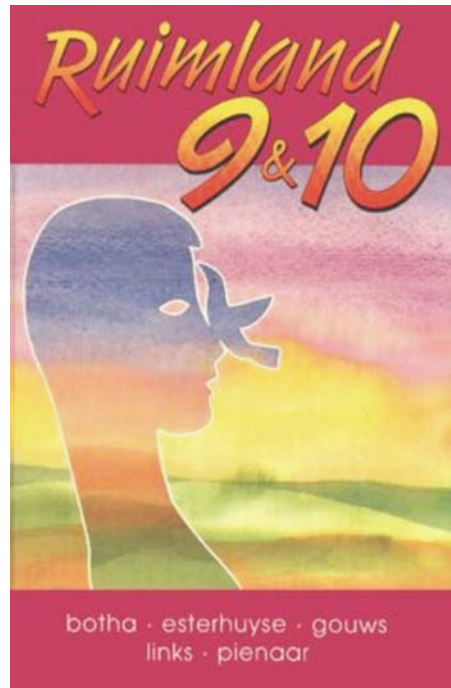


*Who moved the textbook ... ?*

**A case study describing how ideological change in South Africa manifested itself in terms of racial representation in a transitional Afrikaans language textbook series.**

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## CHAPTER ONE

### 1. INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW

#### 1.1 SETTING THE STAGE

After 1948, as a result of the ideology of apartheid, Afrikaans language teaching became entrenched in prejudice, stigmatisation and stereotyping (Polakow-Suransky 2002; Van de Rheede 1992; Strydom 1997). As an ideology of superiority, apartheid was based on securing power to allow dominant Afrikaner values - white and western, to prevail. In order to retain power, the dominant group discriminated against, humiliated and showed lack of respect toward less powerful groups. The opinions and ideas of such groups were marginalised by the dominant group to the extent that they had no voice and may as well have been invisible (Tutorial letter 2000). The apartheid paradigm manifested itself in all facets of South African life, e.g. politics, culture, sport, education - and especially in the language - Afrikaans. The myth of Afrikaans being a unique, white creation with an independent branch of non-white speakers was propagated for an extended period (Esterhuysen 1986). Consequently, Afrikaner values and attitudes became distorted and exclusivity, colour, and history were elevated, while universal values, merit and individuality were downplayed. The resultant caricature led to differences becoming the norm, the all-determining factor. Not surprisingly, February (1995) declared: “Afrikaans carries the label of oppressor like no other language in history”.

The final years of apartheid were characterised by heightened uncertainty, divided loyalties, false assurances and unrealistic expectations, but mostly by fear. After the state of emergency was lifted in 1990, a substantial number of whites believed that there could be an overnight turn of events during which they would lose everything they possessed. They feared that the roles of black and white would be reversed and that they would suffer as ‘people of colour’ had suffered in the past. Ideologically, leaders were in danger of being criticised if they were perceived as too outspoken or were seen to be campaigning for fundamental change. If, in addition, they were suspected of collaboration with proponents of change outside Afrikaner society, they would be rejected forthwith (Du Preez 1983).

It is understandable against this backdrop, that the call for a new perspective with regard to content, teaching style and even lifestyle in South Africa was strong. Yet it was a difficult and potentially exhausting call, since white South Africans were not yet prepared to exchange

their stereotypical beliefs and attendant fears for a new South Africa with an education and training system in which democratic values would be reflected (Smit 1997).

The research problem which guides this case study is: *to what extent does racial representation in an Afrikaans language textbook series reflect the changing ideology during the final years of apartheid?* Sub-questions to help solve the research problem, are:

- How should a textbook function as a change agent?
- What was the role *Ruimland* played in deliberately dealing with “the other” Afrikaans first language speakers?
- What was the nature of the change?

The dissertation begins with an overview of the research, a discussion of the relevant literature and an exposition of the research design and methods. The data collection, interpretation and findings follow. The first chapter draws on the works of leading national and international authors regarding the significant role of textbooks in the construction of socio-political paradigms. The rationale, which contextualises the research, is followed by the research design, focus and aim. The methodological strategy explicates the research question while the argument concludes the chapter.

## 1.2 IDEOLOGICAL MAPPING

Embedded values and attitudes in school textbooks communicate a message to learners about society (Roos 1989). Educational materials such as textbooks are a reflection of the values and norms of a specific period. Textbooks are written documents which display the curriculum content and provide educators and learners with guidelines regarding teaching aims and activities, as well as ideology (Du Preez 1983). The way in which knowledge is selected, distributed and evaluated, is intimately related to the principles of social control (Giroux 1993: 97). To Apple and Christian-Smith (1991: 4)

texts are really messages to and about the future. As part of a curriculum, they participate in no less than the organized knowledge system of society. They participate in creating what a society has recognized as legitimate and truthful.

What was the role of the ideology of apartheid as reflected in textbooks in the organised knowledge system of South African society? Firstly, only positive aspects of the Afrikaner's past were portrayed in books (Chernis 1990; Du Plessis 1987; Strydom 1997); secondly, differences between whites and non-whites were highlighted to establish a more favourable disposition for the white in-group and to justify their actions (Webb 1992; Spencer 1997; Van der Merwe 2000), thirdly, simplification and over-generalisation reduced people of colour to a few, simple, essential characteristics (Esterhuysen 1986; Du Preez 1983). These representational practices were for so long embedded and reinforced in the Afrikaner belief system that they became part of the Afrikaner collective unconscious and developed into an unyielding fear of change attitude in whites (Du Preez 1983).

Van de Rhee (1987) describes the curriculum in terms of not only content, but also *intention* and *process* and distinguishes the *explicit*, *implicit* and *null* curricula. Jansen (in Higgs 1997), explains this from a *critical theory* stance: the school curriculum is a political document in three ways: the *official curriculum* selects formal and explicit knowledge to be taught, the *hidden curriculum* teaches behaviour, values, stereotypes and expectations of society, while the *null curriculum* refers to those aspects that are not taught in schools.

Apple (1990: 84) defines the hidden curriculum as “the norms and values that are implicitly, but effectively taught in schools and that are not usually talked about in teacher statements of end or goals ... ” and adds “... children learn to falsify certain aspects of their behaviour to conform to the reward system extant in most classrooms”. Van de Rhee in Du Plessis & Du Plessis (1987:277) avers that this implies that schools actually teach knowledge as well as ignorance. He quotes Eisner (1985) who describes the null curriculum as:

... the options students are not offered, the perspectives they may never know about, much less be able to use, the concepts and skills that are not part of their intellectual repertoire.

The null curriculum was firmly in place in the South African education system for forty years during which the school acted as a “reproductive force in an unequal society” (Apple 1991: 31). Jansen (1990: 203) regards the curriculum as a manifestation of context:

A curriculum is only as good as its context ... the curriculum ... embodies the values and interest of the dominant group, sustains its hegemonic control.

At the time *Ruimland* (Botha, Esterhuyse, Links, & Pienaar 1989) was published, the context in South Africa was still largely controlled by the values and interests of “white Afrikaners”. Even after the dismantling of apartheid the scars in the official, hidden and null curricula were deep. As schools in South Africa become more integrated, a new formal and hidden curriculum could and should respond to the new challenges of education and nation building in order to change what a “society recognizes as legitimate and truthful” (Apple & Christian Smith, 1991). This study could indicate whether racial representation in the textbook series *Ruimland* participated in paving the way for a new hidden curriculum in a democratic and multi-racial South Africa.

### 1.3 TEXTBOOKS AND SOCIETY

After 1994, a *political* decision led to attempts to ensure that democratic values were reflected in the curricula. Jansen (1997: 135) compares the curriculum to the national flag in the sense that both embody important political symbolism regarding society. Equally, the underpinned values in the textbook can never be separated from political and ideological realities. In the African oral tradition a grandmother would sit with her grandchild on her lap, telling her family stories. A golden thread would always be woven through these stories - sometimes the pride of the family or the courage of individuals would underpin the narratives. It would be subtle but deliberate, as the old woman aimed to establish her and her family’s particular perspectives. Similarly, the textbook is a vehicle for ideological power. It is the cornerstone of the learner’s perception of reality and its power should never be underestimated. Just as family stories are precious and part of the child’s life forever, an intimate encounter with a textbook will be embedded in the learner’s knowledge, and will exert influence for many years. Ideologists create an intimate relationship with the learner through the textbook, sit with the learner on their lap, tell the story as they want it perceived. Apple (1991: 33) describes the relationship between political structures and the individual as intimate and calculated:

... the rules which govern social behaviour, attitudes, morals and beliefs are filtered down from the macro level of economic and political structures to the individual via work experience, educational processes and family socialization. The individual requires a particular awareness and perception of the society in which he lives. And it is this

understanding and attitude towards the social order which (in large part) constitute his consciousness”.

Long after the content has been forgotten the consciousness established will have an effect on the learner. The representation of South Africans and master symbols in textbooks determine the socio-cultural generalisations of our society to the extent that they become part of society's collective consciousness, viz. deep-rooted perspectives according to which the world is interpreted. They form the lens through which everything is seen, experienced and evaluated (Du Preez 1983; Polakow-Suransky 2002; Chernis 1990).

In order for South African society to change, the political ideology has to change the education policy, which would affect the official, hidden and null curricula in schools. This in its turn, would impact on educators and eventually produce learners who, with democratic values, could fulfil their roles as South African citizens. In the downward spiral of *ideology-politics - education policy - curriculum - educator - learner*, the content of textbooks should reflect how the old political and social order has given way to new ideological, democratic values in the classroom. This study will therefore attempt to establish the content of the hidden and null curricula during the final years of the apartheid era, focusing on the underlying values, perceptions and stereotypes of the racial representation in textbooks. The study will further attempt to determine whether deliberate actions were sought to counter apartheid perceptions, values and stereotypes to prepare learners for a new democratic South Africa.

#### 1.4 THE TEACHING OF AFRIKAANS

The teaching of first language Afrikaans did not keep up with educational developments inside or outside the classroom during the apartheid era. Language was regarded as a product, a complete entity that could be studied in isolation. This was one of the contributory factors to the unpopularity of Afrikaans as a school subject (Pienaar 1995). During the eighties there was a great need for methodological reform, as the focus until then had been exclusively on linguistic skills. The new language-teaching paradigm worldwide attempted to achieve a balance between language, thinking and life skills. The so-called communicative approach regarded language as a process of interaction, communication and creation of meaning, which also implied meaningful interaction between teacher and learner and between

learner and learning material. The world of the learner became the focal point, promoting the view that when content is developed from reality, language actions become meaningful and that the learner learns to create meaning in language and by means of language with regard to himself, his world and the language he speaks. Consequently the language textbook had to incorporate the visual world, media texts, non-verbal and non-narrative texts. According to Pienaar (1995) it is unequivocal that learner-centred teaching material eliminates boredom, as the learner becomes part of the teaching process, thus transforming the language classroom into a new, exciting place.

The global aim of the communicative approach was to develop critical thinkers:

Just as teachers must come to recognize the theoretical assumptions that underlie their own pedagogical concepts and practices, students must also learn to recognize the meaning of 'frame of reference' and how the latter concept is instrumental in deciding, selecting and organising the 'facts' that go into everything from their social studies texts to their health textbooks (Giroux 1981: 123).

The source of methodological stagnation and the reluctance to use the communicative approach was, again, ideological. Integrated language teaching was not viable in a segregated society and thought development in a society that feared critical thought was unwelcome. Communicative textbooks cater for all learners, promoting feelings of safety and comfort, but apartheid textbooks reflect a white, Afrikaner-centred approach in which Afrikaans is evidenced as the sole possession of a single group, the only group recognised in the choice of reading passages, naming and examples. Speakers who deviate from the Standard variety of Afrikaans are labelled inferior and uncivilised (Esterhuyse 1986). A concerted effort was required to legitimise the role of varieties of Afrikaans. An adjusted perspective regarding the history of the Afrikaans language and its socio-linguistics became essential. *Ruimland* was a first attempt to accomplish this (Pienaar 1995; Phfeiffer 1992).

## 1.5 THE *RUIMLAND* CASE

An interesting development in this regard in the early nineties was the publication of the Afrikaans textbook series, *Ruimland*<sup>1</sup> (Botha et al. 1989). The publication of *Ruimland* was regarded as a major event in a number of respects. Firstly, Tony Links, then head of the Afrikaans Department of the University of the Western Cape, was the first ever co-author of colour of an Afrikaans textbook. Secondly, it was possible to link the title of the series to a citation in the conclusion of Esterhuyse's book *Taalapartheid & Skoolafrikaans*<sup>2</sup> (1986) a significant study of two old Afrikaans textbooks, in which the way in which Afrikaner-centric borders isolate and stigmatise people of colour, is examined. The citation was derived from a poem by Hein Willemse, poet and academic, viz.

Ons moet hierdie ruimland  
 Waar mensheid verwar word  
 Opbreek  
 En van nuuts af oopbou<sup>3</sup>

Esterhuyse, described by the publisher of the series as the “father of the *Ruimland* series”, co-authored the series during 1989. Thirdly, the *Ruimland* series caused tension in the ideological world of the Afrikaner. A Conservative Party member called for the withdrawal of the series after quoting from it during a government assembly:

Today I urgently appeal to the honourable Minister of Education and Culture ... if this is not enough, I wish to call on the honourable State President to immediately withdraw this book from the eyes, thoughts and ears of our children (Jacobs 1991)

Parents spoke against the series because it supposedly contained New Age principles<sup>4</sup> and immoralities (see Figure 1 on page 9):

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<sup>1</sup>Can be loosely translated as: spacious, expansive country / landscape.

<sup>2</sup>Language apartheid and school Afrikaans.

<sup>3</sup>This spacious country must be broken down and built anew (and open).

<sup>4</sup>At the time not viewed as liberating or enlightening by many South Africans, but as an attack on tradition, security and religion.



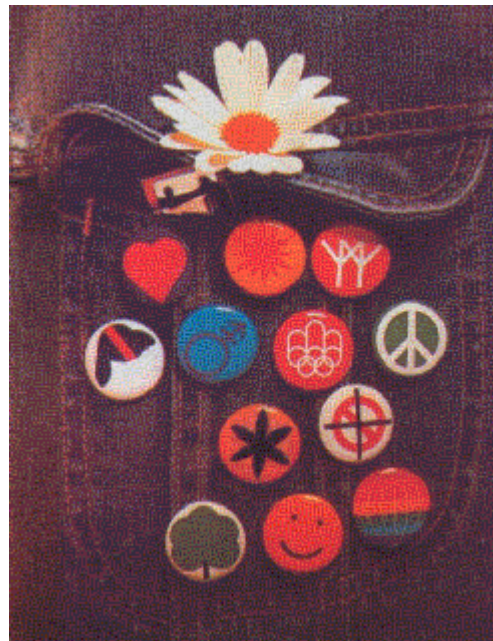
*Figure 1: Newspaper headlines*



The mother mentioned in the headline above is also reported to have objected to the sketch and photograph from the textbook (Figures 2 and 3 on page 10 of this dissertation), as well as to a picture of a black child scratching his ear, which she interpreted as a black power salute (Fulton 1991). An international organisation, Christians for Truth (CFT), expressed the same view in its newspaper. The publication of similar reports in other papers showed not only the contentiousness of the issue, but also emphasised the underlying fear that children should not be exposed to the perspectives in *Ruimland*. This attitude is a clear indication of the content of the null curriculum taught during the apartheid period, when it was believed that moral, religious and political issues should not be mentioned in textbooks. The *Ruimland* authors eventually requested the Western Cape Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church to quell the public protest by examining the series for signs of New Age influence. No substantial evidence was found and the accusations were declared to be unfounded, yet the saga in the press continued for approximately one month.



*Figure 2 Rubens painting/ naked women*



*Figure 3: Alleged Satanic symbol*

## 1.6 CONCEPTUAL CLARIFICATION

### 1.6.1 Ideological change

Ideological change refers to the set of ideas, assumptions and beliefs that forms the basis of a theory/concept of reality held by a particular group. Sim and Van Loon (2001: 170) from the critical theory point of view, describe ideology as a “system of beliefs that transmit or reinforce values”. Change in ideology would consequently result in changed values.

### 1.6.2 Racial representation

The assumption in this study that race and prejudice are socio-political constructions that are built upon a series of inclusions and exclusions in the textbook which “gives prominence to some pieces of knowledge while rendering others invisible” (Apple & Christian-Smith 1991: 97). During apartheid the “Coloured” community was not represented in Afrikaans first language textbooks. Prejudice in terms of racial representation was reinforced as this exclusion gave prominence to “white-only” perspectives.

### 1.6.3 Transitional Afrikaans language textbook

*Textbook* is qualified by the adjectives specifying that it is a textbook not only written in Afrikaans but it is an Afrikaans subject-specific book used to teach Afrikaans to first language speakers. *Transitional* in this study refers to a break in the continuity of apartheid and thus implies political and ideological change in South Africa. It encompasses the time following then State President FW de Klerk’s renowned speech on 2 February 1990 up to the inauguration of a fully democratic government in 1994. De Klerk’s speech was seen by political commentators as the turning point in South Africa history as it terminated white domination and heralded the start of negotiations for a new constitution (Spies & Liebenberg 1993). Although the first *Ruimland* was already published in 1989, it can still be described as a transitional series as the book only impacted the South African market in 1991, as textbooks generally take two or three years to establish themselves.

### 1.6.4 “White Afrikaners”

To avoid the trap of stereotyping myself as author of this dissertation by generalising the two polarised ideological groupings as the only representative groups of Afrikaners, the various

terms used in this study will be defined. There were in fact several different groupings, which will be defined as separate entities. Politically the sentiments of white Afrikaners were centred on the main political parties of the time. Although a number of white Afrikaners had no political affiliation some were members of the *ANC (African National Council)*, *IFP (Inkatha Freedom Party)* or the official opposition, the *DP (Democratic Party)*, during apartheid. FW de Klerk's *Nationalist Party* was the leading party in white Afrikaner ranks and it was also the party that lifted the five-year State of Emergency in June 1990, released 48 political prisoners and agreed to dismantle apartheid. The *Conservative Party (CP)*, the *Herstigte Nasionale Party (HNP)* and the *Afrikaner Weerstandsbeweging (AWB)* represented white Afrikaners who tried to sustain the status quo of apartheid by objecting to all forms of shared government. For instance, they did not sign the National Peace Accord in 1991, which spelt out how the police, political parties and other bodies should behave in order to prevent violence, and they did not attend Codesa (Convention for a Democratic South Africa) because they did not want to negotiate with the African National Congress (ANC) (Spies & Liebenberg 1993). It was also a CP member who called for the withdrawal of the textbook series in parliament. The term "white Afrikaner" is used to refer to the conservative movement because of their holding onto apartheid and the status quo. This term is placed between inverted commas to indicate that the author of this study is aware of the fact that "white Afrikaners" are ideologically diverse and secondly, because "Afrikaner" here includes every first language speaker of Afrikaans irrespective of colour, "white Afrikaner" manages to distinguish between the traditional and "objective" term. "White Afrikaner" (in inverted commas) thus implies an Afrikaner to whom whiteness was a proviso for being an Afrikaner.

### **1.6.5 "Coloured"**

This has long been a controversial word in terms of the South African political and ideological situation. In the first place people of the "Coloured" community, in identifying themselves with the political struggle against apartheid, preferred to be called black. Secondly there is an embedded consciousness of 'other than white' in the word "Coloured" or as the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (Hornby 1998) reports: "having colour". Therefore one would often hear people on television or radio referring to themselves as "ons bruinmense" (we - the brown people). In the third place "Coloured" is emotionally loaded as it implies a mixed race instead of a distinct group. On the other hand, several people do not object to being called "Coloured" and indeed prefer it. Thus the term "Coloured" will be used

throughout with inverted commas to indicate an awareness of the sensitivity and controversy surrounding the word. Sometimes the word “Malay” will be used instead of “Coloured” when religious differences are discussed.

