for exploratory studies, descriptive studies and studies aimed at generating theoretical interpretations or critically examining theories and other claims of knowledge. Ultimately, the methodology aims to generate practical and theoretical truths about human life grounded in the realities of daily existence (Jorgenson 1989: 14).

Based on these characteristics of the participant-observation method, compared with the specific naturalistic nature of the Tshwane case, it is evident that the participant-observation method was an appropriate method to be used in the Tshwane study. What makes this method more relevant and appropriate is the fact that the researcher (as a participant and observer) was working in (and with) the environment (real life) which he was observing and studying. Throughout the research period, the researcher (as a planner and manager in the planning department) was continuously and regularly part of many discussion sessions, negotiations, workshops, meetings and debates related to urban planning - and an integral part of the web of power relations. This made it possible for the researcher to "observe as a participant" and to record these observations.

[5] Yin (1994:78) refers to the six sources of evidence that characterise the multi method approach, namely documents, archival information, interviews, direct observation, participant observation, and physical artifacts. See also Gillham (2000:13); Moore (1987);and McBurney (1994) on the case study methods.

According to Yin (1994: 87) there are various ways in which a researcher/participant observer can participate - from merely observing (from the outside), having casual interactions, to actually participating actively in the functional activities. The participant observation method followed in Tshwane was a purposeful, planned and structured endeavour that implied the active involvement, participation and observation of the real life, while actively involved with it, or actually working there - an *in sito* type of participant observation. Some of the observations of the Tshwane case were however also done from 'the outside', at a later stage, after the events had taken place. This type of *ex post facto* or *retrospective* participant observation is primarily concerned with writing about, and explaining things/phenomenon that you (as a former participant or worker in the particular environment) have observed and experienced some time ago. This method although less structured and more passive provided insights on the case study and also has value in terms of the fact that it can be done at a later stage and another place[6].

This active participation and insider's role can however result in bias of the observer (Yin 1994: 87), while the value of observations could be affected by aspects such as *"mood, prior knowledge or information, values and norms, religious conviction and all other factors that constitute human diversity"* (Moore 1987). See also later discussion on research integrity.

The participant observation method was also used in two recent comparable case studies on the typical South African local authority planning environment - namely the case study done by Watson (2001) and the more recent and very similar Tshwane case study by Homann (2005).

Questionnaires and interviews

During July 1999 a comprehensive perception survey was done to obtain inputs, comments and critique of some of the prominent role players that were concerned and involved with the development and transformation of urban planning in the City of Pretoria/Tshwane. The primary aim of the perception survey was to determine how the various role players involved with urban planning experienced the new planning approaches and more specifically the impact which it had on urban planning and the local authority in general. The questionnaire contained 31 open-ended questions on topics related to IDP and urban planning (see Annexure 1). The questionnaire was delivered by hand to 60 role players in the city who were selected to present the broader spectrum

[6] Throughout the study (1997 - 2005), the researcher was working in the Municipality (the case study). During these years, the participant "directly" observed - for the purpose of the study. It should however be noted that certain observations referred to in the study were made (*ex post facto*) at a later stage and in hindsight.

of urban planning[7]. In spite of various efforts to retrieve the comments, a poor response was received from primarily the councillors and the members of the Planning Zone Forums, and only thirty-three of the sixty questionnaires (slightly more than 50% of the questionnaires) were completed and returned[8]. This response did, however, represent the full spectrum of role players. Most questions were thoroughly answered and the majority of responses provided useful information on the various topics[9]. The questionnaires were analysed and processed and the responses of the various respondents were included and integrated with the relevant parts of the study.

One of the major shortcomings of the perception survey, which was completed in mid-1999, was that it only presented viewpoints on a certain component and time frame of the transformation of urban planning. For this reason a supplementary interview survey was conducted in 2002 (see Annexure 2). This interview survey (2002) also referred to by Gillham (2000) as *"elite interviewing"* aimed to obtain specific viewpoints from 14 selected role players on specific issues that were not effectively dealt with by the other surveys, or specific experts who were able to give answers with insight. These role players were selected mainly based on their close involvement with the transformation process as well as their expertise knowledge and experience on certain issues (see Annexure 2). Gillham (2000); Moore (1987); and Hoyle, Harris and Judd (2002) emphasise the importance and value of such face-to-face interviews and the richness of the communication that can derived from it. As was expected the responses of these interviewees provided useful information on the specific topics. In some instances specific selected role players were also informally interviewed or requested to provide opinions on certain issues about a particular topic related to the study. The purpose of these informal interviews was to obtain specific viewpoints on a particular issue or topic that had to be highlighted.

