ACTION RESEARCH: STUDENT TEACHERS COPING WITH

PROFESSIONAL DILEMMAS

Rivka Keren

Thesis submitted for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

August 2005

School of Education

University of Leicester

UMI Number: U239620

UMI

Dissertation Publishing

ProQuest

Action Research: Student Teachers Coping with Professional Dilemmas

Rivka Keren

The Seminar Hakibutzim Teachers Training College in Tel Aviv trains students to teach different subjects. The pedagogic instructors have the most responsibility for training students as it is they who impart teaching skills and evaluate students' ability and suitability to teach. However, they have long been dissatisfied with their students' handling of professional dilemmas in teaching practice.

Dilemmas, which are ambivalent and lacking a clear solution, are an inherent part of teaching; however, students who are inevitably at the stage of constructing their professional identity, find dilemmas hard to handle. This leads to frustration and, in extreme cases, students ignore their dilemmas. The college has felt it necessary to change the training programme curriculum and try to provide professional tools that will help students handle their dilemmas.

The main aim of this action research was to improve my method of training prospective teachers to cope with professional challenges and especially dilemmas. To this end, I developed a new teaching unit for the Early Childhood Training Program. When I taught this topic for the first time, I analysed the skills and abilities students needed to handle professional dilemmas.

The research lasted two years (two research cycles), during which time I planned and taught the new teaching unit. Each research cycle comprised two elements: a college-based element, in which students learned the tools to cope with professional dilemmas, and the practical element, when students applied what they had learned in college to their school teaching practice. The study identified three levels of dilemma management in each of the skills examined: these were Low, Intermediate and High. In the second research cycle, improvements were observed in the way students managed professional dilemmas.

The results of the study can be applied in every teacher training colleges. Professional dilemmas are obviously not the exclusive province of students of my college. On the contrary, it is something that all teachers face in their professional careers.

Acknowledgements

CONTENTS

TABLES

FIGURES

DIAGRAMS

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

This chapter introduces a study conducted in a class of students training to be teachers and early childhood teachers at the Seminar HaKibbutzim teacher training college in Tel Aviv. The aims of the study were:

- To examine the methods used by students to cope with professional dilemmas encountered in their teaching practice.
- To develop a new curriculum topic to be used in training student teachers: Coping with and Management of Professional Dilemmas.
- To improve the author's professionalism as a teacher trainer.

Firstly, I wish to define two other concepts that bear a resemblance to dilemmas and differentiate between them. Then, I will define the term 'dilemma' itself.

Problem

"A problem is a situation in which a gap is found between what is and what ought to be". (Cuban, 2001, p. 4)

Conflict

A conflict is a clash involving two opinions, situations or approaches. However, unlike a dilemma, when this clash occurs, a person can consider the conflict from the standpoint of an observer, or experience conflict when considering two alternatives, even in a theoretical debate. Thus, conflict does not by definition involve action (Statman, 1993).

This is not so, however, in the case of a dilemma.

Dilemma

Aram (1976) defines dilemmas as situations in which people are forced to choose between equally attractive or equally unattractive alternatives with no way of rationally calculating the better choice. Statman (1993) stresses that a situation involving a dilemma is very difficult to handle; he maintains that, in terms of difficulty, dilemmas are harder to deal with than problems or conflicts. Statman (1993) defines a dilemma as a situation in which the individual does not know what alternative to choose. In this situation, there are not only several considerations which clash, but the points that the person has to consider trouble

1

him and threaten to paralyse him. In Statman's (1993) definition, the person must also decide **what to do** despite the difficulty that this involves. Therefore, the person does not stand to the side, but considers two alternative forms of action (Statman, 1993). Katz and Raths (1992) also discuss the fact that action is required, emphasising that a dilemma is characterized by the fact that "a perfect solution is not available" (p. 376). Whatever decision is made involves giving up the alternative action.

The study conducted was an action research study – in 1994, Lomax described this type of study as "an intervention in practice to bring about improvement" (p.156). Stenhouse (1980) suggests the same definition, adding that the improvement is accompanied by a cycle involving reflection, change, and analysis and evaluation of the change. As noted earlier, the goal of this study is to bring about change in the college's early childhood curriculum in order to improve the way education students are prepared for teaching.