## 1.7 RATIONALE

After teaching Afrikaans first language at secondary schools in South Africa for six years, I lived in England for two years. On my return to South Africa in 1990, I started to teach Afrikaans part time and became aware of the new Afrikaans textbook series which had been published in South Africa during my stay abroad, and which looked like the kind of series I could enjoy using. It was colourful, creative and inspiring. I soon realised many people were not as positive about the series as I was. Some colleagues found the book confusing and felt that it didn't quite follow the curriculum. Others said frankly that they thought that it was “from the devil” because of the New Age principles it supposedly represented. I realised that it was unlikely that the learners would be given copies of the book, so I used it to inspire my own lesson preparation. In 1994, while co-authoring an Afrikaans first language textbook and teacher guide series I became aware of the media and parliamentary controversy surrounding *Ruimland* (1989). It seemed as if I had missed an important event, perhaps even a catharsis, in the teaching of Afrikaans, which had always been my passion. I had, in the transitional history of my country, missed the polemic surrounding the publication of *Ruimland* and could not decide how I felt about the issue. This case study, is in the first place, an attempt to unravel the puzzle surrounding the publication of and public reaction to *Ruimland*, and in the second place, an endeavour to contribute to the body of knowledge concerning learning materials and the ability of such materials to impact on and reflect change.

## 1.8 RESEARCH DESIGN

In terms of the four dimensions in design type (Mouton 2001: 146), this is an empirical study in which existing data (sampled documents) will be analysed hermeneutically through content analysis. Such an analysis entails the systematic, objective study of a concept, person, event or themes of a carefully selected group of materials (Ahl 1992). The types of data in this study are textual, with a low degree of control. The mode of observation here is documentary and the units of analysis are words, meanings, symbols and themes, i.e. any

message that is communicated by the data. The reasoning is inductive and a-theoretical as the texts will be utilised to generate an understanding of the impact of a changing ideology on “white Afrikaners”. Analytic induction (Denzin & Lincoln 2001) will be applied in an attempt to avoid the influence of any preconceptions regarding the data to be yielded by the texts. Data generated by the interviews will be utilised to validate the content analysis and add rigour to the interpretation.

The chapters and sections are linked to the research question that guides the study, i.e. whether and to what extent progressive change toward a multi-racial society was reflected in a certain textbook series published during a transitional period. The case study design comprises a *historical case study* with *qualitative content analyses* of archival reports on the *Ruimland* series, published between 1989-1993, as well as *interviews*. According to Terre Blanche and Durrheim (2002), the development of the research design as a strategic framework allows researchers to reflect on their decisions along four dimensions, viz. the:

- **purpose** of the research
- theoretical **paradigm** informing the research
- **context** or situation within which the research is conducted and
- research **techniques** employed to collect and analyse data.

The above-mentioned dimensions inform the following discussion of the research design.

### 1.8.1 Purpose

The purpose of this exploratory case study is to determine the extent to which an Afrikaans language textbook series acted as a change agent in terms of racial representation on the eve of democracy in South Africa. An attempt will be made to establish whether the emerging re-contextualised ideological framework in South Africa manifested itself in a transitional Afrikaans textbook series. To this end, different bodies of knowledge will be employed which reflect on the change in ideology toward democracy, the textbooks as possible change agents and specialist writings on changing identity theories and stereotyping in society. This backdrop will be used to examine racial representation in the data. The investigation will focus on racial representation as the foundation for constructing a democratic South Africa



after the reign of apartheid. An endeavour will be made to establish whether progressive change towards a multicultural society was effected through subtleties, aims and perspectives and to determine the extent to which such emergent features were accepted or denied. A first language textbook is written for first language speakers and should therefore reflect the reality of the target group, which in this case comprises almost 50% “Coloured” Afrikaners (Statistics South Africa 2000). The representation of Cape Afrikaans and its speakers in a series of Afrikaans first language textbooks is a focal point of this case study.

The research aims, by means of qualitative content analysis and interviews, to trace the master symbols embedded in the ideological world of the Afrikaner at the time of publication. The research is exploratory in the sense that an inductive approach will be used to make particular observations. It is basic as it will endeavour to advance knowledge of the social world (Terre Blanche & Durrheim 2002).

A qualitative approach is appropriate because an attitude study, especially one regarding prejudices and stereotyping, requires one to read between the lines, rather than count frequencies. Marthinus Nijhoff, the Dutch poet, postulated the following during the 14<sup>th</sup> Century with reference to the ambiguity of texts: “Lees maar er staat niet wat er staat” (translated as: read, it doesn’t mean what it says) (Grové & Buning 1968). Much can be learned from a text by focusing on what is *not* mentioned, so publishers often avoid publishing what could become controversial (Marsden 2001: 137). Bias *not* found, could be indicative of trends or patterns underlying reform. *Overlooking* groups like the speakers of Cape Afrikaans (the null curriculum), speaks louder than statistics, thus a quantitative approach would not do justice to the rich data in the textbooks under scrutiny. As Silverman (2000: 128) explains:

In qualitative research, small numbers of texts and documents may be analysed for a very different purpose. The aim is to understand the participant’s categories and to see how these are used in concrete activities like telling stories, assembling files or describing family life. The theoretical orientation of many qualitative researchers thus means that they are more concerned with the processes through which texts depict “reality” than with whether such texts contain true or false statements.

### **1.8.2 Paradigm**

The research falls within the constructionist paradigm to the extent that the social constructed reality just before the downfall of apartheid, is described through the critical analysis of newspaper and parliamentary reports and the impact of this construction on racial representation in a specific textbook series is gauged. The study is descriptive and exploratory with a research problem constituted by the role of racial representation and its effect on “white Afrikaner” ideology. As a constructionist is ontologically concerned with socially constructed reality and discourse (Terre Blanche & Durrheim 2002), this study endeavours to reveal, through the discourse in the data, different ideological stances and meanings underlying social action. An attempt thus, to portray the polarisation which characterised “white Afrikaner” ideology during the final years of apartheid.

### **1.8.3 Context**

The inquiry is presented as a historical case study of a first language Afrikaans language textbook series as a change agent during the final years of apartheid. The macro context of apartheid and its effects on the attitudes and perspectives of “white Afrikaners” is the focus here. Understanding the meaning and impact of a specific textbook series requires the study to be situated contextually (see page 8), a thorough literature investigation and a qualitative content analysis of the archival documentation. The historical facts used to contextualise this research are referential and not part of the data sources, except when mentioned in the interviews.

### **1.8.4 Technique**

A multi-method data collection technique is applied. Two data sources are appropriate regarding the research question: existing data and new data. The existing data have two components, viz. existing literature on the topic and available knowledge, which will be analysed to define the research problem more clearly and develop a frame of reference to interpret findings. Secondly, the data for the content analysis consists of press reports and



parliamentary records. These archival documents are the only written testimony of the polemic surrounding the publication of the *Ruimland* series and will be analysed qualitatively as a reflection on the socio-political perspectives of the period under scrutiny. Different ‘voices’ and what they represent, will be categorised and discussed in terms of the literal and symbolic meanings they personify. New data generated through informal, exploratory interviews will substantiate or contradict the interpretation of the content analysis. The perspectives of several role players will be elicited during the interviews to increase the reliability of the analysis.

## 1.9 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### 1.9.1 Content analysis

Qualitative content analysis is defined as an empirical, methodologically controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content-analytical rules and step-by-step models without rash quantification (Mayring 1997), a process likened to interviewing a text. During the ‘interviewing’ of the sampled reports, my analysis and interpretation will focus on a search for apartheid master symbols as presented in a 1983 study on South African textbooks (Du Preez 1983). The content analysis will consist of three steps, viz. the events and claims will be chronologically transposed into a narrative text; the second analysis will determine the main arguments and the social significance of the political and religious role players and lastly, the aforementioned categories will be re-examined to facilitate linking them to the indicators used to determine the master symbols. The indicators for uncovering the master symbols are generalisation, language representation, characterisation, cultural sensitivity, historical comments and emotive language.

### 1.9.2 Interviews

An attempt will be made to support or contradict the interpretation and to add to the objectivity and rigour of the study by juxtaposing the findings and corresponding information obtained from the interviews. Interviews will be conducted with three authors, three leading academics and three important role players from the publishing company. The reason for the choice of the three categories of role players is both historical and ideological. The authors

and publishers were, during the period in question, either affected by the controversy or at least intellectually interested enough to consciously observe the ideological tennis game on the transitional court. They would therefore probably remember what was at stake, who the role players were and what the impact of the series was - more so than, for example, teachers or learners who just needed a textbook to help them fulfil their teaching/study obligations.

Most of the interviews will be recorded and will be accompanied by field notes. Some will be conducted via email as a number of role players reside far from the interviewer.

### 1.10 PRESUPPOSITIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

A qualitative research study reflects the researcher's views, beliefs and values. According to Miles and Huberman (1994: 8) researchers are unable to detach themselves from a study that is influenced by their understanding and beliefs. They are compelled to make known their presuppositions and assumptions to ensure reliability.

The researcher will, by conceptualising and analysing the data, attempt to construct a narrative from contrary perceptions based on ideological differences. The basic assumption in this study is a search for meaning, but not the 'true' or 'real' meaning of that which occurred during the specific period. The choice of constructionism as foundation for the investigation, is the belief that ideological representations hide reality because they are always based on networks of power relations, resulting in a concomitant struggle regarding meaning, labelling and identities. An attempt will be made to monitor the ensemble of ideas which construct meaning and the effects these constructions might reveal. In other words, the function of these binary narrative constructions in this specific context will be researched.

### 1.11 STRUCTURE AND SEQUENCE OF THE STUDY

This introductory first chapter sketches the background to the study, ideologically mapping the necessity for change in the hidden and null curriculum. After the description of the historical context that illustrates the need for methodological renewal in Afrikaans textbooks, the rationale, focus and aim of the study follow. The research and methodological strategy are introduced and the research questions are highlighted.

Chapter two offers a critical review and synthesis of the literature on representation and textbooks in South Africa and beyond. It explores the conceptual parameters of the study, focusing on range of international authors and their interpretation of representation. It sets out to demonstrate embedded perceptions during the apartheid years, focusing on the Du Preez model of master symbols found in fifty-three South African textbooks (Du Preez 1983).

Chapter three discusses the research design and justifies the methodology followed in the quest for an answer to the research question. The chapter further explicates the data collection, reliability, ethical issues and limitations of the study.

The research material, data analysis and interpretation of the findings are presented in chapter four. The results of the findings and the literature will be juxtaposed to facilitate the drawing of a conclusion regarding the research problem. Explanations, correlations and discrepancies between the research findings and relevant literature will be highlighted and interpreted.

The final chapter draws on the previous chapters to conclude the answer to the research question. In it possible shortcomings of the study are indicated and recommendations are made regarding further research. Finally, this chapter discusses some of the implications of the research for present day South African education.

## 1.12 CONCLUSION

The study has now been situated contextually indicating that the textbook series under investigation was the first to intentionally break away from the apartheid perspective. Based on the assumption that traces of social and political development should be found in the discourse that followed the publication of the series, this study set out to explore the impact of changing ideology on Afrikaans textbooks by tracing the embedded master symbols in the ideological world of the Afrikaner during the last days of apartheid.

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## ABSTRACT

### Key terms

Case study - changing paradigms - post-apartheid society - master symbols -  
counter-symbols - racial representation - Afrikaans textbooks -  
qualitative content analysis - press reports - interviews

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to determine the extent to which an Afrikaans language textbook series acted as a change agent in terms of racial representation on the eve of democracy in South Africa. Data sources for the content analysis are press reports, parliamentary records and interviews with the publisher, the authors and leading academics. The contextualisation includes an explanation of how the authors of the *Ruimland* series were the first to intentionally break away from the apartheid perspective. The literature study comprises an explication of the master symbol model which serves as theoretical framework for this study. Influential issues in the literature on textbooks, representation, language and identity are also described. The main focus is on the three master symbols relevant to the study, which are presented as indicators of racial stereotyping, viz. the exclusivity and isolation of the in-group, appropriation and generalising and simplifying. These indicators are utilised as measurable norms in the analysis of racial representation. Counter-indicators obtained from the data are used to increase the reliability of the analysis. Traces of stereotyping regarding all the indicators and counter-indicators were found in the data. The findings show that master symbols are evident in the data, but that the series also incorporates counter-symbols directed toward a post-apartheid society. The concluding chapters suggests that the series could have been an early signal of a paradigm shift in Afrikaner ranks toward democracy in South Africa.

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## CHAPTER 2

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter two includes an analysis of the relevant literature that further explores the research problem: *To what extent did racial representation in an Afrikaans language textbook series act as a change agent in the final years of apartheid?* The purpose of this chapter is threefold. Firstly, it provides a synthesis of the main concepts and arguments in the fields of knowledge as projected by leading authors, with particular attention to the role of changing racial representation in textbooks. Secondly, a theoretical foundation is constructed. Thirdly, the implications of the literature are considered.

#### 2.2 THE CHANGE COMMUNICATION MODEL

It is almost impossible to measure change because of its complexity. Individuals begin the process of change at different points as they may need time to assimilate philosophy and information. Students receive input from ‘significant others’ in their lives, e.g. teachers, role models in books (Richardson in Cole 1989; Gilborn 1995; Mottier 1997). Change also often depends on students’ perceptions of those to whom they look for “expert knowledge” (Apple in Stub 1975: 285). But in spite of the difficulty in measuring change, textbooks can definitely become effective agents of educational change by fulfilling a more active role in shaping culture and structure in the classroom.

Although there are various change models the Rogers Change Communication Model (Ellsworth n.d.) has been selected because it deals with six components that represent the bodies of knowledge used to establish the conceptual parameters for this research. Rogers (1985) describes change as a specialised version of the general Communication Model set out in Figure 1.

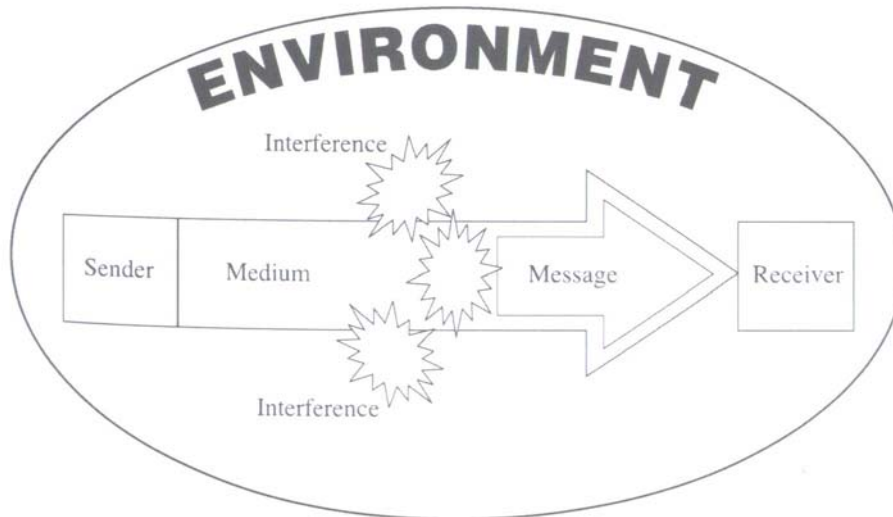


Figure 1. The General Communication Model

The Change Communication Model in Figure 2 will be used as an organising framework for the theoretical part of the study. The six components set out in the model cluster the bodies of knowledge of the chapter, as such reflecting the exploration of change in this study.

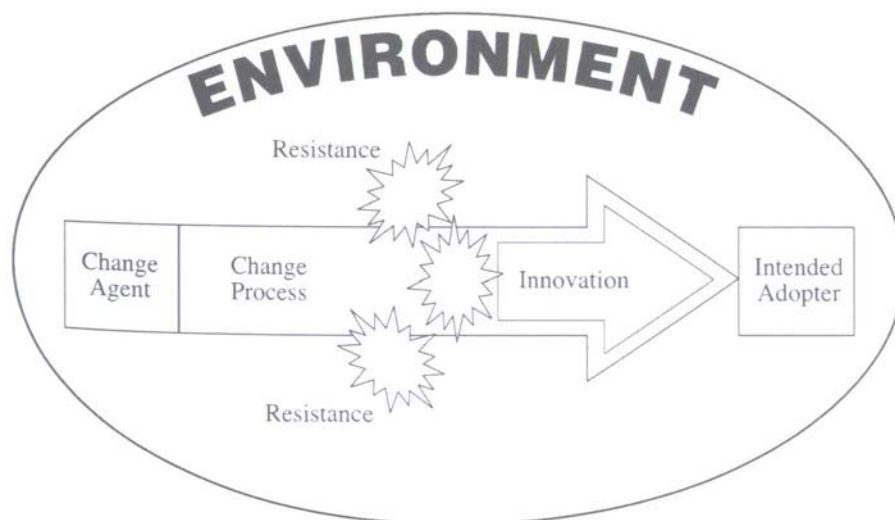


Figure 2. The Change Communication Model

According to the Change Communication Model the *change agent* wishes to communicate an *innovation* to an *intended adopter*. This is accomplished through a *change process* that establishes a channel through the *change environment* between the two communicants. This environment, however, also contains *resistance* that can disrupt the change process or distort the appearance of the innovation. The six components of the Change Communication Model

represent the bodies of knowledge used to establish the conceptual parameters for this research logically and sequentially. The literature study will be clustered around the main components of the Model in order to maintain the systemic nature of the arguments set out in the literature and to demonstrate the interdependence of the components.

This first component of the Change Communication Model, viz. **change agent**, clusters studies in the fields of *gender in textbooks*, *language studies pertaining to identity construction*, *studies on the impact and importance of textbooks* and *Du Preez's (1983) Master Symbol Model*, in terms of which textbooks from the apartheid era were investigated to detect Afrikaner master symbols. **The change process** will be theoretically viewed through the lenses of three social theories, namely *social constructionism*, *social cognition* and *social identity theory* to determine the roles of shifting identities. Bodies of knowledge on international and South African racial representation will be utilised to investigate **innovation** regarding a multi-racial democracy, and the role of controversy in change will be discussed under **resistance**. The **intended adopter** in the Change Communication Model is the corpus of Afrikaans language textbooks, in which, according to the research problem, change could manifest. The **change environment** interacts with all the elements in the model. Critical theory studies and the concept of stereotyping will be discussed to investigate the role of a set environment and how it is viewed by leading authors in this field. A tabular representation of the conceptualisation is provided in Table 1. The discussion of the bodies of knowledge will be followed by an explication of their relevance to this research.

**Table 1**

Agent	Process	Innovation	Resistance	Adopter	Environment
Gender studies	Social constructionism (Gergen, 1985)	Racial representation - international studies	Change controversy	Studies of Afrikaans language textbooks	Critical theory studies
Language studies	Social cognition theory	Racial representation - South African studies			Stereotyping
Importance of textbooks	Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986)				
Master Symbol Model (Du Preez, 1983)	Shifting identities				

## 2.3 TEXTBOOKS AS CHANGE AGENTS

Apple & Christian-Smith (1991: 11) profess that the textbook acts as a change agent when a new reality seeks to replace the old:

The politics of the text takes on special importance, because textbooks often represent an overt attempt to help create a new cultural reality ... they create entirely new kinds of governments, new possibilities for democratic political, economic, and cultural arrangements. In these situations, the role of education takes on even more importance, since knowledge, new ethics and a new reality seek to replace the old.

An attempt will be made to draw a parallel between the above description of the textbook as a change agent and the role of *Ruimland* in changing the paradigms in Afrikaner ideology. Consequently, the focus now will be on the textbook as change agent.

### 2.3.1 Gender in textbooks

The value of the extensive body of knowledge on *gender bias*, for example Pomerence, Varner and Mallar (1996), Macaulay and Brice (1997), Jones and Kitetu (1997) and Poulou (1997), lies in the general assumption that change in textbooks is unavoidable. The latter two are the most significant studies in this regard. Poulou (1997) examines the differences in the discourse roles of men and women regarding gender bias in Greek textbooks. Jones and Kitetu (1997) indicate a significant shift in textbooks from previously disempowered gender roles to more positive ones.