In order to establish an appropriate and open relationship with the interviewees, concerted efforts were made in this study, with both the perception survey as well as the interviews, to explain the purpose of the interview and the study and also the way in which the information was to be used in the study. As and where applicable, specific comments from interviewees were included or quoted

[7] The 60 key role players were carefully selected as those people who represented the broader spectrum of issues. These role players included Planning Zone champions, planners, planning consultants, councillors, and members of the Planning Zone Forums (PZFs). Apart from the community members and councilors, the selected sample represented a 90% majority of planners and managers who participated in the development of IDP during the nineties.

[8] The reason for the poor response could probably be ascribed to the fact that the questionnaire was very comprehensive and time-consuming.

[9] A summary of the responses is provided in Annexure 1.

in the story. In some instances, where very controversial and sensitive statements were made, the identity of participants was protected[10].

Historical research

Telling stories of practice and studying cases over a period of time is also closely related to historical research - the gathering of significant historical data and facts about major events, the organisation of these facts into a chronological sequence, and the meaningful interpretation of the "*patterns of rationality*" (Leedy 1997:173 - 177) that make historical facts appear meaningful[11]. This historical periodisation has considerable power as an organising principle and as a means of giving an integrated account of a highly systematic set of social phenomena (Moore 1987; Leedy and Ormrod 2001; and McCloughlin 1992: 23).

Contextualising and founding the case study

As in most research endeavours, a case study, although it focuses on a particular case, practice story or subject, it also has to be studied and analysed within the broader context of theory, other experiences and trends, and supported by sufficient information and data. This study therefore distinguishes between the following categories of documentation, namely: planning theory (as presented in the theoretical framework for analysis in Chapter 2); general literature on urban planning and related fields[12], such as literature on other case studies, experiences and practice stories, planning methodologies, and the emerging trends in urban planning; and lastly general documentation, information and data such as government publications, council resolutions, minutes of meetings, planning reports, news paper reports, statistical data, etc.

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[10] Any research project should be governed by the ethical principles of research, such as the right of privacy and confidentiality. For more information on these ethical principles in research, see Leedy (1997) on the *Résumé of a Professional Code of Ethics of the American Sociological Association (ASA, 1982),* and McBurney (1994) on the code of conduct drawn up by the American Psychological Association. See also ethical guidelines presented by Leedy and Ormrod (2001: 107) and Erlandson *et al* 1993; and Hoyle, Harris and Judd 2002.

[11] The historical research component of this study was supplemented by a comprehensive search for, and a study of, available and relevant information and data such as: specific legislation, policies, government sources and view points; conference papers; council resolutions; council reports and memorandums; minutes and proceedings of workshops, meetings and working groups; office memoranda and notes; brochures, newspaper and journal articles; guideline documents; training manuals; documented comments and critique; and statistical data such as attendance figures of workshops.

[12] Although the study of planning theory and the general literature study covered many parts of the world, the most references used throughout the study were derived from the United States of America and the United Kingdom. The purpose of the literature study was not to study a particular country's planning or to present a comparative analysis of planning in different countries but rather to study various literature sources and case studies that presented applicable and relevant information on the particular study in hand. These countries, specifically in the early 1900s influenced planning thought in many western countries and also South Africa. The English language in which literature was presented also largely contributed in the promotion of planning thought that developed in these countries.

Not only do these readings provide a useful base of knowledge and the required theoretical and contextual framework, but they provide the information, data, experiences and arguments which are necessary to support the research and its trustworthiness (see also later discussions on triangulation and research integrity). Homann (2005) also argues that a study of a variety of relevant documentation not only improves the validity of the findings, but it also assists to mitigate the inevitable bias of the observations of the observer/ researcher - an aspect which is of particular importance in case study research.