There are two aspects to this change: one involves a change in my own work as a pedagogic instructor and the other is a change in the outlook and behaviour of the students. **In terms of my own work**, I wish to gain insight into challenging questions concerning the best way to provide teachers with the expertise needed to deal with professional dilemmas at work. When the study is over, I would like to present the college management with a proposal for changing the curriculum. Regarding the **expected change in the students**: I hope that their new experience in identifying and analysing professional dilemmas, building an intervention programme, and tackling professional dilemmas in their teaching practice, will not be simply an isolated experience but will change their attitudes and outlooks and affect their professional behaviour as teachers.

Research Questions

With this in mind, the following research questions were formulated:
1. What abilities do education students require in order to cope with dilemmas?
2. What topics should be included in the curriculum to teach students to handle professional dilemmas?
3. How does learning to contend with dilemmas assist in improving students' professional abilities?
4. How does the reflection process contribute to coping with dilemmas?

The College Framework

College vision

The Seminar HaKibbutzim College of Education, where this study was conducted, is an academic institution that trains its students to be teachers and at the conclusion of their studies awards them a B.Ed. In its role of training teachers and educators, the college has chosen to promote a humanistic and democratic approach along with basic tenets of equality, human value, and human dignity, social and human solidarity.

The college goals are based on this vision and consist of –

A. Respecting all college students and their unique skills and abilities while supporting them through the long and difficult path of professional study and training.

B. Continuous development in the field of teacher training by maintaining strict academic standards, advanced teaching and learning techniques, and by combining pedagogic theory with practical experience.

C. The promotion of excellence in the teaching faculty and principal through a combination of professional academic quality and respect.

These three goals are derived from the meta-goal mentioned in the description of the college's vision, namely to provide a humanistic education for its students to convey to their pupils. The college culture affords autonomy to students while at the same time, demanding from them a high academic and pedagogic standard. In the spirit of this approach, the college constantly tries to jointly address three spheres: firstly, disciplinary knowledge is learned, i.e., specialization subjects studied at college, secondly, the approach taught in these disciplines (i.e., the humanistic approach), and thirdly, student attitudes.

If we examine the early childhood curriculum over the three years of the teacher training programme, we see that considerable efforts are made to achieve these goals. Students study articles on the humanistic approach to education. Their set reading material includes books that are considered classics in this field, for example, "Freedom to Learn" by Carl Rogers (1969, translated to Hebrew in 1977).

The teaching methods used at college also have a humanistic character:
• There are frequent class discussions aimed at clarifying and practicing the principles of this approach.

3

- Students' behaviour in teaching practice is examined and measured according to these principles.
- In college, incidents that happened in school are analysed and each event is examined and viewed in the light of this approach.

The goal of the students' teachers, both the disciplinary and pedagogic instructors, is to make students change their positions (the positions they held when they entered college), both regarding their worldview and their behaviour. The aim is that when working with children, the students will automatically respond the way they were taught in college and in line with the philosophy taught there.

Background to the Decision to Undertake this Study

After working as a pedagogic instructor for many years, I had concluded that students find it very difficult to put the philosophy they have been taught into practice. This is evident from the considerable gap between what students say in class and their written work and what they actually do when working as student teachers on teaching practice. In college, when you ask them how they treat children in different situations, they show a humanistic and respectful attitude towards the children and affirm the principles they were taught and the principles of other theories and philosophies. However, they do not always practise what they preach.

My feelings are shared by other college supervisors. In meetings, one detects disappointment and, because of the gap, people seem sceptical about our curriculum and teaching methods. We find that despite the intensive education that students receive at college and despite the sincere desire of the college to change the students' outlook, students still treat their pupils the way they themselves were treated (Zeichner and Gore, 1990; Zeuli and Buchmann, 1988). This is corroborated by Lortie (1975), who maintains that teachers' socialization is complete before they even enter formal training. Lortie (1975) argues that this socialization occurs over the lengthy period that the individual is a schoolchild, and that this is when people start to embrace conservative teaching models. These models are internalized over the thousands of hours that individuals attend school and meet large numbers of teachers. Lortie's (1975) theory is supported by many other studies, such as Bunting, 1988, Petty and Hogben, 1980 and Zeichner and Gore, 1990.

The gap referred to above between what students learn and what they do in practice is particularly marked when facing professional dilemmas in teaching practice. When they face dilemmas in their teaching practice, students obviously feel helpless and frustrated, and respond with indifference and even aggression. They do not come up with solutions to dilemmas that are consonant with the humanistic approach they have learned.

To investigate this gap, I examined the subject matter I teach and my own teaching methods, and discovered that my work and curricula were mostly concerned with professional and applied subjects and that they did not adequately address values or encourage students to examine their own values when teaching. I also found that the curriculum failed to provide tools for coping with complex classroom situations that lacked unequivocal solutions.