The common trends in studies on gender bias are that most of them are quantitative and do not investigate the role of textbooks within a specific transitional political paradigm. They do not fully address the impact of changing ideology on textbooks although they acknowledge the major role of textbooks as change agents regarding gender and race equality. The work of Mottier (1997) is of particular significance for the purpose of this research. She approaches the textbook as an influential vehicle which supports innovation, stating that one of the main reasons for a textbook having to be as modern as possible, is because of its long



life. The production takes several years and the average textbook is used for at least 5-10 years. She regards editors' and authors' attitudes as significant in this regard, recommending that traditional images should be avoided in order to include knowledge about women and ethnic groups. Authors should also be encouraged to seek a variety of representations in their books, and women and ethnic authors should be involved in writing textbooks. Two additional insights regarding the role of the textbook as change agent are that people should be portrayed as *individuals*, not necessarily members of a gender or ethnic group and that textbooks should deliberately introduce new attitudes and patterns of thought, so that for example, the fact (in the child's real world experience) that there are more men than women in managerial jobs, does not become incontrovertible in the child's perception.

These insights address a number of aspects of the current research. Authors and editors were in the 'thick of things', they experienced first-hand the incidents surrounding the publishing of *Ruimland*, and had first-hand knowledge of the intentions, expectations and reception of the series in schools. *Ruimland*, as the first Afrikaans series to use an author "of colour" - an indication of a deliberate paradigm shift, is in keeping with the call to use ethnic authors for the sake of representation. Furthermore, textbooks should deliberately introduce new attitudes, rather than mirror 'the real world'. In the political era during which *Ruimland* was published, racial tension and political uncertainty were the 'real world', but in order for the series to function as a change agent a new, stable world in which people were portrayed as *individuals* had to be introduced. This implies that textbooks should be ahead of their time so as to anticipate trends in social development – as did *Ruimland*.

### **2.3.2 Language studies pertaining to social construction**

Language is the means by which one "names the world, and as such, is the principle vehicle through which cultural norms are internalised - at first in the family, then in the broader social context" (Halsted 1984: 8). Apple calls it the "labelling process which functions as social control" (1990: 126), because while seemingly neutral, its impact is reinforcement, learning and negative feedback- weak tools for dealing with legitimate knowledge:

Language - and the choice among symbols it entails - pervades all meaningful social action, either overtly or covertly, consciously or unconsciously (1990: 150)

Apple and Christian-Smith (1991: 126) add:

(Language tools are) mechanisms by which schools engage in anonymising and sorting out abstract individuals into preordained social, economic and educational slots. The labelling process, thus, tends to function as a form of social control ... to eliminate disparate perceptions and to ... create moral, evaluative and intellectual consensus.

Lastly, the role of language analysis involves examining language for “loaded” words and words or phrases that obscure viewpoints or possible conflict situations. Apple (1991: 85) refers to the “glorifying and complimentary” words used to describe white men who are celebrated for their achievements, e.g. “conquers” and “hero”. In contrast “muted language” is used to describe whites’ brutal or unjust actions.

Language employed as a manipulative tool will be discussed during the analysis of the press debate to show how, through the carefully constructed use of language, much is implied. Emotional language, ideological jargon and different voices which reveal particular social perspectives will be examined to divulge underlying master symbols. The important role of language will be examined with regard to legitimising content, choosing metaphors, convincing a particular readership through the construction of arguments, choice of metaphors and the hiding of obscure viewpoints.

### **2.3.3 The impact of textbooks**

Apple and Christian-Smith (1991: 97) evaluate textbooks in terms of their role in the formation of new cultural and political realities. The power of a textbook’s political and cultural function depends on the network of social and identity relations in which it participates. It can be *retrogressive* (part of a system of moral regulation) or *progressive* (providing essential assistance as part of a larger strategy of democratisation):

Students are presented in classrooms with usually one version of reality. That version embodies certain interests, reifies certain interpretations and value

judgements, and gives prominence to some pieces of knowledge while rendering others invisible. Many students may internalise what they are taught through textbooks, although others may marginalize it within their own thinking or reject it outright. But even if students forget, ignore, or reject what they encounter in textbooks, textbook content is still important because it withholds, obscures and renders unimportant many ideas and areas of knowledge.

The interviews and the content analysis will assist in establishing whether and to what extent the *Ruimland* series tried to be overtly progressive in providing a pathway to inclusive, holistic and critical teaching after decades of only a single ideological version being offered by the apartheid regime. Did the *Ruimland* series present different versions of the South African reality which were aimed at democratising the Afrikaans textbook domain? Was the series a threat to the Afrikaner master symbol system and did it create tension and polarisation within Afrikaner ranks? What was the impact on forming the necessary new cultural and political realities at this transitional time in South African political history?

### **2.3.4 The Master Symbol Model**

#### **2.3.4.1 Introduction**

The theoretical foundation for this research is Du Preez's (1983) study involving fifty-three textbooks used in black and white schools. One of the outcomes of the study was the identification of Afrikaner master symbols which lay at the core of Afrikaner identity during the apartheid era. The textbook in general, and more specifically the polemic surrounding the textbook, communicates social, moral and ethical values and even prejudices. The immediate discussion will include tracing the development of symbols into master symbols and determining the impact and manipulative power of such symbols. Three master symbols will be chosen from the twelve identified by Du Preez (1983) in accordance with the research question.

#### **2.3.4.2 Identification and manipulation**

In her examination of school textbooks Du Preez (1983) found that certain themes and symbols appeared more often, or seemed to be more important than others. People appear to acquire social esteem and status through identification with powerful community symbols, thereby advancing themselves socially. The more involved they become in a specific system,

the less they identify with other systems. When identification with specific symbols becomes too intense in a modern, competitive world, there is an inclination to glorify everything that is perceived to be the system's 'own', and to reject the cultural assets of others:

In a social structure where the religious order is not dominant and where religious symbols are divergent and contradictory, mutual acceptance develops, but when dealing with absolute symbols, the followers may be intolerant toward other religions (Du Preez 1983: 98).

Symbols which are repeatedly used successfully are inter alia, a common historical destiny, a break with the past, a national calling or God-given task and the confirmation of a nation's value to humankind. Symbols from the past, present and future are integrated to form a symbolic whole which should engender a sense of safety and fellowship in the individual. Du Preez (1983) states that in South Africa religious symbols are absolute, hence the choice for this research of the symbol "the Afrikaner has a privileged relationship with God".

Identification and manipulation are very closely linked. Someone might use common identification symbols in an endeavour to achieve consensus between an audience and himself, e.g. by stating: "We as good citizens, should save water". The behaviour of an audience can be manipulated by controlling identification symbols. Images and symbols that are related to subjects sacred to a society, e.g. the Almighty, nation and race, tend to evoke strong emotional reaction. Schools are significant major support agents for home and religious beliefs and the reinforcement of society's master symbols, for instance through textbooks, could play an important part in the adolescent's search for identity and his or her social role in society. Repeatedly reinforced symbols develop into potentially eternal or master symbols. Symbols with which individuals or communities strongly identify, and which are inherently capable of manipulating behaviour or serve as a foundation for other symbols, are master symbols, e.g. "it's stated in the Bible"; "it's law"; "it's a law of nature".

The manipulative power lies in the fact that master symbols limit diversity and ignore individual differences. Furthermore, all attempts at maintaining the *status quo* intensify the stereotyping process, resulting in impoverished master symbols (Du Preez 1983: 7). Master symbols create patterns of prediction that produce static images or perceptions of the world according to which customs, tastes, preferences, abilities and expectations are adapted.

Master symbols are excellent tools of manipulation as they can, if carefully selected and edited, influence people's attitudes toward an institution or group.

The model will facilitate an examination of the reasoning, attitudes, bias and knowledge in the data, as the focus of the analysis is language as a manipulative tool. Symbols are so deeply embedded that agents rarely realise how much their language reveals of that which they unconsciously attempt to conceal.

#### **2.3.4.3 The sphere of symbols**

Master symbols justify the existing social structure and when internalised, become the yardstick according to which experiences and activities are channelled or limited. Self-justification stems from the provision of reasons and motives for playing certain roles. In this way strong symbols are often used to create a feeling of unity among members of a nation. The sphere of symbols will be determined by a content analysis regarding categories, metaphoric and evocative language, vocabulary, statements and topics. Since language is such a powerful tool it will be used it as an indicator of master symbols. Techniques used to characterise and portray 'the self' and 'the other', favouring certain actions and venerating events, will be linked to the emotions from which they stem as well as the value system they constitute.

#### **2.3.4.4 The use of master symbols in this study.**

The twelve master symbols detected in the Du Preez (1983) study are: *legal authority is not questioned; whites are superior while blacks are inferior; the Afrikaner has a privileged relationship with God; South Africa rightfully belongs to the Afrikaner; the Afrikaner is a "Boer" nation; South Africa is an afflicted country; South Africa and the Afrikaner are isolated; the Afrikaner is militarily innovative and resourceful; the Afrikaner has always been threatened; world opinion on South Africa is important; South Africa is a leader in Africa and the Afrikaner has a God-given task to fulfil in Africa.*

The choice for this research has fallen on three master symbols, viz. *whites are superior while blacks are inferior; the Afrikaner has a privileged relationship with God and the Afrikaner has always felt threatened.*

The first symbol was an obvious choice as it is explicitly race related and forms the basis of white supremacy and the ideology of apartheid, which are under scrutiny here. The second symbol is also race related, although not as patently as the first. The Christian National Education system of the apartheid era linked race and religion and was the mainspring of the privileged school system for whites in South Africa. The last symbol was chosen since, during the past, all efforts to alter the political truths of apartheid were regarded as attempts to threaten the “white Afrikaner”.

The purpose of this study is to establish whether the emerging, recontextualised ideological framework in South Africa manifested itself in *Ruimland* through a changed racial representation. The three selected master symbols will be described to determine the extent of the *Ruimland* series’ function as a change agent and to facilitate the analysis.

- **Whites are superior while blacks are inferior**

White ethnocentrism is a deep-set Afrikaner master symbol encountered in the economic dispensation and justified by the Christian civilisation and ‘inherent backwardness’ of the blacks. The Gerth & Miles model (in Du Preez 1983: 75-77) describes it as follows:

The ruling class may be only too eager to vilify the slave, peasant or worker. A vocabulary of motives-of-laziness and general no-good lends status to the superior who has the secondary advantage of implementing his superiority of property and power by a sense of moral superiority; it enables him to rationalise social differences into moral differences, with all the moral benefits accruing to himself. Even the suffering patience of the downtrodden is held against him as ‘lack of ability’ and ‘stupidity’, as ‘lack of initiative’ and as ‘docility’. Thus do status, snobbery and human pride often feed on the misery of others.

High levels of technological development and standards of civilisation are enshrined in the “white Afrikaner” symbol system. Another fundamental master symbol relevant here, is the belief that the “Supreme Being” ordained that there be an eternal divide between white and black and that blacks would always be inferior to whites. The highest value in the apartheid symbol system is the preservation of a dominant white culture. Thus, I have chosen to

employ **exclusivity**, **isolation** and **generalisation** as indicators in the search for master symbols in the texts.

- **The Afrikaner has a privileged relationship with God**

God's instruction to the Afrikaner nation to establish Christian civilisation in order to convert the heathen is the foundation of its religious master symbols. The Great Trek inland (1835-1837) and the annual commemoration of the Battle of Blood River (1838), as the day the Lord offered the Afrikaner victory over the heathens, are prime examples of the dominant role of religious master symbols in the Afrikaner symbol system. The Afrikaners, like the Israelites, became God's chosen people and were exhorted not to consort with the heathens. The God-given task of the Afrikaner leaders was to convert the blacks to Christianity, to civilise them and to prevent the tribes from destroying one another (Du Preez 1983: 78). The emotional connotations attached to religious symbols as a result of the supernatural context within which they function, may easily cause them to be abused or misrepresented in order to facilitate negative action against out-groups (Du Preez 1983: 99). In Du Preez's research religious themes were found to emphasise God's prominence on all levels of Afrikaner life, viz. individual, family and government. Calvinism, the religious doctrine of the Afrikaner, hardly accommodated other doctrines. Other doctrines are referred to incidentally in the textbooks examined by Du Preez (1983) but the textbooks contain no evidence that God acknowledged such doctrines. God is therefore portrayed only in relation to the "white Afrikaner". The omission of religious variety, e.g. the religious customs of other population groups, reinforces the notion of the exclusiveness of the relationship between God and the "white Afrikaner" (Du Preez 1983). The aforementioned aspects have been chosen, in particular the embedded belief of the Afrikaner being **God's chosen people** and the **omission of other religions** from textbooks, to serve as important indicators in the analysis of the Afrikaner's privileged relationship with God.

- **The Afrikaner has always felt threatened**

The threat to Afrikanerdom in the past lay in everything which was non-Afrikaans. The chief threats were the English, urbanisation, foreign countries, African states, the future, Communism and in particular, the large South African black population. In an attempt to

assuage the threat, negative symbols attributed to the aforementioned entities or out-groups, trapped the Afrikaner in a vicious circle. Threat is the wellspring of the phenomenon that people who reject one out-group are inclined to reject other out-groups, thus implying that being anti-something could culminate in being anti-everything. Prejudice and the way danger and threat were experienced were reinforced by segregation as an institutionalised form of discrimination (Du Preez 1983). All **threats, (explicit and implied)**, believed to have affected the Afrikaner will be examined as indicators.

#### **2.3.4.5 Counter-symbols**

Counter-symbols emerge when members of a community question their master symbols and this could result in the formation of a new ideological group, which could in turn also develop explicit credibility. When people's roles change more rapidly than their master symbols, which denote meaning, people may become alienated from the symbols. This could result in their exchanging them for an opposite set of symbols and could lead to conflict between: institutions of the same order, e.g. different churches or political parties; various orders within the same social structure, e.g. church and government; different social structures, e.g. nations (Du Preez 1983).

Since counter-symbols in the data could suggest political paradigm shifts, an adaptation to a new democratic South Africa and a willingness to confront and deal with the discriminating past, they will be accepted as evidence of a new ideological perspective. These counter-symbols are: *sensitivity to all; the Christian church has a role to play, but is not the only faith to be recognised; the Afrikaner needn't feel threatened.*

#### **2.3.4.6 Master symbols and the adolescent**

In an attempt to establish an identity the adolescent investigates all available systems, including textbooks. Identity here refers to identifying with a certain symbol system and the acknowledgement of the adolescent's social role within his/her own community. Through the process of establishing an identity the adolescent gains a historical perspective and determines his position in life. The FET learner is receptive to values because his own identity, that of his group and the identities of other groups, are important to him. The



conclusions reached by FET learners are more enduring than those of primary school learners.

The official view before 1995 was that all education in South Africa had to be *Christian National*, as instituted by the Afrikaner in opposition to British cultural imperialism. The orthodox Afrikaner regarded the Christian and national requirements as one entity. For the Afrikaner, his history was a national, epic journey during which he was able to bring to fruition his total being, ideals and institutions. It was through his perspective on his own history that he retained his identity and form (Du Preez 1983: 21).

Ortega (in Du Preez 1983: 97) describes *living as being actively involved in interpreting one's situation*. There is, however, a deviation in the sphere of symbols found in Afrikaans textbooks. Elderly people (witnesses of the past) play a dominant role, thus influencing the learning material offered to the adolescent during his interpretation phase. This signifies a shift which deprives the adolescent of his independence and right to interpret. Such a situation arises when a generation inherits a strong symbol system from a previous generation and takes ownership of the system without interpreting it, almost as if having created it independently. As Giroux (1981: 83) explains:

... the student is viewed as a spectator rather than a choice-making participant. As such, democratised relationships are replaced by authoritarian encounters in which communiqués substitute communication, lecturers substitute discussions; obedience substitutes creativity and formulas substitute critical thinking.

Exposure to textbooks which give no indication of the way to interpret current circumstances, causes demoralisation and a lack of orientation. Apartheid South African textbooks encourage learners to cultivate an unquestioning loyalty toward the government. Absolute loyalty reinforces the status quo. This, for thirty-five years contributed to the stable political pattern, although it was in direct opposition to democratic principles. In a democratic society authority grows from the acknowledgment, disclosure and solution of differences. Democracy suffers when differences are single-mindedly avoided and when ways of expressing one's differences are limited. Democracy cannot exist where opposing opinions are regarded as 'treason or heresy'. The unconditional acceptance of legal authority as propagated through master symbols in textbooks could spring from an inner uncertainty and

stagnation, thereby impeding growth and development. The contribution of textbooks to the promotion of a critical attitude among school-going children is minimal (Du Preez 1983: 75). The reaction (or non-reaction) of learners regarding the press controversy precipitated by the publication of the *Ruimland* series, could be important in determining their critical awareness and critical thinking skills. This part of the model serves to refine an understanding of a possible image of a democratic South Africa facilitated by *Ruimland* as change agent. The Du Preez (1983) study concludes that peaceful co-existence in South Africa can be achieved only if Afrikaner master symbols could be abandoned in favour of a common South African symbol system. Textbooks play a major role in this regard and should therefore be intentionally purged of manipulative symbols.

#### **2.3.4.7 Implementation in this study**

The *Master Symbol Model* will be used to test power inequalities and racial representation in a transitional Afrikaans first language textbook series through a content analysis of archival reports surrounding the publication of the series. As the critical question concerns racial representation in the textbook series, the data will be critically evaluated to establish whether dominant Afrikaner values, i.e. white and western prevail, and whether stereotypes were created to simplify, over-generalise or reduce people of colour to a few, simple, essential characteristics.

## **2.4 THE CHANGE PROCESS**

According to the Change Communication Model the *change process* establishes a channel through the change environment to communicate an *innovation* to an *intended adopter*. The process as described by Ellsworth (n.d), aims to motivate a particular intended adopter to accept ('buy into') the innovation.

### **2.4.1 SOCIAL THEORIES**

The discussion of theories will demonstrate how stereotypes are produced in the human mind, provide a backdrop against which shifting identities should be seen and consequently show what is required to initiate the change process in the hearts and minds of people.

#### **2.4.1.1 Social constructionism**

A basic assumption of *Social Constructionism* (Gergen 1985) is that knowledge originates during social interchanges, i.e. people's everyday knowledge about 'the way things are' is not gleaned from the real world but is the result of an ongoing and changing process of communication: people speak, write and use signs and symbols actively and cooperatively and create 'reality' out of negotiated understandings. The constructionist position is that the 'real world' of the five senses and the thinking brain is a product of social discourse. In addition, constructionists argue that negotiated understandings which produce conventional wisdom are grounded not only in the participants' immediate situations, but also in significant historical and cultural contexts (Integrated theory 2002).

The underlying belief of the theory is that people represent and stereotype others as a direct result of their own social environment, i.e. from birth to adulthood, including their interaction in that environment. This to a large extent explains the stereotypical representation in South African textbooks during the apartheid era. How can people know 'the way things are' if they are denied social, historical and cultural knowledge and relationships based on equality? How are people able to regard and measure themselves objectively if they have not been represented objectively for thirty-five years?

#### **2.4.1.2 Social cognition theory**

*Social cognition theory* encompasses all the aspects that influence the acquisition, representation and retrieval of personal information, as well as the relationship of these processes to judgments made by the perceiver. Solomon Ashe (1946) pioneered the field of impression formation, the study of how people think, with his work on *schemas and categories*. A schema is an organised cognitive framework that represents knowledge of a given concept. The primacy effect allows one to form an impression of a person relatively easily based on physical appearance, clothing, gait, speech, etc. Schemas assist people to form and organise impressions of others fairly quickly, but could lead to stereotyping based on incorrect inferences or exaggeration. Social cognition theory considers schemas to be important in forming stereotypes as they serve as the organised framework from which

representative knowledge is gathered about a person, role, event, or even about oneself (Meyers 1999). When people have strong, developed, organised schemas, as South Africans were obliged to have because of their abnormal (apartheid) political paradigm, they will selectively attend to information and traits that confirm their perception. Inconsistencies may be discarded as accidents or flukes, or people may forget or abandon such ideas. Memory is biased because information is coded to fit expectations and this may lead directly to stereotyping (Leyens, Yzerbyt & Schadron 1984). A study of the theory underlines the fact that it would be difficult to change schemas established in the South African context and that some resistance to the *Ruimland* textbook series in which such organised schemas were deliberately challenged, was to be expected.