3.4 ANALYSING AND THEORISING THE CASE STUDY DATA

One of the biggest challenges of case study research with its plethora of data and information is to effectively analyse and process the data and information in hand, and to make sense of it all. Jorgenson (1989: 107) distinguishes between analysing and theorising. Whereas analysing implies the breaking up and organising of data, and the reconstruction and reassembling of data, theorising is *"the making sense of the data"*, the construction of meaningful patterns and organisation of facts in the form of an explanation or interpretation (Jorgenson 1989:107).

Theorising, however is more than just cramming data into a theoretical framework - it is about thinking and developing grounded theory *inductively* - theory that is grounded in the evidence that is turned up (Gillham 2000; see also Jorgenson 1989: 113), and a theory that is based on rich interpretations and study of practice (see also Watson 2001; Innes in Yiftachel and Huxley 2000; Erlandson *et al* 1993:28 - 29; and Hillier 200). The building of grounded theory is also associated with *"the weaving of the multiple sources of evidence in a narrative"* (Gillham 2000: 94), the interpretation of the *"chain of evidence"* (Yin 1994), and the *"study of the patterns of behaviour" (*Flyvbjerg 2001:45). Hillier (2002: 17) within the context of the study of power and social relations refers to a type of practice-centred theorising as *"a blend of individualistic interpretation, paradigm and a practical context"*. Theory normally grows and emerges from the analytical/theorising process, as this process evolves and matures, and as the relations, patterns and themes emerge (Jorgenson 1989: 107; Tuffy *et al* 1996; see also Erlandson *et al* 1993:28 – 29; and Gillham 2000). See also later paragraphs in this section on how narrative writing and explanations contribute to building theories.

The challenge for case study researchers is therefore to conclude their studies, not only by presenting descriptions of the major themes that emerged from the data, but also by utilising the themes and their interpretations to put forward theoretical propositions. These propositions should indicate why a certain phenomenon occurs and how concepts are related (Tuffy *et al* 1996: 111) - it

should provide a perspective, a way of seeing, or an interpretation aimed at understanding certain phenomena (see also Blumer and Agar in Jorgenson 1989).

Yiftachel and Huxley (2000) however argue that most theories in planning literature have been normative and prescriptive and as such they only covered part of the theorising endeavour - focussing on *"how things should be"* rather than explaining *"why things are as they are"* - the so called explanatory theory. Unlike the "armchair theorising" of the past, the new forms of theorising according to Yiftachel and Huxley (2000) is more about critically examining planning itself - more about looking for *a* theory than *the* theory (see also Watson 2001).

Closely related to the theorising process and the value of the emergent theories is the aspect of generalisability. One of the main concerns or critiques against the case study research relates to the fact that it provides little basis for scientific generalisation, i.e. to generalize from one case to another (Yin 1994: 10; Gillham 2000: 12; and Erlandson *et al* 1993: 15 -16). This implies that proponents of naturalistic inquiry (realising the above), have to settle for a deep understanding and exploitation of social phenomena as they are observed in their own contexts - and the need to ground theory before it is applied (Erlandson *et al* 1993 15 -16). This is why the naturalistic researcher has to use an inductive theorising process so as to *"make sense of what you've found after you have found it"* (Gillham 2000: 6 - 7). Yin (1994: 10) however argues that case studies, like scientific experiments, are generalisable to theoretical propositions as is illustrated by Jane Jacobs' famous book, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*[13] (Yin 1994:10). Gillham (2000:12) in support of the above argues that although research findings may not be generalisable, "the theory" created from the facts may be usable by other people (Gillham 2000: 12). The ultimate aim of the theorising process is thus to achieve generalisable additions to knowledge, or new knowledge which could contribute to the development of new theory (Gillham 2000:15). Flyvbjerg (2001:184 - 87) is also sceptical of the ideal of summarising and generalization as the outcome of social research and argues (in support of Gillham above), that the value of narrative studies lies in the narrative itself as the narrative makes the contribution, through its specific nature (see later discussion on the narrative).