Professional literature on the subject of this gap

Numerous scholars have discussed the gap between training expectations and actual student performance and have suggested several reasons for it. Schon (1983) notes that one reason is the students' incomplete teaching model and argues that the model fails to address the practical skills needed in ambivalent situations. He describes the need for an epistemology of practice that would also relate to intuitive and creative responses when facing a lack of clarity or in situations involving conflict or crisis. He further maintains that there is in teacher training excessive emphasis placed on technical skills and solving problems as opposed to identifying problems. He argues that teaching practice does not provide students with the tools for defining and identifying problems and that consequently, students and teachers have difficulty knowing what decisions to make and what goals they need to choose and reach.

Other suggestions explaining the gap between what the students say and do include the student's own negative self image as a teacher, and the gap between desired and actual performance in different teaching situations (Knowles and Sudzina, 1991; Schwab, 1989), i.e., students are not confident that what they would like to do is appropriate, or they expect something which does not come to pass. Another suggestion concerns the students' role ambiguity regarding desirable and undesirable classroom behaviour (Knowles, and Sudzina, 1991), i.e., they have many question marks and uncertainties regarding what teachers can and cannot do in class.

These suggestions strengthened my opinion that I needed to teach students extensively and develop their powers of judgment regarding ambiguous matters in teaching practice and situations where there is no one way for the teacher to react. These situations constitute professional dilemmas. I had to decide at what point in their three-year teacher-training programme it was appropriate to introduce the students to the new subject of coping with dilemmas. In order to explain my decision I first need to outline the contents of each year of study.

Students' professional development

As already noted, the teacher training course lasts for three years. The curriculum for each year has different goals and emphases. Student professionalism increases with each year, and in the fourth year, the student enters the novice teachers part of her training. The following is an outline of the curriculum for each year of the training programme.

First year

In their first year, students learn to see and accept differences in children. They are also taught the tools to develop a teaching unit, teach small groups, and about the encounter with the individual child.

Second year

The emphasis in this year is on developing self-awareness and positive interpersonal communication skills. The scope of the teaching practice is extended, and the student's role and influence on the teaching practice class increases. The student becomes actively integrated in the life of the preschool/school (students spend one semester in each). They teach individual children, small groups or the full class.

Third year

In the third year, students learn to establish a 'climate for growth' in their practice class, in other words, to create a pleasant classroom atmosphere, and a climate where children are willing to cooperate and contribute without feeling threatened. In their third year, students are responsible for managing their own teaching day from beginning to end in their twice-weekly teaching practice. Students are able to relate to the different learning levels in their class and incorporate assorted teaching resources to enhance their teaching.

The above explains why the study was most appropriate for a sample of third year students. By their third year, they are relatively professionally mature, they are able to organize activities for children in a variety of learning frameworks and levels and can plan and teach

a full school day. Another reason this year was appropriate was that students spend much more time in school. They have teaching practice twice a week for six hours, compared with the first and second years, when practice is only once a week for six hours.

Applying the new teaching model described in this research will fall to the pedagogic instructor, who is the main faculty member responsible for student professional training. The section below describes this instructor's role.

Role of the Pedagogic Instructor

In Israeli colleges, the pedagogic instructor is the most important figure in the teacher-training programme. This instructor helps students to acquire their main teaching skills. At the end of their first year, this instructor decides whether students are suitable to be teachers. The instructors' work can be divided into two areas: the first relates to the students' studies at college and the second to their teaching practice in school.

College – the pedagogic instructor teaches the curriculum for the track the student is following (in this study, students were from the early childhood track). The programme is comprised of pedagogic and didactic classes, and private meetings with students to discuss academic and personal issues. In class, instructors teach educational theory, some of which is applied in school practice.

School – The pedagogic instructor assists students in planning their lessons, observes them in action, provides feedback on their performance, and gives suggestions on how to teach the children. The instructor maintains direct contact with the regular teacher of the teaching practice class (two students per class), coordinating the students' work with them and involving them in the students' curriculum. The instructor also evaluates the student's work.

Aims of the pedagogic instructor

The instructor has several goals and functions. The following describes the most important of these as regards this research.

- Providing students with tools by guiding their interpersonal behaviour and fostering moral and ethical judgment in their work with children.
- Practicing weighing things up and decision-making, particularly in ambiguous situations (Russel et al, 1988).