#### **2.4.1.3 Social identity theory**

Tajfel and Turner's (1986) Social Identity Theory (SIT) is a powerful and extensively employed explanatory theory on group identification and in-group bias. According to Brown (2000) SIT has changed the way social psychology thinks about stereotyping. It proposes that people strive to achieve or maintain a positive social identity (thus boosting their self-esteem) and that this positive identity derives largely from favourable comparisons between the in-group and the relevant out-group (Brown 2000). Self-esteem, status and beliefs are the prevailing factors in conflict orientation. SIT is composed of two main principles. It focuses on the individual necessity to uphold and reinforce the uniqueness of the group among other out-groups in order to attain a positive social identity image, as well as on group processes and the idea that a shared social identity depersonalises individual self-perception. The underlying principle is that individuals define themselves in terms of group membership. This social self-defined perception therefore produces and determines the social behaviour and actions of individuals.

SIT has three components, viz. *social categorisation*, *comparison* and *identity*. *Social categorisation* simplifies and adds meaning in order to define who people are; *social comparison* entails the evaluation of own opinions and skills, thus a comparison to those of others. These evaluations influence the behaviour of individuals because they are concerned with the value of the own group in comparison to other groups. *Social identity* follows the need to compare differences between groups in order to establish the in-group more favourably. The maintenance of self-esteem is important during comparisons and it is essential in preserving social identity.

In summary, SIT states that people identify themselves as members of different social groups. As individuals, people are driven to examine and compare their own in-group to other groups in order to evaluate their own perspectives. A positive image of the own group is essential for self-esteem and individuals are able to achieve this by discriminating against other groups. The discrimination process entails labelling other groups as inferior or poorer regarding characteristics deemed important by the in-group. SIT regards stereotypes as, most often, the result of ignorance about a particular social group whether racial, economical, ethnic or interest-based.

The SIT view of the over-accentuation of differences to make one's own group appear superior to others and the resultant discrimination against other groups, is one of the tenets of this research. Representations of reality are negotiated constructs of social group identifications based on mutual value systems, ideas and practices.

Contrary to popular belief racial or ethnic stereotypes are not always negative assumptions about races or ethnicities. Stereotypes can consist of positive beliefs about a certain race, e.g. 'all Asians are smart' or 'all African-Americans play basketball well'. Regardless of the nature of the stereotype, it is damaging because when it is accepted as the truth, it leads to sweeping assumptions about entire races of people and about individuals who are not personally known by the person making the assumption. While it is part of human nature to categorise people based on own experiences, stereotyping has far greater and more negative consequences than merely judging individuals. Stereotypes can also lead to discrimination, attempts by group members to fulfil the stereotype, damaged self-image, memory problems and violence. SIT will be used to determine whether differences between the in- and out-groups are highlighted in the data to establish a more favourable position for the in- group, to justify its actions and explain events.

#### **2.4.2 CHANGE AND IDENTITY**

Giroux is one of the few authorities on the post-modern dynamics of shifting identities. He supports a pedagogy that considers cultural differences and identities as "constantly being negotiated and reinvented within the complex and contradictory notions of national belonging" (1995: 11).

Vera Tolz who researched nation building in post-communist Russia, believes that *identity* could provide an answer to the question: *Who am I?* Identity issues are linked to the question: *Who are we when we talk about us?* Most ex-Soviet Union communities construct their national identity from their relationship with *the other*, i.e. those *who we are not* (Kusendila 2003). Identity thus implies a community of people held together by politics and/or common properties such as culture and tradition, religion, ethos, history and definitions that clearly draw the line between one specific group of people and another. National identity is highly sensitive to the “intersecting dynamics of history, language, ideology and power and as such is a social construction that is built upon a series of inclusions and exclusions regarding history, citizenship and national belonging ...” (Giroux 1995; Kusendila 2003).

Kusendila (2003), assuming that traces of socio-political developments could be found in recent textbooks, set out to compare the most recent Flemish and Afrikaans textbooks in terms of *national identity*, suggesting that in contexts of great national change such as the abolition of apartheid in South Africa the textbook can offer a platform for different (even contradictory) values to help create a new cultural and social reality. She defines identity as “points of temporary attachments to subject positions”, such as “who are we?” and finds that the “we” in the relatively recently published Afrikaans textbook *Raamwerk* (Traut, Gouws, Peacock & Snyman 2001) are first and foremost *South African* and inclusive with respect to multicultural discourses. She calls the “new” Afrikaner presented in *Raamwerk*, a re-invented “self” among “others”, respectful and aware of diversity and valuing this awareness. The “new” Afrikaner looks into the future for unity while also remembering the divisive past, i.e. the old apartheid–Afrikaner now becomes the “other” (2003: 14, 92). Kusendila’s findings suggest that there has been a major ideological shift in Afrikaner identity and representation in Afrikaans textbooks since apartheid, indicating the success of the *change process* of the Change Communication Model.

## 2.5 INNOVATION

According to the Change Communication Model the *change agent* wishes to communicate an *innovation* to an *intended adopter*. The innovation acts as the message that has to be

conveyed before any change can occur. In this case the innovation component consists of penetrating stereotypical beliefs and practices.

Suggestions from the literature concerning the way in which old stereotypical representation in textbooks should be addressed, are explicated in the following discussion of international and South African representational studies.

### **2.5.1 Racial representation studies**

The literature on racial representation is extensive. Some researchers investigate film and media representation (Savage 2001), teacher perceptions of native Americans (Falkenhagen & Kelly 1974), the relationship between second language proficiency and stereotyping (Spencer 1997) and even stereotyping in children's comics (Bidmead & Leicester 2001). A number of authors deal with the selection of texts. Van der Merwe (2000) argues that books should reflect a diversity of racial and cultural perspectives. Zulu (1996: 56) suggests using criteria to select literature texts, which would challenge racial, ethnic, gender and religious assumptions and Combrink (1996) calls for the competence to decode and understand historical facts and ideological motives to plan a better future for South Africa. Certain authors should be given a voice because of the applicability of their work to the research problem of this case study. In Dutch literature Mok (1999) explores the manifestations of sublime racism in geography textbooks in the Netherlands. Through a cultural analysis with a historical focus, she sheds light on the use of subtle textual strategies which contribute to race-embedded socio-political construction. She shows diachronously and synchronously, via an intertextual viewpoint, how the use of metaphors, themes, arguments and narrative elements establishes superiority and inferiority in texts. Both Barton & Walker (1983) and Mok (1999) mention that change is often only a change in the content taught and not in the context in which it is taught, as it is often the context and not the content of books which determines the messages which are communicated. Mok (1999), in her dissertation on geography textbooks and race, emphasises firstly, that race and prejudice should be seen as an exclusively socio-political transaction of which the manifestations are embedded in the culture and common expressions to such an extent that they go unnoticed unless they are challenged. The reason for this is that race functions as a major foundation for (especially white) identity.



Another relevant source of sublime racist representation, is a procedure for detecting and documenting sex, race and other biases in educational material, published by the Michigan Department of Education in 1979. Erroneous group representation, under-representation and segregation in texts are categorised quantitatively in terms of severity, using checklists and diagrams. Klein (1993) distinguishes *tokenism* and *marginalisation*; tokenism, such as the colouring in of a face which is similar to all the white faces in the picture is absurd and rather insulting while marginalisation is more subtle. Ethnic minority characters who are always at the edges of the picture and the story, never make the decisions which move the plot along and never offer anything with which readers might identify.

Studies on sublime racist representation point to stereotyping techniques and the fact that the absence of overt racism during the highly sensitive political transition in South Africa is not proof of a battle won against stereotypical representation. Silences about race, tokenism and marginalisation could be a viable option for exploring racial issues. The Master Symbol Model appears to be suitable for investigating underlying and embedded racism.

Richardson (in Cole 1989) distinguishes three perspectives of racial change, viz. *conforming perspectives* which are the most common form in education and which accept the status quo and dominant ideologies; *reforming perspectives* such as multi-cultural education, concern cultural diversity in the classroom, learning about other people's cultures and ways of life and are aimed at increasing tolerance and respect among all people - they seek improvements and modifications, but accept the current overall structure as sound; *transforming perspectives* such as anti-racist education, reflect the struggle against racism – the main premise is that society is institutionally racist and that the complex hierarchy located within the exploitative white power structure should be dismantled, both through the hidden and the actual curriculum in all schools. Transforming perspectives seek to bring about profound and far-reaching changes that disregard the status quo. Although Afrikaans textbooks during the apartheid era had conforming perspectives, it has yet to be determined whether *Ruimland* constitutes reforming or transforming perspectives.

### **2.5.2 Racial representation studies in South Africa.**

Racial representation investigations in textbooks in South Africa focus on history textbooks in particular, primarily within the landscape of post-apartheid South Africa (Bam 2000;



Rostron 1999). These two authors argue that the government made a conscious effort not to distribute any new textbooks so as to defuse tension and reduce conflict. Bam (2000) accuses the government of suppressing historical consciousness. In his doctoral thesis *The past in the service of the present: A study of South African history syllabuses and textbooks 1839-1990* Richard Chernis offers an in-depth analysis of bias in South African history curricula and describes apartheid era texts as contributing in social identity theory terms (Taifel and Turner 1979) to *identity formation, legitimisation of social order and national orientation*:

Through the use of master symbols the text messages create an implicit ‘other’ ... A nation’s self image, portrayed as flatteringly as possible in its history textbooks, is to a large extent defined by the manner in which it views ‘other’. It is almost as if the self-image is enhanced by the coexistence of hostile images of those deemed to be outside the group (Chernis 1990: 59).

The innovative potential of the *Ruimland* series will be juxtaposed with the Chernis report to establish whether creating an implicit ‘other’, portraying the own image as flatteringly as possible (while offering hostile images of the out-group), reveal themselves through the master symbols or whether, on the other hand, *Ruimland* is an exception among post-apartheid textbooks. Polakow-Suransky’s (2002) comparative analysis of the content of old and new history textbooks in South Africa and the role of the content in creating modern national identities links certain historic events and ideological implications of asserted ‘facts’ to master symbols in a society’s collective consciousness (see also Chernis 1990 and Du Preez 1983). According to Chernis these symbols are initially perceptions which eventually come to be regarded as irrefutable facts (Chernis 1990). The way in which the ideological implications of historic events influence history textbooks is comparable to the ideological impact of the press polemic regarding Afrikaans textbooks. Therefore the focus will now be on the role of controversy in the Change Communication Model.

## 2.6 RESISTANCE

### 2.6.1 Role of controversy in change

The information booklet *Curriculum 2005* states that education is always the key to change. (Department of Education 1997). Apple (in Stub 1975: 286) links change to conflict,

suggesting that conflict about texts is often a proxy for a wider issue of power relations because it involves what people hold most dear, and further claims that by their very nature social paradigms constantly change. The order of society becomes the regularity of change:

The reality of society is conflict and flux; not a closed functional system as it may seem. The most significant contribution as a major source of change and innovation is conflict. Conflict must be looked at as a basic and often beneficial dimension of the dialectic of the activity we label society ... Conflict is one alternative 'form of consciousness'.

Conflicts are systematic products of the changing structure of a society and by their very nature tend to lead to progress. The explicit focus on conflict as a legitimate category of conceptualisation and as a valid and essential dimension of collective life could enable different paradigmatic views on social life and differing value assumptions of each. This is an integral part of change, because conceptions that might be totally unacceptable during conflict one day may become alternative considerations or even options the following day. Understanding reality is a necessary condition for changing it, but conflict compels one to choose sides and this is a major step in bringing about reconstruction (Apple in Stub 1975 ).

Gillborn (1995: 179) recognises the importance of conflict as “piercing the calm, orderly and rational façade ...”. There is therefore only one choice: prejudice and discrimination are either challenged or reinforced by school education. According to Stub (1975: 40) school education cannot maintain a neutral stance. Even during the apartheid era in South Africa authors chose to write within or against the apartheid paradigm (Esterhuyse 2003).

A controversial issue is one on which society is divided (Richardson in Cole 1989). The divergence of opinion may be about the very definition and naming of the problem or about the structure and contours of the ideal situation, state or society on which action is focused. All protest reactions appear to assume that firstly there is essentially nothing wrong with the system as a whole and secondly, that the system, comprised of the main agencies of the government, therefore legitimises the protesting groups as relatively authoritative components of the system (Richardson in Cole 1989).

Conflict and polarisation around Afrikaans is not an extraordinary phenomenon. Du Plessis (1987) identifies three ideological movements in the then first language community, each used Afrikaans for its own purposes, viz. the Cape movement which consisted of intellectuals of colour who used Afrikaans to strive for political freedom, e.g. February and Willemse; the Afrikaner establishment which attempted to ‘sell’ Afrikaans in a modern jacket and the right wing that used Afrikaans nationalism as an ideology for racial dominance. Du Plessis (1987) thus describes language as a manipulative tool in social identity construction. Esterhuysen (1986: 22) explains Lukens’ proximal linguistics (1979) in which three stages of communicative distancing are distinguished. Firstly “own” culture is put first while the out-group is categorised as a “problem”. The second phase entails emphasising the linguistic patterns of the dominant group so that the out-group experiences culture rejection. Giroux (1981: 84) explains:

The message here for students is more implicit but no less powerful; they are being told that their cultural centre of gravity, their mode of generating meaning in the world, does not matter. Instead they are told that what they bring to the class is less important than what they are given.

This rejection results in two outcomes, viz. their own (stigmatised) variety is used to maintain their group identity and to obstruct inter-group communication. The most drastic of the three phases is the phase of resistance during which the out-group moves away from the mother tongue to another language in order to be freed from the rejection. This was illustrated by the refusal of some “Coloureds” to communicate in Afrikaans (Esterhuysen 1986: 23).

But in “white Afrikaner” political history conflict was also often lurking within own ranks. According to Du Preez (1983) Afrikaner leaders are in danger of being rejected if they are perceived as too outspoken or seen to be campaigning for fundamental change. If, in addition, they are suspected of collaboration with proponents of change outside Afrikaner society, they will be rejected forthwith. In the last days of apartheid leaders who favoured the renewal of Afrikaner master symbols were seen by conservative Afrikaners as a potential threat to the Afrikaner nation and its master symbols. Afrikaner leaders found that the changes they proposed did not fit into their established symbolic framework and they could hardly campaign for change without being rejected by some of their ‘own people’. This unyielding attitude regarding existing symbols was a symptom of the fear of change and growth, linked to the Afrikaner master symbol *the Afrikaner has always felt threatened*.

## 2.7 THE INTENDED ADOPTER

Audiences construct their own responses to texts which they read against the backdrop of their own class, race, gender and religious experiences (Apple & Christian-Smith 1991). Interaction between *change agent* and *intended adopter* is important here and Ellsworth (n.d.) insists that there should be a flow of communication between the change agent and intended adopter to ensure the success of the change process. The flow of communication between *Ruimland* as change agent and subsequent Afrikaans textbook publishers (the adopters) needs to be investigated to determine the success of the change process.

### 2.7.1 Afrikaans textbook studies

Several studies have focused on the impact of the narratives, dialogues and visual material in language textbooks on moral and political values (Webb 1992; Esterhuyse 1986; Du Preez 1983 and Spencer 1997). Controversial topics should not be avoided, as students need to be equipped to recognise bias and resist inculcation and indoctrination. Limiting references to religious matters or omitting religious ideas, practices, motivations and institutions will merely promote the use of silences as subtle stereotyping (Esterhuyse 1986; Du Preez 1983).

Esterhuyse's (1986) intensive socio-linguistic examination of *Afrikaans my Taal* (1981) and *Ons Moedertaal* (1979) determined the socio-linguistic norms in the books as well as the extent to which they cater for the psychosocial needs of Afrikaans learners. Language stereotyping, in this case, the stigmatisation of "Coloureds", started with the implementation of Standard Civilised Language (the colonialist belief that whites brought civilisation to South Africa). Cape Afrikaans is referred to as the "unmentioned" variety according to the same principal found in the literature, viz. "total omission"- stereotyping achieved by denying the existence of a specific group. Examples were found not only of omitting the unique character of the Cape language variety, but of idioms and abbreviations that emanated mainly from the white milieu, e.g. farming and Christian religion. The disparagement of the Muslim faith especially was almost libellous, and *Afrikaans my Taal* (1981) is for example quoted as defining "kramat" as the "'sacred' grave of a Mohammedan". (The author intent is clearly shown by the use of inverted commas with regard to the word 'sacred'. The implication is that the grave is not truly sacred).

Esterhuyse (1986) and Webb (1992)) also refer to the attempt of textbooks to portray the language of the "Coloureds" as coarse and humorous, thereby reinforcing the clown or "jolly

Hottentot” stereotype. Other facets include the distorted historical version of the Malay and Khoikhoi contribution to the language, the use of names, surnames, place names and addresses associated with whites.

Of the seven categories of unacceptability for prescribed poems at school level only those relevant to this research are mentioned here, viz. racist words, poems which stereotype or present negative cultural associations and Afrikaner-centric poems or poems linked to only one religion (Du Plessis & Du Plessis 1987).

Webb (1992), Esterhuysen (1986) and Du Preez (1983) discuss language representation and exclusiveness as a result of the apartheid policy. The exclusion of the out-group (people of colour) on grounds of language variety, as well as the need for methodological and visual representational change in Afrikaans textbooks is examined.

In Esterhuysen’s (1986) sociolinguistic study, a comprehensive view of Afrikaner exclusivism as sociolinguistic manipulation by syllabus designers, prescribing committees and textbook writers, sacrosanct myths about Afrikaans and speakers of Afrikaans are tested against universally accepted sociolinguistic rules. The focus is primarily on the speakers and their social background, as language is regarded as the “intricate bearer of a common history” (1986: 2). The following are the most important points in his discussion of language varieties:

- The status of a specific variety within a speech community is in direct proportion to the socio-political power of its speakers.
- “Coloured” Afrikaans speakers’ cultural diversity and social strata were ignored during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Their voice was denied with regard to the evolution of the language and “Coloured” varieties of Afrikaans were heavily stigmatised.
- “Verbal intimidation” results in an identity crisis because deep-set cultural language values are systematically destroyed; the person begins to believe his trusted home language is not acceptable” (1986: 20).

Esterhuysen (1986) relies on the Whorfian hypothesis: a group that isolates itself also circulates isolated thoughts. He also refers to a pedagogic investigation into Afrikaans prescribed books by the then Transvaal Education Department (TED), pointing out four of the criteria applied:

1. Values must have a Christian Reformatory basis.
2. Events should take place within a national framework.
3. Religious beliefs of (possibly white?) parents and children should be respected.
4. The historic background should acknowledge Afrikaner Nationalism in integration with the Christian foundation.

The twelve master symbols described by Du Preez (1986) reflect these norms: the fundamental requirement in the Afrikaner context was that only positive aspects of the Afrikaner past be portrayed in books. Ultimately a link is pointed out between this assertion and the shaping of the Afrikaner adolescent's identity. It is described as a vicious circle which deprived the Afrikaner adolescent of the opportunity to experience the problematic nature of a life characterised by varying degrees of good and bad, consequently reinforcing the master symbols as the sole reality.

The apparently most recent studies on Afrikaans textbooks are those completed by Phfeiffer (1992) and Kusendila (2003). The first is a review of classroom teaching materials by a lecturer in the Afrikaans department at the University of the Witwatersrand, in which *Ruimland* is seen as liberating after the many years of “drab and bor(ing)” material” (Phfeiffer 1992: 85). Subsequently Pheiffer (1992: 87) motivates and describes the use of *Ruimland 9 & 10* (Botha et al. 1990) as a second language university textbook in their department:

The standard Afrikaans textbook was referred to as “drab and bore” (sic). Unfortunately, through the use of particular texts, examples and terminology, there has also often been an entrenchment of racial stereotypes in particular and Nationalist ideology in general. In this regard *Ruimland* offers an encouraging alternative ... and we as a Department of Afrikaans are impressed by the way in which it presents a new face to Afrikaans: new in terms of being free from and independent of an underlying Nationalist ideology, new too in terms of its innovative teaching methods.