As discussed in previous sections, some research processes (many of those who are influenced by the modernist paradigm) aimed to develop *the* theory or *a* grand theory; provide answers and solutions to complex problems and phenomenon; or a structured, legitimate "right" answer to a

[13] Although this book is based on experiences of New York City, the chapter topics, rather than reflecting on the single experiences of New York, cover broad theoretical issues in urban planning such as the role of side walks, the role of neighbourhood parks, the need for primary schools, etc. In the aggregate these issues in fact present the building of new theory in planning (Yin 1994: 37).

stated research question; or scientific proof or support for a particular hypothesis, or a scientific discovery. Unlike these approaches, this research process within the context (and boundaries) of "the postmodern" and naturalistic research rather aims to create a *"good productive theory"* as described by Hoyle, Harris and Judd (2002). According to them, "a productive theory" is a theory that prospers and grows, a theory that opens up new insight, or a theory that addresses important significant social phenomenon or social behaviour that needs explanation. Instead of constructing grand theories, this study rather aims to present new perspectives on phenomena related to power and power relations within a local authority-planning environment. In line with the practice movement as discussed earlier, the study further aims to expose an experience of practice and power within a local authority-planning environment - an experience from which others can learn, and an experience that others can interpret and extrapolate. According to Foucault (1994: 16) theories are not intended to be permanent structures but rather temporary scaffolding, erected for those who might find it useful. Polkinghorne (1998: 175) refers to the *"open ended"* conclusion of narrative research. Just as this study resulted in expanding the knowledge base, others can use this study to produce, as Flyvbjerg (2001:71) proposes, *"a type of knowledge that makes it possible to progress from the lower levels of human learning to the higher expert levels".*

3.5 RESEARCH INTEGRITY, VALIDITY AND TRUSTWORTHINESS

In most research endeavours, the challenge is to ensure a legitimate, valued and plausible study with integrity and trustworthiness. Hoyle, Harris and Judd (2002: 418) and Yin (1994:36) argue that the ultimate way of testing the validity of research findings is to test the replicability (reliability), which implies that if someone else repeats the same research he/she must make the same conclusions to make it believable. However, unlike the pure physical sciences, and also the above viewpoint on replicability, naturalistic social science research, specifically the type located within the pragmatic phenomenology and hermeneutics is not, and cannot be, about "right or wrong", about replicability and scientific validity (alone). In support of this viewpoint, Polkinghorne (1998: 175) argue that although validity is associated with conclusions based on logic and measurement data, it should (within the context of naturalistic research and the postmodern logic) rather be construed as *"the more general understanding of validity and well-grounded conclusions"* (abbreviated emphasis by author).

However, if intellectual inquiry is to have an impact on human knowledge (by adding to the overall body of knowledge) it surely must be credible and trustworthy (Erlandson *et al* 1993:28 - 29; Yin 1994;Polkinghorne 1998:174;Gillham 2000:13;and Hoyle, Harris and Judd 2002: 18). According to Yin (1994: 9 -11 and 32 - 38) and Hoyle, Harris and Judd (2002: 18) the validity of case study

research depends very much on the integrity of the researcher and the way the research is performed (the quality of the research), and according to Polkinghorne (1998:174), the design and structure of the research process.

Gillham (2000:13 - 30) presents a number of determinants for ensuring trustworthiness[14], *viz*: the need for researchers to be careful of prejudices and preferences; the need for researchers to constantly challenge and scrutinise themselves; to look for the negative, opposite and contradictory evidence or evidence that qualifies or complicates the emerging understanding; to focus on representativeness of data and to ensure that all the shades of the picture are covered; and to look for the under the surface hidden evidence.

Gillham (2000: 19) further argues that the study of multiple forms of evidence in sufficient detail not only provides a *"thick description"* which improves understanding, but the use of different methodological approaches improves the validity and trustworthiness of the evidence (See also Allmendinger 2001: 217 and Erlandson *et al* 1993:). Although Gillham (2000: 10) agrees that all evidence is of some value, he also emphasises the need to appraise the trustworthiness of all evidence and to continuously assess what faith can be placed in the evidence in hand - almost like a juridical inquiry. Yin (1994: 98) emphasises the need to maintain the *"chain of evidence"* - similar to that in criminological investigations - to present and evaluate all evidence without any bias.