Kusendila (2003), previously mentioned for her comparative study of Afrikaans and Flemish textbooks, emphasises the relation between mother tongue textbooks in language education and the development of certain social and political phenomena based on exclusiveness or inclusiveness. She finds that *Raamwerk* (Traut et al. 2001) presents the textbook's new humanistic ideal on the one hand and the discourse of today and yesterday on the other hand. She finds a highly inclusive South African nationality and inclusive multi-culturalism based on "unity through diversity" (Kusendila 2003: 92). As previously mentioned, Kusendila's study indicates progressive change in terms of representational practices in Afrikaans textbooks since the publication of *Ruimland*.

## 2.8 ENVIRONMENT

There is a dynamic systemic interaction between the different components of the *Communication Change Model* and each instance of the model occurs within an *environment*, whose conditions will interact with the change process to bring about its success, and which contains resistance factors that may distort the message or could interact with the innovative message.

Apple and Christian-Smith (1991: 2) describe texts as intrinsically part of social and political contexts:

Texts are not simply delivery systems or facts. They are at once the result of political, economical and cultural activities, battles and compromises. They are conceived, designed and authored by people with real interests ... they participate in creating what a society has recognised as legitimate and truthful.

A brief overview of critical theorists' perspectives on the context or environment within which the components of the Communication Change Model operate, will be followed by a discussion of the concept of stereotyping, which in this study, is examined as embedded in representational practices in Afrikaans textbooks.

### 2.8.1 Critical theory studies

Judging from a *critical theory* perspective, Jansen (1997), Smit (1979), Polakow-Suransky (2002) all advocate the embodiment of political symbolism in education in society. A

phenomenon like the Christian National Education system in South Africa during the apartheid era is a prime example. The innovative message in Smit (1979) calls for a holistic curriculum, integrating a critical awareness of all the many contexts of a learner's life as well as community and global perspectives. Jansen (1997) highlights the curriculum as an "important lens through which to understand gender, race and class inequalities in any society". For this study the question is whether the innovative message of the *Ruimland* series as a "transitional curriculum" (Pienaar 1995) was a successful new lens through which race-representational practices in South Africa could be viewed and understood.

Hall (in Apple & Christian-Smith 1991: 12) describes the symbolic power of the curriculum as follows:

The circle of dominant ideas does accumulate the symbolic power to map or classify the world of others ... their dominance lies precisely in the power they have to contain within their limits, to frame within their circumference of thought, the reasoning and calculation of other social groups.

According to Apple and Christian-Smith (1991: 80) representational practices have two outcomes, firstly they legitimise the dominant status of the in-group and secondly, they present socially constructed relations as "natural", in other words, subjective perceptions are projected as facts:

This kind of social control legitimates existing social relations and the status of those who dominate, and it does so in a way that implies that there are no alternative versions of the world, and that the interpretations being taught in schools, are indeed, undisputed fact.

This was indeed the result, with regard to Afrikaans first language textbooks, of the stagnation and limited view which characterised the apartheid past (Esterhuyse 1986; Webb 1992). Only one version of the world, that of the Afrikaner, dominated and impacted representational practices significantly and made progressive change difficult and complex.



### 2.8.2 Stereotyping

The word stereotype is comprised of the two Greek words *stereos* and *tupos* meaning rigid and trace. As defined by Leyens, et al. (1984) “stereotypes are shared beliefs about a person’s attributes, usually personality traits, but often also behaviours of a group of people”.

Stereotyping originated in Aristotle’s *Physiognomonic* (Hinchman 1999), the analysis of people’s facial and bodily characteristics, their perceived similarity to animals and the belief that humans and animals had common character traits. By the eighteenth century, before the word “stereotype” came into being, the interest in the relationship between human form and character permeated all disciplines, e.g. art, literature and philosophy. Blumenbach (1752-1840) and Lavater (1741-1801) were two of the leading figures in physiognomy, the study of comparative anatomy. During the nineteenth century physiognomists such as Samuel R. Wells (1820-1875) and Joseph Simms (1833-1920) turned such interests into blatant racial prejudices. Their *New Physiognomy* (n.d.) found its way into an illustrated encyclopaedia on West Africa by Colonel Frey: *Cote Occidentale d’Afrique* (n.d.) which was purported to offer an unbiased approach to West Africa. The French philosopher, linguist and educator, Barthes (1977) developed the theory of “occidentalism”, which claimed that French culture and mores were universal. Barthes specifically focused on non-verbal signs and described society as a construct perpetuated by signs of dominant values within its culture. Occidentalism, according to Barthes (1977), is a set of “blindings”, providing only one tool for understanding, namely rhetoric which operates as “truth”, but is in fact only a tool used for persuasion.

Although bel hooks (pseudonym1992), like Barthes, sees stereotyping as a cultural process, she describes stereotypes as a form of “lazy” knowledge. Most literary and cultural works limit themselves to stereotypes held by the “dominant” culture, which is frequently described as white, male, western and heterosexual. The function of stereotypes is determined by who is being stereotyped by whom. The group doing the stereotyping is the in-group (perceiver) and the group being stereotyped is the out-group or target. On grounds of the already mentioned finding of Kusendila (2003) that the new out-group in Afrikaans textbook series was the “old apartheid Afrikaner”, one can deduce that the environment has changed dramatically in the decade after apartheid and that the conservative “white Afrikaner” has been marginalised.

Power is usually directed against the subordinate or excluded group and includes not only physical coercion or economic exploitation, but also symbolic power, the power to use representational practices to represent someone in a certain way. Hall (in Hinchman 1999) notes that stereotyping reduces people to a few, simple, essential characteristics which are represented as fixed by nature. Stereotyping tends to occur where power inequalities exist.

Most psychologists seem to agree that as Ryan, Park and Judd write (1996:122):

Human beings have a limited capacity for processing information. Stereotypes serve to organize and simplify a complex social world and thus are often likely to take the form of overgeneralizations.

Stereotyping, thus, is *the way people seek to know and understand others in the world at large, i.e. by generalising*. It therefore seems appropriate for Barthes to state in his autobiography that “stereotypes are everywhere”, and for post-colonial scholars to suggest that the model for an individual knowing groups of people should be based on the way an individual knows other individuals. The indicators *generalising* and *simplifying* which will be used in the data analysis thus lie at the heart of stereotyping and representation.

## 2.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter has sketched the issues in influential theoretical writings about the textbook as an (ideological) change agent, shifting identity theories and racial representation. Controversy and the status of Afrikaans textbooks have also been described with emphasis on the Master Symbol Model, which is the main construct guiding the research. All the studies in this chapter illustrate the subject of the study and provide conceptual parameters for changing representational practices.

## CHAPTER 3

### 3. RESEARCH DESIGN

#### 3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the design choices used in this study to answer the question:

*To what extent does racial representation in Afrikaans language textbook series reflect the changing ideology during the final years of apartheid?* The chapter comprises the following:

- epistemological perspectives that have shaped the conceptualisation and methodology of this inquiry
- an outline of the methods used to gather and organise the data
- a discussion of the selection and treatment of data sources with regard to the research question
- a reflection on the methodological justifications.

#### 3.2 QUALITATIVE CASE STUDY DESIGN

Coherence is achievable between a qualitative approach and an exploratory viewpoint, as the latter searches for new insights into phenomena like racial representation by employing an open, flexible and inductive approach (Terre Blanche & Durrheim 2002). The research question suggests a qualitative approach since it demands an understanding of the impact of racial representation in a transitional Afrikaans textbook on ideological change in South Africa, which in turn requires an understanding of the context of the data. The *case study design* was chosen for this research because contextual elements (as explained in chapter one) contributed to the uniqueness of the setting, especially in the light of the then uncertain political climate. The case study, coupled with a qualitative approach could assist in the exploration of the rich descriptions of attitudes, expressions, perceptions, views and beliefs of all the role players. The descriptions could simultaneously be read in terms of the impact of the changing socio-political climate in South Africa:

The word qualitative implies an emphasis on process and meanings that are not rigorously examined or measured (if measured at all), in terms of quantity, amount, intensity or frequency. Qualitative researchers stress the socially

constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied, and the situational constraints that shape inquiry. They seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning. In contrast, quantitative studies emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes (Denzin & Lincoln 2001: 4).

Qualitative involvement in this research will enable enquiry beyond the restrictions of quantitative analysis, adding rigour by engaging with the historic social world as presented in the data. It will furthermore allow for the verification of the findings based on the primary data through the interviews with participants or role players, who in a sense *lived* the experience in the historically created world that will, through archival data, become the object of research. According to Miles and Huberman (1994: 10) one of the core reasons for choosing a qualitative approach is that:

Qualitative data, with their emphasis on people's 'lived experiences', are fundamentally well suited for locating the meanings people place on the events, processes, and structures of their lives: their 'perceptions, assumptions, prejudgements, presuppositions', and for connecting these meanings to the social world around them.

The above description reflects the advantage of a qualitative rather than quantitative approach in acquiring in-depth insights into the essence of this research problem.

### **3.2.1 Epistemological perspectives**

This study is committed to a constructionist understanding of a historical event. The historic focus of the study is the transitional road to a new, democratic South Africa and the impact of a textbook series on this process. Constructionism has been chosen as the basis for the research in an attempt to monitor the ensemble of ideas by which meaning is constructed and to discover the effects revealed by this construction. There is no hypothesis to prove or disregard, but the working assumption as mentioned in chapter one is to explore and discuss all role players' perspectives, responses and voices in order to untangle the embedded meanings, networks and ideological representations in the data. The attempt to construct a narrative from contrary perceptions based on ideological differences is emergent from the data.

### 3.2.2 Data selection

Racial representation as a basis for building a democratic South Africa guided the design of the study and ensured that the study achieved what it set out to do, i.e. to determine whether the emerging re-contextualised ideological framework in South Africa manifested itself in a transitional Afrikaans first language textbook series. The evidence used to address the research question is constituted by the data, viz. the authentic *archival documents* (press and parliamentary reports from the time under review) and *interviews* pertaining to these documents. Both sets of evidence mirror the reactions of different ideological groupings during the transitional political phase. The data in this study are so inextricably linked to the literature study and conceptual framework that the one is literally the outcome of the other. The literature creates a web of knowledge that supports the focus of the investigation. The data were organised, analysed and compared to the relevant existing literature and theory. More importantly, the sampling and procedure of analysis emerged from the literature study in the sense that the need for representational change as well as traces of change which were already part of a process, became apparent. It was in other words the realisation during the literature study that the construction of a new social identity had already commenced, that foregrounded the role of the *Ruimland* series as a change agent and led the researcher to consider its impact on the change process. The next step was to select a method of investigation that would best provide the data needed to answer the research question and address the issue of reliability. This inquiry consequently draws on two research methods within the constructionist, qualitative paradigm, i.e. the **content analysis** of documents, press reports and **interviews** with experts.

### 3.2.3 Data collection

The following brief exposition contains the justifications for data collection.

- *Data sources*

The *Ruimland* series was chosen because of the controversy in the press and in parliament. The controversy in the Afrikaans textbook domain evoked emotional responses as no other series had in the past. This source could therefore show emerging ideological patterns or tendencies which could be rich data regarding the study of change in the highly politicised

era just before the abandonment of apartheid. The data were gathered in an attempt to examine the process of change. The interviews as selected data sources will either support or contradict the interpretation of the content analysis. The interviews will be used to supplement and to measure the objectivity of the initial interpretation. Since the aim of the study is to attain in-depth insight into the impact of the series, questions will be used to elicit reflective narrative responses during the interviews.

Two authors who were at the centre of the controversy will be interviewed and might be able to explain the reasons and motives for writing the series and the impact of the controversy on the process they initially had in mind. Two academics were interviewed as they were not as closely involved with the issue as the authors were, yet they could recall the incident and the impact it had. The publisher's representatives were also chosen to enrich the description of the impact of the series. The findings of the content analysis will, as a final step in the analysis, be evaluated according to corresponding information obtained from the interviews.

The reason for choosing the three categories of role players is both historical and ideological. The interviewees were either affected by the controversy (the authors and publishers) or at least intellectually interested enough (the academics) to observe the ideological tennis on the transitional court. They would therefore probably remember what was at stake, who the role players were and what the impact of the series was, more so than for example, teachers or learners who needed a textbook only as a teaching or learning aid.

- *Content analysis*

The research question posed in this study demands a multifaceted methodological approach. The research is historical in that it focuses on a historical event, viz. a transitional period in South African history, ending the forty-year grip of apartheid. The historic and sociological nature of this study demands a methodology enabling the reconstruction and interpretation of past events. Documentary publications of a specific era seem to be the ideal vehicle for exploring historical events. Therefore the decision to use the archival data, the only available empirical documentation of this historic occurrence in the change-specific era, was apt. The documentation serves two purposes, firstly, it offers an understanding of the depiction of different racial groups in South Africa in a single source during the transitional period.

Secondly, the source can be examined to determine the frequency and transferability of such depictions at that specific time in South African history.

In this study the manifestation of the three master symbols under investigation will determine the impact of the textbook series as a change agent. A search for the manifestation and consequently the deconstruction, of these three versions of the social world associated with racial, religious and cultural issues forms the core of the study. Du Preez's (1983) findings will be used to identify three master symbols in the data: *whites are superior while blacks are inferior/ the Afrikaner has a privileged relationship with God/ the Afrikaner feels threatened.*

Scott (in Bryman 2001) recommends assessing documents in terms of *authenticity, credibility and representativeness*. The archival data to be used in this case study comply with all three criteria. The authentic archival data are credible and representative. The sample is *representative* because every published report written during the controversy has been included, i.e. "purposeful sampling" (Terre Blanche & Durrheim 2002: 45). The data are *credible* because the interviews will enable the researcher to identify discrepancies while evaluating the findings. The data are *authentic* from a constructionist point of view as written documents contain meaning which can be regarded "as carefully crafted attempts at persuasion" (Terre Blanche & Durrheim (2002: 155) independent of the authors' intention.

Qualitative researchers often infer themes from texts, referred to by grounded theorists as *open coding*, and by classic content analysts as *qualitative analysis* (Berleson 1952) or *latent coding* (Shapiro & Markoff 1997). There are a number of variations of these methods. In content analysis **coding units**, which best capture data, can be selected. The five most common types of coding units in content analysis according to Mouton (2002) are:

- Words: the smallest possible unit. Key words are easily identified and are generally reliably classified by content analysts.
- Themes: the next, larger unit. A theme may be a simple sentence or single idea.
- Character: in which the content is divided each time a person or object is mentioned. This unit is useful for identifying relationships and spans of control between individuals within the entity.

- Item: it is the whole unit in which the content was originally generated. Item analysis is useful when variations within items are small or unimportant.
- Space and time.

Dispositions may also be revealed in content analysis through the coding of ideologies, beliefs or principles (Bryman 2001: 185). The coding of ideologies, beliefs or principles will be applied here as that is what needs to be assessed to answer the research question. However, *character* will be used as a coding unit, as it is a useful tool for juxtaposing different role players and ideologies.

- *Interviews*

Unstructured hour-long interviews were held with the senior publisher: Afrikaans and the marketing and sales director at Maskew Miller Longman; two authors of the series, Japie Pienaar and Jan Esterhuysen; two academics who observed the process over time and showed a keen interest in the role of the *Ruimland* series in addressing apartheid myths; professor Hein Willemsse, the Afrikaans head of department at the University of Pretoria and Mari Nöthling, an academic study guide specialist at the University of South Africa (UNISA). The interviewees might seem to supply one-sided evidence because they are all in favour of the book, but as the aim is to establish whether *progressive change* toward a multi-racial society was the outcome of the series, and not who was right and who was wrong, this is not a limitation. Interviews were used to ascertain opinions or attitudes at another level. The interview method was a “tool for obtaining the perceptions and interpretations of key stakeholders regarding research findings” (Vaughn, Schumm & Sinagub 1996: 28). The interviews will also serve as validation as they will be used to assist and re-evaluate the interpretation of the content analysis. Enriching the interpretive data adds depth and dimension to the knowledge gained. The interviews were in-depth, individual, open-ended and unstructured so as not to circumscribe information, although questions had been prepared before each interview. Two of the interviews were conducted via email because of distance and time constraints.

### 3.3 DATA ANALYSIS

The next section of this chapter consists of a conscious, explicit reflection on the data to determine which tools and procedures to utilise.



### 3.3.1 Content analysis procedure

The guidelines in Ryan's *Techniques to identify themes in qualitative data I* (2000) will direct the process, which will be further explained in chapter four, where the data will be interpreted and analysed. The content analysis procedure will now be explained in detail and comparisons will be drawn between paragraphs and across informants (Mayer 2000). Sandelowski (in Ryan 2000) observes that the analysis of texts begins with proofreading the material and simply underlining key phrases "because they make some as yet inchoate sense". Bernard (in Ryan 2000) refers to this as the *ocular scan method*, otherwise known as "eyeballing".

A detailed logical and chronological version of the unfolding events will be constructed after each document has been scrutinised with regard to every role player's part. Each line or sentence will be read and reread and the questions "what is this about?" and "how does it differ from the preceding or following statements?" will be answered. The detailed work will ensure that the focus is on the data rather than on theoretical flights of fancy. Charmaz (in Ryan 2000) notes that this process may be used to identify themes in the text, in this analysis the *incidents, methods used to legitimise the reasoning, different voices, arguments and emotive language* will be used.

The final scrutiny-based approach which Ryan (2000) suggests, is in direct contrast to typical theme identification techniques. Instead of searching for themes, the search is for what is *missing* from the text, as much can be learned from a text by what is *not* mentioned. As early as 1959, propaganda analysts found that material not covered in political speeches was sometimes more predictive than material that was covered (George in Ryan 2000). Silences sometimes indicate areas that people are unwilling or afraid to discuss. The investigation into what is *not* said will be used to identify underlying cultural assumptions. Latent content will be just as important as manifest content, in addition attempts will be made to probe beneath the surface and to ask (and answer) searching questions.

In the quest to identify themes in texts as suggested by Ryan (2000), the techniques will include: an analysis of words (word repetitions, key indigenous terms and key-words in context), a careful reading of larger blocks of text (comparing and contrasting, social science

queries and searching for missing information), an intentional analysis of linguistic features (metaphors, transitions and connectors) and the physical manipulation of unmarked texts (“pawing”/discovering, cutting and sorting procedures).

Maxwell in Ryan 2000 notes that themes are found by reviewing the literature. The richer the literature the more themes it contains. Themes are derived from the characteristics of the phenomena being studied. Themes are also gleaned through already agreed upon professional definitions and from local common-sense constructs. Other factors that influence the derivation of themes are the researcher’s values, theoretical orientation and personal experience of the subject matter.

Themes and indicators surrounding the main components of the Change Communication Model will most likely emerge through the data and will be linked to the manifestation of the three master symbols which are under investigation. Each analysis will be reproduced in writing according to the relevant categories.

### **3.3.2 Interviews**

The data from the interviews will be analysed inductively, similarities and differences between experiences and opinions presented in the content analysis and those presented in the interviews will be traced. This will facilitate the finding of patterns in the data. The account of the research conducted will thus be checked by the information obtained from the interviews, examining it for contradictions, summaries of material, over-interpretation and instances of interpretations infected with personal prejudices on the part of the researcher. No deconstruction will be involved in analysing the interviews, as they will be used only to evaluate and validate the outcomes of the content analysis. This will assist the researcher to monitor the frame of meaning as it will provide information against which to interpret the analysis.

## **3.4 DATA INTERPRETATION**

### **3.4.1 Content analysis procedure**

The text will be coded and examined in manageable categories on a variety of levels, e.g. words, word sense, phrases, sentences and themes. Indicators obtained from the literature

study (see chapter two) like *generalisation*, *language representation*, *characterisation*, *cultural sensitivity*, *historical comments* and *emotive language* will determine the extent to which the master symbols occur or act as counter-symbols.

### **3.4.2 Interviews**

As stated earlier, interviews will be conducted with the sales and marketing manager and senior publisher of Maskew Miller Longman as well as authors and leading academics, in order to gain a better understanding of the context of the controversy. Visual aspects like the cover designs, illustrations and other visual material, the sales strategy and the titles will enrich the understanding of the possibly deliberate, yet subtle, ideological undertone in the texts. Field notes as well as tape recordings of the interviews will facilitate the documenting of the responses and the descriptions of experiences and views.

## **3.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The following table summarises the methodology utilised to solve the research problem and to realise the aims and objectives of the research:

Table 2: Methodology

Step in the process	Method	Reason
Sampling/selection of data sources	Scrutiny of archival documents on the role of the <i>Ruimland</i> series in schools.	To obtain rich data for determining racial representation and progressive change toward a multi-racial society.
Data analysis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis of press and parliamentary reports.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "Breaking up" data into patterns in the verbal material through manual analysis.</li> <li>• Analysing the data from archival reports on the <i>Ruimland</i> series between 1989-1993.</li> </ul>
Data interpretation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Content analysis interpretation.</li> </ul> <p>Unstructured interviews with the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• authors and leading academics</li> <li>• sales manager and the senior publisher of the series.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To categorise the results determined by three master symbols that act as indicators.</li> <li>• Examination of categories to determine and describe main themes and link them to master symbols.</li> </ul> <p>To:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• re-evaluate the evaluations of the researcher</li> <li>• explain certain trends, policies and politics.</li> </ul>

### 3.5.1 Content analysis

There are numerous interpretations and definitions regarding content analysis which is a very flexible method that can be applied to a variety of media. In a sense, content analysis is not a data-generating method, but rather an approach to the analysis of documents and texts. However, because of its distinctive approach to analysis, it is usually treated as a research method (Bryman 2001). The following statements illustrate that definitions of content analysis differ considerably.

Content analysis is a methodology for determining the content of written, recorded, or published communications via a systematic, objective and quantitative procedure. Thus, it is a set of procedures for collecting and organising information in a standard format that allows analysts to draw inferences about the characteristics and meaning of recorded material (Methodological Manual 1995: 1).

A quantitatively oriented technique by which standardised measurements are applied to metrically defined units and these are used to characterise and compare documents (Manning & Cullum-Swan in Denzin & Lincoln 2001).

Qualitative content analysis is defined as an approach of empirical, methodological, controlled analysis of texts within their context of communication, following content-analytical rules and step-by-step models, without rash quantification (Mayer 2000).

Content analysis is a research technique for the objective, systematic and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication (Berelson (1952) in Bryman 2001: 18).

Content analysis is any technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages (Holsti (1969) in Bryman 2001: 14).

All the definitions emphasise the objective, systematic inferences of content analysis, yet some label it explicitly as an exclusively quantitative methodology. Although content analysis seems to be firmly rooted in quantitative research with the aim of producing

quantitative accounts of the raw material in terms of categories specified by the rules, Holsti (1969) does not mention it, while Mayer (2000), in his definition of qualitative content analysis, distinguishes clearly between the qualitative and quantitative paradigms.

Consistency, methodological rules and procedures are the means by which content analysis (quantitative or qualitative) ensures transparency and prevents researcher bias. Rules are clearly specified in advance for the assignment of raw material to categories. Objectivity, in this sense, is vested in the fact that the procedures for assigning the raw material to categories are transparent, so that the analyst's personal biases intrude as little as possible. Content analysts simply apply the relevant rules. Researcher bias is suppressed through the consistent application of rules.

The definitions cited show that quantification is concerned with uncovering the apparent content of the item in question, i.e. what it is about. Holsti (1969), however, makes no such reference, alluding to only "specified characteristics" thereby opening the door to analysis in terms of "latent content", i.e. meanings beneath the superficial indicators of content (Bryman 2001: 178). This research is qualitative and concerns the unravelling of the *latent* content, i.e. intention, perspective and attitude. If it had involved *apparent* content, quantitative content analysis would have been applied.

- *Advantages of content analysis*

In order to justify the qualitative content analysis design, the major advantages of content analysis applicable to this study will be discussed.

Content analysis, according to Mouton (2002) can help analysts learn more about issues of interest, add qualitative richness to quantitative data and validate evidence from other sources. Bryman (2001: 189) mentions the following advantages:

- Content analysis is a very transparent research method. It is this transparency that often causes content analysis to be referred to as an objective method of analysis.
- It allows the researcher to track changes in frequency over time.
- Content analysis is often referred to favourably as an unobtrusive method. It is a non-reactive method and has no reactive effect.
- It is a highly flexible method. It can be applied to a wide variety of different kinds of unstructured information.

- Content analysis can allow information to be generated about social groups that are difficult to access.

Although the above advantages are all applicable to this study, the last one is the most appropriate for the purpose of this research, viz. to penetrate the minds of ideological groups and to trace their motives and modus operandi in fighting for or saving what they hold dear. It also suits the constructionist paradigm.

- *Disadvantages of content analysis*

Mouton (2002) points out a number of disadvantages regarding content analysis, viz. it can be costly and time-consuming, pose reliability and validity problems and can be challenged as being too subjective. Bryman (2001) lists further disadvantages, i.e. the search for traditional markers increases the potential for invalid inference; it is difficult to ascertain the answers to “why” questions through content analysis - suggested answers are usually merely speculations; the emphasis on measurement could easily and unwittingly result in emphasising what is measurable rather than what is theoretically significant or important.

Bryman (2001: 191) suggests the following solution:

Sometimes users of content analysis have been able to shed some light on “why” questions raised by their investigations by conducting additional data collection exercises. Such exercises might include qualitative content analysis and /or interviews.

In the current research the data are tested against the interviews which serve as references outside the actual content analysis. The use of the interviews validates and enhances the reliability of the study and minimises the potential for invalid inference and subjectivity by maintaining a focus on that which is theoretically significant. In the last instance the data collection is not costly or time-consuming as it comprises only eleven newspaper reports and one parliamentary report.

## 3.6 METHODOLOGICAL JUSTIFICATIONS

### 3.6.1 Reliability

The following methods were used to ensure reliability:

- **Multi-method design (crystallisation)**

Denzin and Lincoln (2001: 57) describe crystallisation as “... the writer tells the same tale from different points of view ... It is a strength that adds rigour, breadth, complexity, richness and depth to any inquiry”. The two methods, *content analysis* and *interviewing* complement each other and ensure an understanding of the research question. The conceptualisation and the literature are used to challenge the findings, i.e. to determine whether the findings correspond to the theoretical aspects. The content analysis, interviews and literature are inseparably linked and also serve the purpose of triangulation.

- **Cross-checking**

Qualitative content analysis risks a possible lack of objectivity. Re-examining the data and cross-checking the interpretations with the interviews are the means used to counter researcher-subjectivity. Reliability will be enhanced as the researcher’s own interpretation. will be re-evaluated through crosschecking the interpretive data to test perspectives and formulations.

- **Disconfirming evidence**

Three master symbols have been chosen for scrutiny in terms of the conceptual framework. It could be worthwhile to determine the extent of the *absence* of these symbols in the controversy. Such an investigation could shed light on the presence of counter-symbols in the period covered by the research, which could be indicative of progressive ideological change away from racial exclusion toward democracy.



- **Participant involvement**

The publisher's "participant involvement" in this research is crucial. The interviews will serve not only to provide information regarding sales strategies and target groups, but constant contact with the publisher will ensure information on a variety of aspects such as workshops, articles and Gauteng Department of Education (GDE) documentation. Increased credibility will be achieved by involving Maskew Miller Longman in the research, because they, as the leading publishers of school textbooks, monopolise the school textbook market and as a result play a leading role in establishing certain attitudes and counter-stereotypes through representational practices in the textbooks they publish.

### **3.6.2 Limitations of the study**

- The sampling is limited to historical evidence in the form of eleven archival reports, thus a very small sample size. However, as previously mentioned, an in-depth understanding of a small but information-rich sample (*purposeful sampling*) is acceptable within the constructionist paradigm. Establishing links between the interview data and the reports to obtain a clear image and a broader understanding of the specific historic era and events augments the sample.
- The researcher runs the risk of limiting the frame of reference, which could result in stereotypical and narrow findings. As content analysis is largely dependent on the honesty of the researcher, caution will be exercised in attempting to link the master symbols of the Afrikaner to the data. In an effort to counter subjectivity the interpretations will be evaluated against and compared to the interview data.

### **3.6.3 Ethical considerations**

Although no special permission is required to conduct this research, it will be done with the full knowledge and participation of the publisher of the textbook series, Maskew Miller Longman. Permission to use illustrations from the textbook series will be obtained as required by copyright legislation. The interviews will be voluntary and the participants will be informed of the objective of the research, namely to gain insight into the impact of the

series on change towards non-racial representation in textbooks (also see the ethics statement in the addendum).

### 3.7 CONCLUSION

Chapter three comprises a description of and motivation for the research design and methodological approach; an explanation of the inductive approach in the constructionist paradigm and a discussion of the reliability and limitations of the study. The analysis and data interpretation form the focus of the following chapter.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### 4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

#### 4.1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to describe and explain the impact of the textbook series on the emerging re-contextualised ideological framework in South Africa during the final phase of the apartheid era. This chapter presents the results of the exploratory, descriptive and interpretive investigation which attempts to provide an answer to the research question and sub-questions:

To what extent did racial representation in an Afrikaans language textbook series act as a change agent in the final years of apartheid?

- a) How should a textbook function as a change agent?
- b) What was the role *Ruimland* played in deliberately dealing with “the other” Afrikaans first language speakers?
- c) What was the nature of the change?

The chapter focuses mainly on the different attitudes gleaned from the data. It explores the significance of these attitudes in terms of their links to the three master symbols which were investigated to determine the degree of exclusivity and isolation of the in-group, the appropriation of a privileged relationship with God and, finally, generalising and simplifying “the other” (people of colour).

The data analysis was based on the methods of Miles and Huberman (1994) according to which the researcher is the main part of the research tool in a qualitative analysis. In this chapter the data analysis and interpretation are presented together. This research focuses on racial perceptions surrounding the publication of an Afrikaans first language textbooks series. It determines whether there were changes in the perceptions of Afrikaners regarding other races during the last days of apartheid. Furthermore, it identifies ideological recurring themes and issues in textbooks during the transitional time. The purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which an Afrikaans language textbook series acted as a change agent in terms of racial representation on the eve of democracy in South Africa.

## 4.2 DATA ANALYSIS

The task in this section is to identify some of the values and assumptions in the subjects' responses contained in the reports, in order to illustrate the polarisation in the ideological world of the Afrikaner at this historic time. Much of what follows in the content analysis is acknowledged to be speculative and incomplete, as the results are clues that need to be evaluated against the data gathered from the interviews. A number of categories were established, which as emerging themes, were relevant in relation to the research question and sub-questions. The analytical procedure is an attempt to develop a narrative to show the relationship between the various data components. This entailed a search for historical evidence that would fit or contradict the emerging narrative.

Polkinghorne (1989) refers to the drawing together of events and the integration of those events into an organised whole, as a process. Thus the process of interpreting data and using it to construct the historical narratives in this study is the focus of the next section.

### 4.2.1 Content analysis

- *First phase of analysis: from fabula to narrative*

A first analysis was done to capture the themes and to chronicle the polemic. The unfolding events were logically and chronologically described as related, in exactly the way they were presented in the data. Each document was summarised along the lines of every role player's part in terms of act, scene, agent and purpose (Burke in Bergman 2003) so that the *story* (the fabula: the raw, temporally-sequenced events) was transposed into a *narrative text* related by agents: who are the actors? (who is represented?); who is the authority? (in whose names are statements made?); what are the locations? (where was it published?); what is the subject matter of the conflicts? and are they resolved in the end? No interpretations are offered in this first analysis. The context is (according to the Austin's (1962) Speech Act Theory), described as a collection of "locutionary speech acts" (Bergman & Mottier 2003).

- *Second phase of analysis: social significance of narratives*

The eleven newspaper and parliamentary reports were analysed a second time to determine the social significance of the narratives. The narratives were scanned to determine whose

experiences they revealed. The headlines and sub-headlines of the press reports already ‘tell a story’ about the social context, viz. emotional language, political and religious role players as well as the “New Age” threat.

*Table 3*

<b>HEADINGS AND SUB HEADINGS</b>
<b>Shocking facts in Afrikaans textbooks</b> (Verdeeldheid ... handboeke 1993).
<b>Parents wake up!</b> (Ouers, skrik ...duur voort. 1993)
<b>What is the New Age really about?</b> (Ouers, skrik ...duur voort. 1993)
<b>Is New Age penetrating our schools?</b> (Pienaar 1993)
<b>Platteland Mother objects to “naked woman”, evil symbol”</b> (Fulton 1991).
<b>Conservative Party (CP) Member of Parliament (MP) asks FW (de Klerk) to withdraw “diabolic book” from schools</b> (KP-LP....onttrek 1991)
<b>Another CP “solid oak” bites the dust</b> (Scott 1991)
<b>At a bookclub: ladies, reject this “hellish”book, he asks</b> (De Vries 1993)
<b>Row over “new SA” textbook</b> (Fulton 1991).
<b>Dissension in Dutch Reformed Church</b> (Verdeeldheid ... handboeke 1993).
<b>Controversy continues</b> (Ouers, skrik ...duur voort. 1993)
<b>Afrikaans no ideological ventriloquist</b> (Strydom 1993)
<b>Books strongly criticised - publisher reacts</b> (Verdeeldheid ... handboeke 1993).
<b>No New Age in language textbook says Dutch Reformed Church</b> (Van Niekerk 1993)

During the second analysis the text was coded into five categories to determine the social significance of the narratives, i.e. the incidents, different voices, arguments, techniques used to legitimise the reasoning and emotive language. In this regard Mumby (1993) refers to the double socially symbolic meaning of narratives: they take on meaning only in a social context and play a role in the construction of that social context as a site of meaning within which social actors are implicated. The already mentioned categories will now be discussed.

1. **Incidents in the melodrama:** the parents' row, summoning the school inspector, the call in parliament for the withdrawal of the series, the intervention of the Dutch Reformed Church and the lack of evidence in the investigation by the Synod of the Dutch Reformed Church.
2. **Different voices:** teachers, authors, writers, publishers, academics, politicians, journalists, learners, the National Education Department, school inspectors, the Youth Commission and the Church.
3. **The arguments:**
  - **In favour of *Ruimland*:** the book is relevant to all sectors of the South African community, it develops critical thinking skills, it will bring about ideological and methodological paradigm shifts and the content is stimulating, relevant and interesting.
  - **Against *Ruimland*:** the book reinforces uncertainty over the existence of God, it promotes theft, sex and drugs and propagates an incorrect attitude toward life because it is a New Age infiltration, it is a subtle, but well-orchestrated plan to corrupt learners, it challenges all traditional or exclusive ideas and it emphasises the emotional, spiritual world.
4. **Legitimising the reasoning**
  - **In favour of *Ruimland*:** the series promotes the popularity of Afrikaans as a school subject and Afrikaans moving across boundaries should be applauded. It does not threaten Christian beliefs and shows no sign of satanic symbols – people choose to read something sinister into pictures. Every creative illustration and exercise is seen as a New Age symbol - negative comments

and accusations are not sufficiently substantiated. Texts are representative of the South African cultural spectrum.

- **Against *Ruimland*:** “The book is full of naked women” (referring to the Rubens painting), one of the buttons on a denim jacket displays a satanic symbol and a black child is giving the black power salute. The series asks questions instead of taking a stand, e.g. “What is your attitude regarding drugs?” Two Christian schoolteachers researched the New Age principles and found that meditating techniques are recommended to find “space in oneself”. They also regarded a rainbow motif on one of the covers as a New Age symbol.

##### 5. Emotive language:

- **Against *Ruimland*:** “full of naked woman”, “hellish book”, “Parents should wake up”, “Shocking facts in grammar books”, “Let us stir flour (the symbol of Jesus) into this poisonous pot”, “We now know this enemy - are we going to let him take our children?” and “Spiritual corruption”.
- **In favour of *Ruimland*:** People who complained were described as “idiosyncratic”, “ridiculous”, “Just to read, is a hell of a problem”, “disgusting”, “stunt”, “undermining nonsense”, “horror-struck” and “the audacious accusations were blasphemous”.

This second analysis, in Czarniawskan terms (in Bergman & Mottier 2003), produces narratives through the process of association, of building the “and, and, and” connections between actions and events and negotiating them with the readers. It categorises different ideas and identities within one cultural grouping. The textbook thus becomes the playing field in the press for individuals and groups to pursue their conflicting interests. Performative speech acts (Austin in Bergman & Mottier 2003) will be used in the following analysis. These are speech acts that “do” something in “saying” something. They use the language of a constative statement in order to effect an action without explicitly saying so. What is the function of such speech acts in this second analysis? The core words and phrases used by *Ruimland* supporters are indicative of change, i.e. “relevant to all”, “critical thinking skills”, “paradigm shifts”, “stimulating” and “interesting”. On the other hand, words and phrases from those against *Ruimland*, reveal the threat it posed, viz. “uncertainty”, “wrong attitude”,

“infiltration”, “well-orchestrated plan to corrupt”, “old-fashioned” or “exclusive” ideas are challenged. In terms of the Change Communication Model (Rogers 1985), it is clear that the *innovation* introduced by the change agent (an innovation based on moving in the direction of a new dispensation based on equality), experiences *resistance* based on maintaining the status quo, in other words, defending the decades of apartheid. This corresponds to the static image or perception of the world (Du Preez 1983), as characterised by master symbols, and the view that attempts to change the stable political pattern of apartheid were regarded as threats to the “white Afrikaner”. As this research is an attempt to try to monitor the change to a democratic South Africa, Du Preez’s statement that democracy cannot exist where opposing opinions are regarded as “treason or heresy” (1983: 75) is particularly significant. The emotional language used in the data is significant in that it reflects the highly emotional responses aroused by the new political order that emerged in South Africa during the early nineties. Change brings about uncertainty, e.g., when the status quo is disturbed new demands shape the role and perspective of textbooks and consequently, the curriculum. The threat of change is latent in the recorded speech acts of the time.

The second analysis is interpretive in its categorising function as well as its social function and therefore builds on the first (factual) analysis. The analysis developed into a self-controlling process. At first, as explained in chapter three, only phase one and two (the factual analysis and the emerging theme analysis) were planned, but each time the data were examined another angle came to mind, so that in the end five phases of analysis evolved – each one building on another. This is a manifestation of “crystallisation” (Denzin & Lincoln 2001), which, as mentioned in chapter three, is a method to ensure reliability, i.e. the same story is told from different points of view. The analysis which thus emerged from the data is authentic. Building on the second analysis, the categories were re-examined to determine three main arguments in the third analysis.

- *Third phase of analysis: main arguments*

Elements from different domains are combined to provide actors with a set of symbolic references that suggest a common understanding. Character coding, which entails dividing the content each time a person or object is mentioned (Methodology Manual 1995) was applied. The most generalisable quote from each of the three categories was used to “name” the three readings. Bryman (2001) suggests that researchers should in a content analysis, try



to categorise commentary as positive, negative or merely descriptive. In the light of this, the emergent readings are presented in the following narratives.

### **“This is a hellish book that should be condemned”**

Parents, the Christians for Truth organisation and an Afrikaans Christian, religious journal (*Die Kerkbode*<sup>5</sup>) support the above condemnation of *Ruimland* by the Conservative MP in parliament. Their argument comprises three repetitive themes, viz. Christian values are neglected and challenged: the methodology of critical questioning instead of defending the Christian viewpoint is criticised; secondly, moral values and traditional ideas are questioned; and thirdly, the embedded “New Age principles” attempt to create space for other cultures and religions in order to eventually replace Christianity with Islam.