Closely related to the above is a method referred to as triangulation - a method which implies the multiple observations of the same phenomenon, or the convergence of different kinds of evidence, gathered in different ways but bearing on the same point (See also Gillham 2000:13; Erlandson *et al*. Yin (1994: 91 - 92) argues that the use of multiple sources of evidence in case studies allows an investigation to address a broader range of historical, attitudinal, and behavioural sources of evidence - but more importantly it results in *"converging lines of inquiry"* or a process of triangulation which improves validity and integrity. Throughout this study (as and where possible), the various different sources, evidence and opinions were used through triangulation to support statements (and facts).

Within the context of case study research and more specifically the participant-observation method, the aspect of trustworthiness or validity and correctness of data can also be improved/addressed by checking one's ideas/findings with those in the culture/practice and to get feedback from the participants - a process referred to as member checking (Tuffy *et al* 1996: 113; see also Gillham 2000:13; Erlandson *et al* 1993:28 - 29; and Watson 2001).

[14] Similar strategies to improve and ensure trustworthiness are presented by Erlandson *et al* 1993:29.

Lastly, the aspect of trustworthiness and research integrity depends very much on the credibility and integrity of the observer/researcher and his/her relationship with the participants. It is imperative for the researcher to establish and build trust and relationships and to maintain these relationships with observers for him/her to collect accurate info and truthful information (Jorgenson 1989: 21; Tuffy *et al* 1996: 112 and Gillham 2000: 53). It is also important for case study researchers to be *au fait* with the limitations of (naturalistic) case study research so as to ensure validity of data and findings (See also Moore 1987). See also the disadvantages of the participant-observation method discussed earlier. The role of the researcher as an insider is particularly important, as the personal experience becomes a primary source of information - hence the need for the researcher to be very critical of this information and the personal experience (Jorgenson 1989: 93). Erlandson *et al* (1993: 15) and Yin (1994: 56 and 59) further highlight the question of researcher-bias and the challenge that researchers face to be open. On bias, Culler (1997) refers to the potential problems of "*unreliable or self conscious narrators"* which could undermine their authority to tell a story in such a way that they manipulate the story. He emphasises the need for a reliable narrator which could render *"the facts"* in the form of a narrative or story. Although researchers must try to be reliable narrators and researchers with integrity, they should also realise (and accept) that they are only human and subject to human failure, own biases, prejudices, values and norms etc.

The aspect of trustworthiness also largely depends on how the research findings are presented, specifically in narratives. Polkinghorne (1998:98) and Erlandson *et al* (1993:28 - 29) both emphasise how the linguistic quality of a reading/message (the way in which the story is written and presented) can enhance the validity of the research, and the way in which it will be received, interpreted and understood by the reader - the so called hermeneutic understanding. Based on Jakobson's communication modes, specific reference is made to the transaction between the sender (author), message send (story) and the receiver (reader) (Polkinghorne 1998). This highlights the need for the sender/teller (and researcher) to provide the truth and sufficient information, and to package and present it in such a way that it enables the reader to make his her own judgement.

3.6 THE NARRATIVE: RESEARCH TOOL AND STORY

Although narrative theory or narratology[15] is usually associated with literary theory (Webster 1996; Culler 1997; and Genette 1980), and a suitable style for presenting case studies (Gillham 2000: 22), the concept of narratives has become an important research tool in the social sciences. Polkinghorne (1998:21) refers to *"narrative explanation*" as a story that explains the significance of events that have occurred or *"explanatory narrative research"* - a methodology used to *"construct a narrative account explaining 'why' a situation or event involving human action has happened"*. While Polkinghorne (1998: 21) argues that narrative research is not really a new form of inquiry, Hoyle, Harris and Judd (2002: 392) state that it is an underutilised research method, and a method that yields information that could not be accessible by more traditional methods. In his plea for a new (phronetic social science), Flyvbjerg (2001:18) makes a compelling argument for the use of the narrative as a tool for such research and states that: *"Where science does not reach, art, literature and narrative often help us to comprehend the reality in which we live"*. He further argues that narratives are ideally suited to conveying complex and contradictory nature of real life. Unlike the fairy tale connotation usually associated with narratives, narrative in social research is about the process of writing "true stories" about actual concerns of people's lives (Polkinghorne 1998; Hoyle, Harris and Judd 2002: 392). This undoubtedly makes narrative research highly appropriate for the study of practice and power as described in the section dealing with the practice movement.