### **“Just to read, for some is a hell of a problem”**

A well-known Afrikaans writer (De Vries 1991), in an attempt to shrug off accusations that *Ruimland* was endangering Christian values, reacted to the accusation in the same register (“**hellish** book ... **hell** of a problem”) using the ambiguity of the word “hell” to emphasise the emotional undertone of the accusation. Teachers, parents, authors, Afrikaans writers, the Dutch Reformed Church Synod and learners reacted accordingly by suggesting that examples were used out of context. The main reasons for the polemic appeared to be firstly, the communicative language approach that advocated integrating language, thinking and life skills and secondly, the inclusiveness of all Afrikaans speakers. Shrugging off the objections as “not worth talking about” as De Vries did, was a general trend in the interviews. Esterhuysen (2003) refers to the fact that the book was banned from the province of the Orange Free State (OFS): “The ban probably still stands to this day - I couldn’t be bothered”.

### **“It’s a storm in a tea cup”**

Another theme was the more cautious voice of a head of department who was “aware of the controversy, but received no complaints”, the school inspector who would not take a decision on the withdrawal of the book, the spokesperson from the Cape Education Department who

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<sup>5</sup> The Church Messenger

stated that “textbooks are only teaching aids” and the author of colour who was “bemused by the fuss”. In the interview Esterhuysen (2003) mentions the Cape Education Department’s endeavour to maintain a neutral stance:

The Cape Department of Education kept to the sideline. They knew that the previous dispensation had come to an end, but they were still cautious of the men in grey who still had the power.

Esterhuysen (1986) also refers to another manifestation of neutrality, a clear indication of the effect of the political tension and uncertainty of the specified time:

Even the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC), sponsors of the *Ruimland* project, who played a significant role in the research that had been done, after the row ‘distanced itself from the findings’. Teachers were also hesitant to support a series that deliberately broke away from the Nationalist Party and apartheid.

Although covertly involved in the project, the HSRC was not willing to take an ideological stand against apartheid and like the teachers, was ‘playing it safe’, which could be indicative of the impact of the decades of unquestioned Nationalist reign.

- *Fourth phase of analysis: master symbols*

The three main arguments in the *Ruimland* debacle were further analysed with the view to finding traces of the indicators *exclusivity, isolation, generalising, simplifying* and *appropriation*. These indicators were then linked with one or more of the master symbols identified in chapter two. As indicated in chapter two, only three master symbols are applicable to the research question: *whites are superior and blacks are inferior; the Afrikaner has a privileged relationship with God and the Afrikaner feels threatened*. The results of the content analysis have been clustered in Table 4 on the following page to facilitate the search for master symbols. The links with the master symbols and the manifestation of the literature in the data will be described during the data interpretation in the second part of this chapter.

Table 4 Master symbols

Indicators	Whites are superior, blacks are inferior	The Afrikaner has a privileged relationship with God	The Afrikaner feels threatened
<b>Exclusivity</b>	Author of colour. No dialect was promoted although texts were taken from the cultural spectrum.		Inclusivity an assault on Afrikaner faith
<b>Generalising</b>		Book betrays Biblical principles. Labelling.	Satanic symbols. Naked women.
<b>Simplifying</b>	Black power salute.	Afrikaner identity exchanged for Islam.	New Age elements. Questions / prescription. Emotive language.
<b>Appropriation</b>	White speakers of only Afrikaans.	Interpret content solely in terms of Bible.	
<b>Isolation</b>	Variants stigmatised.		Space created for other cultures / faiths / norms.

- *Fifth phase of analysis: counter-symbols*

Opposite indicators *inclusivity, non-generalising, non-simplifying, non-appropriation and non-isolation* were traced in the group in favour of the series and again linked to master symbols - in this case counter-symbols. Counter-symbols (explained in chapter two) develop when master symbols are questioned by society and could result in a new ideological grouping that is indicative of an emerging identity (Du Preez 1983: 64). In table 5 on the following page the results of the content analysis are clustered, utilising a search for counter-symbols in order to suggest the political paradigm shifts, the adaptation to a multi-racial South Africa and the willingness to deal with the discriminating past. The suggestion based on the table is that such counter-symbols are traces of the new ideological perspective promoted in the Afrikaans textbook domain by the *Ruimland* series.

Table 5: Counter-symbols

Indicators	Sensitivity to all	Christian church has a role to play, but is not the only faith	The Afrikaner needn't feel threatened
<b>Inclusivity</b>	All children. Sensitivity to others. Dialects seen as inferior in the past.	Not all Afrikaners are Christians.	Communicative approach.
<b>Non-Generalising</b>			Perceptions weigh heavier than facts – Synod asked to investigate book.
<b>Non-Simplifying</b>		No satanic symbolism judged by learners.	Always sees danger when traditional paradigms are challenged.
<b>Non-Appropriation</b>	Malayan contribution. Afrikaans relevant to all sectors of South Africa.	Submitting to future blessing of the church.	
<b>Non-isolation</b>	Legitimise the role of variants.		

#### 4.3 DATA INTERPRETATION

In the discussion of the analysis the emergent readings will be linked to the master and the counter-symbols. Reference will be made to the applicable phases of analysis as well as to the theoretical part of the study (chapter two). The quality criteria of the interviews will be used to enrich the answering of the sub-questions dealing with the textbook as change agent, the role of *Ruimland* in dealing with “the other” first language speakers of Afrikaans, as well as the nature of the change that took place. As set out in chapter three, the indicators *generalisation*, *exclusivity*, *simplifying*, *isolation* and *appropriation* will be used to construct the narratives. It will be shown that the analysis of the three master symbols produced strikingly similar representations marked by fear, threat and a lack of knowledge of “the implicit other”. The counter-behaviour on the other hand, suggests a break away from all three master symbols, as it deliberately adjusts the illusions of “white Afrikaner” supremacy, Afrikaners feeling threatened and the comfort of being privileged by God. The chapter will conclude with a summary of the impact of *Ruimland* in answer to the sub-question about the nature of the change.

### 4.3.1 Discussion of main arguments

The functions of the three narrative configurations of the third analysis focus on whether they mark out identities, whether the identities mark out differences and how the differences define “the other”, as well as how “the other” helps to structure the moral and social life of culture, group and individual (Plummer in Bergman & Mottier 2003). These three arguments are actually competing narratives that reach beyond the text that is used to characterise them. Three conclusions can be drawn from the data in the first reading: in the first place, traditional ideas and values within Afrikaner Christianity should neither be questioned nor challenged. As discussed in chapter two, schemas develop as a result of the political paradigm in which people live, code information to fit expectations and uphold the uniqueness of the in-group in order to confirm social identity. Secondly, discriminating against other groups by not representing them in textbooks boosts the positive image of the in-group, while ignorance about other groups is reinforced. The underlying assumption is that “the other” is inferior and does not deserve representation, hence the third conclusion: there is no room for other religions and cultures in textbooks as they are seen as a major threat to the own, appropriated religion which cannot be expected to acknowledge other faiths.

The second reading offers evidence of challenging these traditional beliefs on the grounds of the promotion of critical thinking, open-mindedness and comprehension of the need for a more inclusive society. This makes sense against the background of one of the interviews (Willemsse 2003). When asked how the press row impacted on the *Ruimland* effort, the interviewee responded that accusations in the press were at that stage seen as an affirmation of change: “Every time something like this happened, we knew we were on the right track”. This corresponds with both the “bemused smile of dr. Links” (Fulton 1991) when he was first questioned by the press and the unemotional statement by the school inspector that the fuss was merely “a storm in a teacup” (Fulton 1991)

### 4.3.2 Indicators

- *Exclusivity*

*Ruimland* was in a sense, a new curriculum. It could be regarded as an *official curriculum* selecting formal and explicit knowledge to be taught because the old curriculum that was based on the apartheid principle of exclusivity, was no longer in touch with the demands of the “new South Africa”. *Ruimland* overtly opposed exclusivity in textbooks. The interviewees voice this as follows:

Basically there was a vacuum in the curriculum then. People realised that the sociological reality was not authentically reflected in the textbooks of the time (Willemse 2003).

“*Ruimland* was an alternative curriculum” (Pienaar 2000).

As a *null curriculum*, *Ruimland* intentionally moved away from Afrikaner master symbols to produce students with democratic values.

We thought: children and teachers don’t even know ‘that they don’t know’, that’s why we will develop a textbook to curb ignorance – it was almost a type of affirmative action (Pienaar 2000).

*Ruimland* was also a new *hidden curriculum* teaching new behaviour, values and expectations of society. Apple (1991: 7), in explaining what the hidden curriculum is, asks:

Whose knowledge is it? Who selected it? Why is it organised and taught in this way? To this particular group?

The answer to these questions becomes clear when one considers the interviewees’ pronouncements:

A group of people, tried, under Jan’s leadership, to rectify what they believed to be the isolationist view of Afrikaans. The communicative approach was new then and Jan and his group attempted to address this issue and the new approach simultaneously (Willemse 2003).

The authors submitted it to the publishers; it was probably the first textbook ever written on the initiative of the authors and not at the request of the publishers. *Ruimland* therefore entered the market on its own terms rather than via a submission process (Pienaar 2002).

Bearing in mind these deliberate attempts of the authors to break the exclusivity, it becomes clear that the series negotiated and constructed ways to deal with the new upcoming democracy. Also, for those opposed to the series, the traditional apartheid, null curriculum was the real curriculum. In frantically fighting for exclusivity, isolation and appropriation, the formal and the hidden curricula were at the service of the null curriculum, trying to withhold the options offered to the student, preventing the development of perspectives which would enable “alternative versions” of the world (Apple & Christian-Smith 1991: 80) to be seen and reducing the student to a “spectator rather than a choice-making participant” (Giroux 1981: 83).

The norm recommended by Klein (1993) for evaluating superiority and inferiority in bias studies concerns accepting or challenging an unequal distribution of power:

Any resource that endorses ‘white superiority’ and ‘black inferiority’ is racially biased. If it accepts and perpetuates the unequal distribution of power that holds people down because of their colour, instead of questioning it, it is accepting and perpetuating racism. This is done as often by what is not said as by what is said.

It is clear that the ideological group opposed to *Ruimland* was fighting for exactly this acceptance of inequality and uses race and religion to justify the inequality. There was no place for other religions, language variants or “other-than-white Afrikaners” in this book. The ethnocentric forces in the in-group emphasise cultural and linguistic differences necessary to change a marginalised group to an out-group (Esterhuyse 1986:22). This process manifests in phenomena which can be recognised in the data of the polemic surrounding *Ruimland*. Firstly, the own culture is put first while the out-group is represented as a problem and a threat. From the onset of apartheid the Afrikaner gave metaphorical evidence of this through labelling by naming, e.g. “die kleurlingvraagstuk” (the “Coloured” issue). Secondly, the linguistic patterns of the dominant group are emphasised in such a manner that the out-group experiences cultural rejection. As this aspect was extensively dealt

with in chapter two only the two outcomes of the rejection of a contingent within a language community are summarised here: the own (stigmatised) language variant is deliberately used to maintain the group identity and to block off inter-group communication. Secondly, the out-group moves away from the mother tongue to another language in order to be freed from the rejection.

According to Pienaar (1995) the Malay contribution was added to *Ruimland* to combat the exclusion of the out-group in an attempt to enable “Coloured” speakers to feel more comfortable. However, the spokesperson for Christians For Truth saw the Malay contribution as an effort to exchange the Afrikaner identity for Islam (Ouers, skrik wakker ... duur voort 1993). Esterhuyse (2003) confirms that involving the thus far “silent Cape variant” resulted in complaints about the “non-Afrikaans” names in the series during a *Ruimland* workshop with teachers in Pretoria. *Ruimland* was clearly aimed at rectifying the rejection of the “Coloured” community, but was challenged by accusations of betraying Afrikaner identity. In chapter two this is discussed as part of the resistance to the change process. Du Preez (1983) points out that those leaders who try to promote change are at risk of being rejected by their own people, especially when they are seen to be working with “them”, i.e. those outside Afrikaner ranks, who also try to bring about change. Pienaar’s (1995) unequivocal stand that there would be no apology regarding the sensitivity of Afrikaans children is insightful, and a strong indication of a conscious decision in favour of the counter-symbol of *non-isolation*. In this regard Willemsse (2003) mentions the inclusivity of Cape Afrikaans schools at the very time names and place-names familiar to “Coloured” learners were used in an Afrikaans textbook series. The importance of this counter-symbol emerged as one of the strongest themes in both data sources. All the interviewees emphasised the fact that *all* speakers of Afrikaans could identify with the book and the inclusion of Malay learners in the newspaper discourse is also a major point of departure in arguments by those in favour of *Ruimland*:

The book... is relevant to all sectors of the South African community instead of teaching the language from a white perspective only. Texts were taken from the cultural spectrum (Fulton 1991).

Millions of Afrikaans speakers are not Christians. When Afrikaans breaks down barriers, one should hear applause ... (Strydom 1993).



This corresponds with Pienaar's (2003) view that *Ruimland* served to "open up" Afrikaans, thus freeing the Afrikaner from ideological imprisonment. The aforementioned marginalisation of the "Coloured" out-group was reversed, inequality was no longer accepted as normal and for the first time religious barriers were broken down to deliberately include "the other".

- *Generalising*

Examples that were cited out of context, exaggerated and generalised were eventually used to accuse the authors of "a subtle but well-orchestrated plan to corrupt learners" (Ouers, skrik wakker... duur voort 1993). A black child scratching his ear was interpreted as a black power salute, "full of naked women" referred to one Rubens artwork and "full of satanic symbols" referred to one button on a denim jacket (Esterhuyse et al. 1990: 342, 101 & 52). On such grounds *Ruimland* was accused of "apologetically moving away from Biblical principles" (Verdeeldheid ... handboeke 1993). Esterhuyse (2003) proposes that *Ruimland* was instead shifting away from Christian- Nationalist Education:

The whole paradigm of *Ruimland* frightened people for whom white dominance had always been a comfort zone. *Ruimland* took an explicit stand against Christian National Education, thus treading on religious and racial toes.

Chapter two refers to Mok's (1999) discussion of the role of metaphors, themes and arguments in race-embedded socio-political construction. The following quotation indicates the degree of emotional warfare during the controversy, but also the way rhetoric, according to Ryan, Park and Judd (1996), results from generalisation:

Let us stir flour (the symbol of Jesus) into this poisonous pot so that our children, even if they have to eat the poison, are not harmed by it (Verdeeldheid ... handboeke 1993).

Du Preez (1983) describes this as the manipulative use of master symbols, i.e. symbols with which everybody identifies easily become manipulative and persuasive tools when controlled by those who use them. Two aspects are important here. Firstly the emotional call tries to legitimise the dominant status of the white in-group and secondly, the image of the "poisonous pot" is an instance of subtle stereotyping, implying that if the white (Christian) Afrikaner were to be mixed with other religions and races the resulting mixture would be "poisonous". Du Preez (1983) links the emotional connotations of religious symbols to the

misrepresentation of out-groups. In this regard Apple (1991: 143) describes emotional language as both a sensitive indicator and a powerful creator of assumptions about people:

Just as any single numeral evokes the whole number scheme in our minds, so a term or a metaphor with political connotations can evoke and justify a power hierarchy in the person who used it and the groups that respond to it.

The above-mentioned metaphor, not only “arrange(s)” (Apple 1991:143) reality with generalisation, but also covertly justifies and reinforces status, power and ideological authority.

The publishers’ decision to ask the Church Synod to intervene showed that they recognised the substantial role of the blessing of the Church in Afrikaner politics. The statement that perceptions weigh heavier than facts implicitly comments on the danger of generalisation. They therefore tried to reverse the generalised perceptions that had been created, by utilising the sentiments of the master symbol *the Afrikaner has a privileged relationship with God*, in their favour.

- *Simplifying*

As explained in chapter two, stereotyping is a direct result of people’s attempts to simplify their everyday lives. It is easier to use preconceived schemas to evaluate and categorise people than to actually attempt to know them. Associating individuals with and categorising them into set groups with certain traits, helps people organise and explain persons and events in a complex society.

The textbook series was simplified by those who opposed the book and perceived *Ruimland* as an attempt to exchange Afrikaner identity for Islam. The accusation that “creating space for other cultures, beliefs, norms, languages and races” (Verdeeldheid ... handboeke 1993) was a New Age element, also has a simplifying effect as it labels and names. The internationally approved communicative approach (asking of questions instead of prescribing with regard to matters such as drugs and religion) is simplified by those opposing the book as a “well orchestrated plan to corrupt learners” (Ouers, skrik ... duur voort 1993) and described as a danger to traditional values and norms. This then confirms Du Preez’s (1983) view that democracy cannot exist where different opinions are simplified and described as “treason”.

Consequently those who-are-not-white-and-Christian are marginalised and labelled the enemy because of a twisted religious belief, embedded white supremacy and fear of the changing political climate - the three master symbols investigated in this study.

The emotive use of language during the controversy is indicative of an effort to simplify complex issues. Furthermore, the emotional language indicates the extent of the threat experienced at the time of publication, e.g. “parents should wake up”, “spiritual corruption”, etc. (Ouers, skrik ...duur voort. 1993). As was the case with generalising, examples from the series were simplified, viz. the teacher “almost plays the role of hypnotiser” (Verdeeldheid ... handboeke 1993) when in one of the exercises, he lets the learners lie on their backs to visualise the “New Age motif of a rainbow” (Verdeeldheid ... handboeke 1993); Pienaar D 1993) on one of the covers. This falls into the category of simplified thinking and is the kind of subtle stereotyping mentioned in chapter two, in which there is an omission of race while other means like religion and culture are used to stereotype and segregate. The underlying theme in the already mentioned accusations is that of creating an almost evil enemy from the simplified examples. The question then arises as to who this enemy could be. Based on the content analysis and the interviews, the answer to the question is: the onslaught of those who endeavoured to change the apartheid principle of exclusivity to inclusivity and to change appropriation and isolation to welcome and respect for the religion and culture of “the other” Afrikaans first language speakers. *Ruimland* was viewed as the perpetrator that would corrupt learners spiritually with its counter-symbols through which “room would be made for other religions and cultures” (Verdeeldheid ... handboeke 1993).

The counter-symbol is clear in the response of writers, authors and academics: no out-of-context examples were to be used, accusations had to be substantiated and children were to be allowed to think for themselves, to develop students with democratic values (Strydom 1993). The difference between the binary perspectives in favour of or against the series resulted in an ideological ‘we’ versus ‘them’ tug of war. Those opposing the book represent only the (simplified) voice of a specific group within the “white Afrikaner” community, while the pro-*Ruimland* group tried to construct a new society for the benefit of ‘all of us’.

- *Isolation*

Since South Africa and the Afrikaner were isolated from the world during the reign of apartheid South Africa became the ‘world’ for many South Africans, in particular “white Afrikaners”. Gergen’s *Social Constructionism* (1985), previously discussed, links

stereotyping directly to the environment into which people were born, in which they grew up and in which they interacted (see chapter two). To live in South Africa between 1948-1992, was to have no other certainty, no other version of reality and certainly no other solution to problems such as apartheid. “White Afrikaners” became increasingly self-dependent and the only way to survive was to cling to false master symbols such as the three investigated in this research. The clinging to false master symbols is the main problem in the *change environment* according to the Change Communication Model (1985). For the first time since 1948 Afrikaner textbooks were challenged to distance themselves from the comfort zone of isolation and to face alternate versions of the social world. The Afrikaner’s retreat further into isolation by rejecting all innovations regarding religion and race-related issues came as no surprise. Strydom (1993) links isolation to threat, referring to the accusation of New Age infiltration:

Previously, every different-minded person was labelled a communist – it is just as easy now to label every creative illustration, every visionary exercise, every variant a New Age symbol.

The quotation raises the question as to whether it is perhaps a traditionally stereotypical reaction of the Afrikaner to search for the enemy everywhere and anywhere when he feels that the very core of his existence is threatened. This is substantiated by all the interviews with the authors, academics and the publisher. Esterhuysen (2003) recalls his phones being tapped after the publication of his book *Taalapartheid en skoolafrikaans*<sup>1</sup> (1986), revealing the paranoia of the era, and the wholehearted belief of the authors in what they were doing; Nöthling (2003) called it a time of “sensitivities and sensibilities” and “bystander behaviour” – a comfort zone when certain issues and persons were untouchable: because of the high level of uncertainty and threat in society, the inclination was to retain that which was valued and treasured in the past. To release what they held dear would be too harsh on a people struggling to survive severe change. Everything perceived as a menace to the familiar, traditional paradigm was labelled a threat, even after the Dutch Reformed Church Synod could find no proof of New Age principles in *Ruimland*. Nowhere in the data does anyone explicitly boast of a privileged relationship with God, yet the inclusive nature of *Ruimland* was perceived to endanger the Afrikaner’s Christian norms and was even seen as an assault on the Afrikaner’s relationship with God. The (Christian) in-group ignored the existence of the out-group (any other religion), insisting on the existence of only its own religion.

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<sup>1</sup> Language apartheid and school Afrikaans

Although the Synod could not find traces of New Age principles, any concepts not familiar or traditionally known were scrutinised. Meditation, holism, astrology and “exaggerated sexuality” (Pienaar 1995), were seen to undermine the Christian perspective.

The remedied perspective in the textbook regarding the history and socio-linguistics of the Afrikaans language is indicative of the counter-symbol of isolation. According to Statistics South Africa (2000), Afrikaans is the home language of 217 606 Blacks, 2931 489 “Coloureds”, 15 135 Indians and 2558 956 Whites. A first language textbook is written for first language speakers and should thus reflect the reality of the target group, which in this case is approximately 50 % “Coloured”. The authors of *Ruimland* deliberately took these figures into account in their representational practices and consequently became the first authors of an Afrikaans textbook series that truly represented first language Afrikaans.

- *Appropriation*

The most important concern of those opposing the series was that “The book attempts to replace Afrikaner identity with Islam” (Ouers, skrik ...duur voort 1993) Two implications are embedded in this sentence. Firstly, *identity* is used as a synonym for religion and secondly, the assumption is that all Afrikaners are Christians. Model C schools (state schools) during the apartheid era practised Christian education and therefore parents interpreted the content of textbooks largely in terms of the Bible. The second assumption demonstrates an arrogant disregard for the desires of other South Africans. Both the symbols *whites are superior while blacks are inferior* and *the Afrikaner has a privileged relationship with God*, manifest themselves in the appropriation of Afrikaans for only the white (Christian) speakers of Afrikaans. The implication is that only the needs, faith and language of one group are considered and expected to be represented in textbooks. It should be remembered that the headline used as basis to determine the three main arguments, viz. “This is a hellish book that should be condemned” (Jacobs 1991), was a quote by a right wing MP in a white-only parliament, clinging to the status quo of the apartheid fallacy. At the time only Christians, albeit from different political parties, were represented in the House of Assembly. In calling for the withdrawal of the book the MP relied on the representatives’ religious background to deter them from allowing Islam to replace Christianity, while in fact Islam represented “the other” Afrikaans first language speakers (“Coloureds”). Although race was (cleverly) not mentioned during the sensitive transitional time, the trend was clearly that Muslims

(“Coloured” Afrikaners) should be excluded from Afrikaans textbooks. The choice of the phrase “hellish book” is manipulative in the sense that it suggests the opposite of “heaven”, which is sacred to Christians. As Du Preez (1983) points out it is possible to use powerful symbols like the aforementioned to manipulate audiences through controlling identity. This tends to evoke strong emotional responses.

Another set of perspectives is in place in the *Ruimland* counter-symbol. Examples of the exclusion of the out-group (people of colour) on the grounds of language variety were discussed during the press polemic. The authors admitted to a deliberate attempt at legitimising the role of especially Muslim Afrikaners (Links in Fulton 1991; Pienaar 1991). The authors emphasise that a remedied perspective regarding the history and socio-linguistics of the Afrikaans language was imperative. Deviation from the Standard Variant was in the past shrugged off as inferior and uncivilised, and such speakers were stigmatised. The authors reacted strongly to the accusations of those who were against the book, and agitated for a deliberate effort to legitimise the role of variants, especially Muslim Afrikaners. Regarding the *process* in the Change Communication Model, this remedied perspective shows deliberate selection of representational practices as pointed out by Marsden (2001) and Apple and Christian-Smith (1991) (see chapter two). While these authors object to textbook selection as representing socially constructed relations being regarded as natural, *Ruimland* uses selection as a tool to create a new South African reality, away from the one-version-of-the-world reality.

#### 4.4 THE IMPACT OF *RUIMLAND*

For the first time in their association with textbooks, young adults were confronted with atypical Afrikaans which deviated from Standard Afrikaans and which was acknowledged in the choice of reading material, naming and choice of examples. If one considers the fact that this series was in addition, the first language textbook ever in South Africa, in any subject with colour illustrations, and the first in which the visual world, media texts, non-verbal and non-narrative texts were incorporated, its implicit appeal to the adolescent to change, modernise and perceive reality differently, cannot be over-estimated:

It changed the whole perspective on the teaching of Afrikaans and even the perspective on Afrikaans as a language. What now goes without saying, was at that stage the starting point of it all (Pienaar 2003).

In this regard the *political* decision made by the first democratic South African government to ensure that democratic values were reflected in the curricula, was preceded by this series. In fact, the *Ruimland* series deviated from the spiral of *ideology-politics-education-policy-curriculum-educator-student* as discussed in chapter one. Its purpose was to elicit reaction and it targeted the learner and teacher, attempting to offer young adults who had thus far been encouraged by textbooks to be unquestioningly loyal to the government, the status quo and the stable political pattern of the preceding thirty-five years, the right to independence and the right to interpret. Students suddenly faced the *progressive* network of social and identity relations in contrast to the *retrogressive* encounters of the past (Apple & Christian-Smith 1997: 97). An interviewee interprets the conceptual learning development of *Ruimland* as “true” critical thinking: challenging one’s own value system so that learning becomes *unlearning* and *re-learning* (Nöthling 2003).

However, in assessing the change brought about by this particular series, one has to realise that change doesn’t occur overnight and that as Naidoo (1996: 10) reminds us: “change education amounts to changing the way parents bring up their children”. This is particularly relevant in the context of transforming an education system that is still in many respects, saddled with the legacies of apartheid. Although *Ruimland* did without doubt act as a change agent, its role was probably to *desegregate* rather than *integrate*. Naidoo (1996) alludes to desegregation as something which does not imply anything about the quality of interracial contact; it merely involves the physical proximity of members of different groups in the same school (or in this case in the same textbook). The *reforming* or *transforming* perspectives (Richardson in Cole, 1989) of *Ruimland* were mentioned in chapter two. It now appears that *Ruimland* had to act as a bridge between acknowledgement, respect and tolerance for cultural diversity in South Africa. Had it gone the way of transforming perspectives, *Ruimland* would probably not have succeeded in the role of change agent, as the innovative message would have been too far-reaching to be accepted by the intended adopter (the Afrikaans textbook domain) in this process. It was a first step in acknowledging the “other” part of the Afrikaans language community. In order for change to become established there is a need for short and long term goals to transform or abandon systems (Cole 1989). In this regard one of the authors (Esterhuysen 2003), when asked whether it wouldn’t be a good idea at that stage to rewrite the *Ruimland* series, replied that *Ruimland* had always been a time-specific document



with a short term goal and that rewriting it would be the same as “warming a cup of cold coffee”.

*Ruimland* acted as a catalyst on the psyche of Afrikaans teachers. Looking back, I would say that it had the same impact as the authors of the sixties had on Afrikaans literature and that the music of Johannes Kerkorrel had on Afrikaans music. It may sound presumptuous, but all Afrikaans textbooks published since, have tried to imitate the style and vision of *Ruimland* in some or other way.

#### 4.5 CONCLUSION

Based on the evidence of the results of this chapter, the research question regarding the extent to which racial representation in *Ruimland* reflected the changing ideology during the final years of apartheid, has been answered. According to the Change Communication Model (Rogers 1985) *Ruimland* acted as socio-cultural agent in presenting an innovative message of non-stereotypical representation. The data (the content analysis, the interviews and the literature) proved that *Ruimland* was used to reverse the master symbols by means of counter-symbols. The new approach activated a change process that challenged the apartheid environment that was governed by *exclusivity, isolation, generalising, simplifying* and *appropriation*. Resistance to change manifested in the press polemic, which confirms that Du Preez’s (1983) master symbols were still very much in evidence in the ideological world of the “white Afrikaner” at the time *Ruimland* was published. *Ruimland* opened up the playing field of the new democratic South Africa in developing counter-symbols directed toward post-apartheid society. It can therefore be claimed that the innovative message of new representational practices did reach the intended adopter - the Afrikaans textbook domain.



## CHAPTER 5

### 5. IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 INTRODUCTION

The research findings and their implications are discussed with regard to the research question, i.e.: *to what extent does racial representation in an Afrikaans language textbook series reflect the changing ideology during the final years of apartheid?* In answering this question this chapter offers an overview of the main **implications** of the study and a discussion of its **impact**, **strengths** and **limitations**. Finally **recommendations** are made regarding further study.

#### 5.2 IMPLICATIONS

The following implications were drawn from previous chapters and will answer the three sub-questions asked in chapter one:

##### 5.2.1 The textbook as change agent

The first step toward answering the sub-question: *How should a textbook function to become a change agent?* entailed an investigation of the literature to determine how a textbook could function as an agent of change. Numerous studies suggest ways in which textbooks could function as vehicles of change, thus defining “whose culture is taught” (Apple & Christian-Smith 1991: 1). The following outcomes seem appropriate to the transitional role played by the *Ruimland* series:

- Textbooks should deliberately introduce new attitudes and patterns of thought.
- People (of different gender and race) should be portrayed mainly as individuals.
- A diversity of racial and cultural perspectives should be reflected.
- Racial, ethnic, gender and religious assumptions should be challenged.
- Textbooks should be *progressive*, i.e. provide essential assistance as a part of a larger strategy of democratisation
- Conflict over texts should be regarded as proxies for wider questions of power relations because they involve what people hold most dear.

Based on the literature study, it seems logical to deduce that *Ruimland* did indeed have the potential and characteristics to act as a change agent.

### 5.2.2 Addressing the representational past of Afrikaans

The second sub-question focused on understanding the role of *Ruimland* in addressing the representational past of Afrikaans textbooks in deliberately dealing with “the other” Afrikaans first language speakers.

As it was effectively shown in the literature review (Esterhuysen 1986; Du Preez 1983) that Afrikaans textbooks, in the past, created racial stereotypes, there was no need to demonstrate this in subsequent sections of the research. Language stereotyping, in this case the stigmatisation of “Coloureds”, started with the emphasis on standard, formal Afrikaans, viz. *Algemeen Beskaafde Taal*. This concept is translated as “general civilised language” and originated as a result of the colonial belief that the whites brought civilisation to ‘darkest Africa’.

Three implications are drawn from the findings of the investigation which attempted firstly, to discover whether *Ruimland* shattered stereotypical representation and secondly, to determine what was revealed about society by its reactions to *Ruimland*.

1. The Afrikaners’ identification with master symbols became intense and as a result glorified all that they viewed their own. “White Afrikaners”, driven by their need for self-esteem, secured their status by trying to prevent the “other” (people of colour) from featuring in textbooks. In the case of *Ruimland* they went so far as to insist on the withdrawal of the book from schools.
2. The use in *Ruimland* of images and symbols regarding subjects sacred to the Afrikaner community, i.e. the Almighty, nation and race, elicited strong, emotional reaction in the press and in parliament where they were used as manipulative tools to cling to the political agenda of apartheid.

3. Silences were shown to be conspicuous in the data:
  - Objections concerning religious matters including the Muslim faith, were based on maintaining **silences in the textbooks**, thus as subtle stereotyping.
  - A number of complaints were lodged by the Conservative Party (CP), a right wing political party known to rely heavily on “white Afrikaner” support and whose policy defended apartheid principles and values. In a carefully constructed plea for the withdrawal of the series, not one motivation or reference to race was made publicly. Only religious and moral objections were raised - an obvious silence which downplayed racism at a time when apartheid had almost been dismantled.
  - The total omission of *Kaaps-Afrikaans* (Cape Afrikaans) in textbooks of the past was a subtle form of stereotyping. The insistence in ignoring an entire community which comprised a large section of the language community, sent the clear message that the racial stereotyping of the past would continue, albeit during the final throes of apartheid. Young adults were for the first time (through *Ruimland*) confronted with an Afrikaans which included dialects and which recognised Afrikaners of colour in the choice of reading passages, naming and examples.

### 5.2.3 The nature of the change

Kusendila’s (2003) finding that the “new” Afrikaner represented in *Raamwerk* is a re-invented *self* among *others*, is the only point of reference against which to measure the sub-question: *What was the nature of the change?*

1. The attempt by the authors of *Ruimland* to awaken a consciousness regarding the “other ” (Pienaar 2003; Willemsse 2003; Esterhuyse 2003; Louw 2002), could be seen as the seminal point as its publication heralded a progressive identity shift in the Afrikaans textbook domain.
2. *Ruimland* challenged the null and hidden apartheid curricula and became an alternative transitional curriculum - in fact, it preceded the current curriculum which has become institutionalised in South Africa.
3. *Ruimland* did not follow the usual spiral of *ideology/ politics / education policy/ curriculum/ educator/ student* as discussed in chapter one, but targeted the student and the

teacher in an attempt to create respect and awareness for diversity in South Africa generally and within the Afrikaans community specifically.

#### 5.2.4 Data

The data answered the main research question revealing the extent to which *Ruimland* attempted to change racial representation by presenting counter-symbols. The series operated as a socio-cultural agent that provided a new formal, hidden and null curriculum that led to the counter-creation of stereotypes. Emerging ideological patterns regarding change in the highly politicised era just before the dismantling of apartheid demonstrated that there were two competing narratives:

- **Ethnocentric forces** in the in-group emphasise cultural and linguistic differences in order to change a marginalised group to an out-group. All the indicators are clearly linked to race and religion, that were revealed by the data analysis to be inseparable in “white Afrikaner” thinking. By means of master symbols an implicit other - the “other” Afrikaans first language speakers - was created in the text messages.
- **Opposite indicators**, i.e. *inclusivity, non-generalising, non-simplifying, non-appropriation and non-isolation* were traced in the group that was in favour of the series and linked to counter-symbols. Attempts to legitimise the role of especially Muslim Afrikaners, lay at the core of these counter-symbols and were admittedly used to deliberately counter old master symbols ( Esterhuysen 2003; Pienaar 2002).

The analysis and the interviews clearly showed that the (“white Afrikaner”) market wasn’t ready for the counter-symbols concerning racial representation, but that *Ruimland* was an uncompromising statement. *Ruimland* showed a major ideological shift from the apartheid perspective: socio-linguistically it represented a true picture of Afrikaans; it dealt deliberately with master symbols and researched teacher’s perceptions. The controversy revealed the political agendas and the hidden curricula of mainstream thinking in Afrikaner ranks. The publication of *Ruimland* was a battle against the master symbols of the past: only rectifying racial representation to the core would bring about change. It was an ‘awareness’ series that had to penetrate the circle of isolation and exclusivity in order to break the stereotypical perceptions that for so long had been at the core of misunderstandings in South Africa. The visual mapping (page 92) is a synopsis of how this study answered the research

question. It provides a summary of the methodology, main conceptual framework and findings and it visually reflects the ideological shift towards a common South African symbol system.

### 5.3 IMPACT OF THE STUDY

Obviously, there is no straightforward causal link between the findings of this study and the socio-political situation in South Africa. Textbooks alone do not determine the face of education or society. The findings demonstrate however, that the content of this series affected societal views on racial representation and educational policies. They also show that the effects occur in a space within which constructs such as *identity* are not defined automatically and independently of human minds. Changing identity can according to Giroux (1995: 46), “only be understood within the intersecting dynamics of history, language, ideology and power”. The findings indicate that a search for new symbols was initiated through the confrontation of two ideologically different “white Afrikaner” groups which drew together the self and the other. The fact that the series was a bestseller for a number of years after the polemic could be indicative of a shift in the ideological world of the Afrikaner away from the mentioned master symbols as indicated by Kusendila (2003).

The study as a whole casts new light on the understanding of racial representation in a new post-apartheid South Africa. The findings of this case study could have an impact on the policies of publishers of textbooks, textbook authors and current teaching of Afrikaans in schools, as well as on academic programmes at higher education institutions. All parties need to understand the constructive role of learning materials in socio-political contexts, and this particular historic focus could enable education policymakers to better understand transitional efforts to transform perceptions and perspectives from the embedded apartheid legacy to an equitable representation of race in Afrikaans language textbooks.

### 5.4 LIMITATIONS AND STRENGTHS OF THE STUDY

- **Limitations**

The limitation of the study is that it is confined to one set of data and that the interview data, which reflect the experiences, knowledge and perceptions of the authors, academics and the

publisher, could not be expanded to include teachers and learners who worked with the textbook during the period on which the research focuses. Also, it would have been valuable to include teachers and learners from the then “Coloured” schools to establish whether they experienced a major shift from being excluded from textbooks to suddenly becoming part of the Afrikaner spectrum.

- **Strengths**

- The study focused on gaining an increased understanding of whether the *Ruimland* textbook series played a significant role in bringing about change in a new South Africa. Did *Ruimland* in other words, *really move the South African cheese?* The study has answered the question effectively.
- A second strength lies in the literature and the theoretical frameworks used to address the question. The areas of social theories, importance of textbooks and representational practices were discussed, interpreted and used to obtain a clearer picture of research in the relevant fields and to analyse and interpret the data as objectively as possible.
- In the third place this case study contributes to the body of knowledge on textbooks and learning materials and demonstrates the potential of such materials to impact and reflect on change.

## 5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS: FURTHER RESEARCH

- Assorted cultural contexts place different demands on the construction and organisation of knowledge, desires, values and social practices. The historical narratives in this thesis particularly explored the dynamic forces that shaped the process of change and characterised the resistance to change. A similar analysis focusing on new issues and problems in the current South African situation would constitute a worthwhile study and could have implications for curriculum development.
- The findings of the current research could result in interesting comparisons regarding an investigation of racial stereotyping in recently published Afrikaans textbooks. The question remains whether new textbooks build on the ideological shift provided by

*Ruimland* after the controversy, or revert to ‘safe’ symbols. *Ruimland* challenged the status quo in a myriad ways. Since *Ruimland* textbooks appear at first glance, to be free of salient stereotyping as is intimated by Kusendila (2003), it remains to be discovered whether they too challenge existing stereotypes like *Ruimland* did as an alternative curriculum.

- Research could be conducted to improve the understanding of the influence of other psychological mechanisms, e.g. the role of the media in creating and maintaining **racial** stereotypes or other forms of representation e.g. with regard to gender or religion, could be investigated.

## 5.6 CONCLUSION

More than a decade has passed since the “white Afrikaner” lost his political authority and inevitably had to adapt to changing circumstances in a new South Africa. The idea that careful socio-political construction would eventually emerge from the research was at the core of the inquiry which holds symbolic meaning in terms of “who we are and who we are not when we talk about us” (Kusendila 2003). The Department of Education (2002), implicitly added a third question in its recent publication of *Values in Education* viz. “Where do we want to be?” The central principles of the new education system (critical thinking, rational thought and deeper understanding) will “soon begin to break down class, race and gender stereotypes” and “these are the types of citizens who will lead South Africa to great heights”. This statement reveals the notion of the curriculum as an agenda for social reconstruction and implies that schools should provide an agenda of knowledge and values to guide students to improve society and cultural institutions as well as the beliefs and activities that support them.

It was exactly this vision which ten years ago, led to the publication of *Ruimland*.

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