The narrative as a story is also a valuable method of presenting and sharing research with others. Stories expose readers to the experience of the planners/actors - how they learn, how they deal with conflict, how they develop good judgement, how power and power relations interact, specifically in the complex political world planners work in (Forester 1996: 507 and 518 - 9). Based on Dewey's pragmatic perspective, Yiftachel and Huxley (2000) argue that experience (as presented by stories) not only serves as a context for learning, but actually becomes the medium through which we learn. Telling stories of planning and power from the present and the past, in a context of ongoing inquiry and debate, sharing interpretations as researchers and theorists, not only amongst one another but with practitioners as well, offers a new sort of community in which planners can work to improve the democratic quality of practice (Hoch 1996: 43). The value of practice stories (experience) can be supported by Foucault (1994: 246) who distinguishes between the *"experience book"* as opposed to a *"truth book"* or a *"demonstration book"*. Based on his book *"Discipline and Punish"* which focuses on the lives and behaviour of prisoners, their families etc,

[15] See also Watson (2001) and Homann (2005) on the relevance of narratology, specifically within the context of planning stories.

the book (or rather the experience) when it was published had a major effect as it worked towards a transformation of people and institutions (Foucault 1975, translated by Sheridan 1977).

As is evident in the recent contributions by Watson, Flyvbjerg, Allmendinger, Forester, Hoch and Hillier, story telling and narratives have become particularly relevant in studies focussing on power and power relations (an aspect that forms the core of this particular study). It has increasingly become important for planners to study planning history and to become "*story tellers of practice*" (Hoch 1996). Hoch further argues that stories of resistance are quite common, given the fact that power relations are virtually unescapable in most planning activities (and omnipresent, according to Foucault).

Narratives and more specifically the narrating process within the context of social research, has become an important part of the theorising process as discussed earlier on. Narrating is not only about the recording of events in a particular sequence, but aims to discover and unpack the meanings of events (or the sum of events) - within the context of a particular story line (or plot structure)[16]. Polkinghorne (1998: 22) refers to narrative understanding as "*the comprehension of a complex set of events by seeing the whole in which the parts have participated"*, or narrative as a form of meaning making - about creating a higher order of meaning. It is almost like theorising the emplotment, or "developing theory from a story" (Polkinghorne 1998).

In line with the more flexible postmodernist writing trends, the narrative style presents a more flexible style of presenting and interpreting the facts and events - in the form of a poem, a novel or a story (Munslow 1999:10 and 15; and Himmelfarb 1997:161 and 165). In short, narrative writing presents a more inventive, imaginative, and creative style of presenting the past (Himmelfarb 1997:165). This style of writing, with its variations and story lines also has the potential to provide a friendlier and more effective way of communicating the facts (and the story) to the reader (Lewis 1998; and see also Watson 2001).

Narrative writing presents more than just that which happened on a specific date in history, as it creates the structure, flexibility and opportunity to present multiple stories, readings and meanings in one story (Munslow 1999:175). In most cases, a narrative presents what happened, when, where, how, within what context, what the impact and relevance was, how it was perceived, what caused the event, etc. It also describes the setting, what it looked like, felt like, the experience, perceptions, moods, and attitudes (Flyvbjerg 1998 a and b; Lewis 1998; and Watson 2001).

[16] Stories usually consist of plots (or organising themes). These plots weaves together a complex of events to make a single story and provide a meaningful constellation and integration of events (Polkinghorne 1998; and Munslow (1999:10 and 182). See also Homann (2005) on the distinction between plot structure and the story.

Normally these events are structured in a narrative by the conventional means of time, place, actors, and events.

Within regard to the required detail of the narrative/story, reference is made to the concept of *"thick description"* as a process that focuses on the fine grain of the observations or the story. See also Thompson in Hillier (2000); Erlandson *et al (*1993); and Gillham (2000: 19) on the concept of thick description. Homann (2005) refers to the *"densely woven detail of the narrative"* of the Tshwane case study that presents the reader with the social reality within which the experience took place. The narrative helps readers to understand complex evidence and thick descriptions or as Flyvbjerg (1998) argues, *"to assist readers to move around in dense case material".*

It should however be noted that the course of the Tshwane narrative has varying *"degrees of thickness"*. In some instances or certain time periods, places etc., a thorough *"thick description"* is provided on the fine grain or the various layers of the story, whereas lesser detail *("thin description"*) is provided in other areas of the story. This variation in detail is merely ascribed to the availability of data (or lack thereof) in certain areas and the particular relevance of data in a specific instance. It should also be noted that the story is primarily concerned with the transformation of urban planning and the question of power relations and therefore the story was mainly braided around events and experiences associated with the above. This intrinsically implies that little or even no detail is provided on events and experiences that are not related to, or associated with the main focus of this study. Unlike standard historiography which aims to focus on a full and balanced reconstruction of the past phenomenon, the Tshwane study, similar to the historical analysis done by Foucault, rather focuses selectively on just those aspects of the past that were important for understanding the present (See also Foucault 1994:15). Polkinghorne (1998) also refers to the periods of significance (*kairos*) in the narrative or the episodic patterns that are determined by a specific beginning and end and characterised by certain plots or groupings of relevant events.

Any story or narrative has to end at some point in time and in a certain manner. When viewed within the context of the theorising process it is of particular importance how a narrative is brought to closure (Webster 1996) and the way in which views, theories, or generalisations are presented. Although the narrative (Chapter 5) ends like most other stories (at the end of the story), the narrative is capped and "rounded-off" (to use Forester's expression) by a critical summary and analysis of the story (and more specifically the transformation process) in Chapter 6, as well as the final chapter (Chapter 7) which presents the phenomena and knowledge which emerged from the narrative, with particular reference to power and power relations.

Dealing with “me” in the story

During the period from 1992 to 2002, the author/researcher/observer played a role in the transformation of urban planning in the former City of Pretoria/Tshwane and as such is an important actor in the story. In view of the above, it was imperative to find an appropriate way to also address the author’s comments and viewpoints in the story. Since the inception of the study various options and styles of writing were used in an attempt to address this relationship between the author and the story. Initially reference was made to “the author” or “the researcher”. This style of writing in the third person has been described as "ambiguous" as it gives the impression that the author did not take part in his/her own study (see also Leedy 1997:294). In other cases reference was made to the first person - the active voice, also known as ‘active voice narratology’ (see Beauregard 1998; and Lewis 1998).

Although this style of writing became popular in recent planning narratives (see McCloughlin 1992: 23; Flyvbjerg 1998; and Watson 2001), in this particular instance, it created the impression that the author was writing a story about himself. However, in order to give a full and valid account of the story, it was imperative to fully address the viewpoints of the author/actor in the same way that another author would have addressed this actor’s comments. As a result of the above, it was decided to separate the author from the agent or actor and that reference be made directly to “Johnny Coetzee” (the actor), in the same way as reference was made to other actors. Webster (1996) distinguishes between the roles of the narrator (as the person who is telling the story) and the “focalizer” (the figure in the text from whose perspective events were seen). Although, according to Genette (1980: 7), these roles are not always the same as the role of the “focalizer” can shift from one character to another, The Tshwane narrative reflects the perspectives and views (and “focalization”) of the observer /narrator himself. This implies that the narrator is the same person as the figure in the text from whose perspective events are observed. In this case the “focalizer”/ narrator, viewed/narrated events - as they happen (ed), with the gift of hindsight and a combination of the above (see also Polkinghorne 1998; and Culler (1997) on *temporal aspect* of narration and “focalization”). See also previous discussion on *ex post facto* participant observation.

Although the former paragraphs present a discussion on a variety of complex research components, it should be emphasised that this particular Tshwane endeavour was very much an iterative process of thinking, reading, listening, observing, analysing, exploring, synthesising, theorising, writing and editing.