7

- Helping students to link practical teaching experiences to theory learned (HaCohen and Zimran, 1999). This goal is one of the most complex and will be examined fully in the next section.

Importance of relating theory to practice

According to Russel et al, (1988) students must verify the theory learned in class with their practice so that they cease to be two separate issues but two facets of the same thing. Salomon and Almog (1994) support Russel et al (1988), and argue that there should not be a gap between knowledge acquisition and knowledge application. The knowledge needed to work with children in school is varied, and includes being able to solve problems, to make decisions regarding dilemmas and situations with multiple alternatives, diagnose situations, choosing which action to take, and apply general principles. The question is whether student can apply the theory learned in college to their work in the classroom.

In the past, researchers believed that students could do this. They maintained that when we learn problem-solving skills in theory, generalization and internalization occur automatically, enabling students to apply the skills learned in other similar situations. Nowadays, it is recognized that this transfer does not happen alone. Guidance while coping with real life professional dilemmas is needed. Without guided teaching practice, students will find it hard to develop the ability to judge and adopt a definite position in ambiguous situations. Such competence only develops by acquiring active knowledge, i.e., knowledge acquired in a context of thinking and problem solving, not in a context of memorization and exercise. In other words, it is knowledge acquired in an active context (Salomon and Almog, 1994).

Teaching methods

The pedagogic instructor uses several teaching techniques which help to reach the above goals. The techniques include four methods which will be very useful in achieving the present research goals.

A. Case studies – analysis of authentic teaching and instruction situations, which provide rich detail and address theoretical principles. The principles explain and give a general meaning to the situations described, and help the student to relate her theoretical studies to her practice class.

B. Journal record – as a tool for personal professional development.

C. Paired sharing of experience – pairing students together as 'critical friends', to share thoughts and ideas and provide constructive and useful feedback (Zilberstein, 1998).

D. Diagnosis, analysis, and investigation of dilemmas that students bring to college classes following their teaching practice experiences. Presenting dilemmas in class can help to enhance the students' ability to cope when they encounter ambiguous situations in future, and will equip them with tools to help in forming judgments and adopting a stance.

However, in order to be able to cope with dilemmas in practice, students must study the coping with dilemmas course in college.

Professional Dilemmas in Education

Before we discuss the different methods of training students to tackle dilemmas, I want to offer an example of a common professional dilemma in Israel.

Israel has absorbed a massive migration of immigrants from the former Soviet Union. Often when visiting schools, I have observed that many of the immigrant children just sit in class doing nothing. When I have asked teachers why they do not help them, they explain the following dilemma: "If I spend time with the immigrant children, I will neglect the others (there are 40 children in a class and one teacher). On the other hand, focusing on the non-immigrant children means neglecting the immigrants who need a lot of personal attention". The teachers felt that no matter what they did, one of the parties would suffer. Teachers were very distressed by the situation, which they found extremely frustrating.

The importance of coping with professional dilemmas, and their frequency, depends on the individual teacher, since there is no blueprint or moral code telling teachers how to behave. Teachers must decide alone what is fair, how to divide their attention, etc., just as they must decide on the best teaching technique (Hansen, 1998).

Presently, no Israeli teacher-training programme addresses the subject in a structured way. Although students do analyse dilemmas when reporting occurrences in class, this is neither intensive nor consistent. Interestingly, the same is true for other countries as well, where teacher-training tackles teaching skills like classroom management, teaching heterogeneous groups, etc., but does not address the complex issues that characterize

school teaching (Beyer, 1997; Goodlad, 1990). However, even though we do find discussion of different types of teachers' dilemmas in the professional literature, we find that there is little material on the **professional dilemmas that face teaching students.**

There may be several explanations for this, one of them being that for many years, the technological orientation approach to teaching, requiring teachers to develop their practical and didactic skills, has prevailed. Thus, the moral skills needed in teaching have been neglected, and there is a lack of focus on the importance of teachers being able to morally justify and reflect on their work (Bergem, 1993). Today, however, teachers are highly aware of the need to be better prepared to cope with dilemmas in their lives in general and their professional lives in particular. I believe that we must translate this awareness into a new teacher training curricula.

As noted earlier, the most appropriate way to explore the subject proposed here is through action research. Of the action research models available, this study uses the model of investigating educational situations, conducting an activity to bring about change, studying the findings and lastly, evaluating and changing the programme based on the findings (HaCohen and Zimran, 1999). In this research there are two cycles. The first research cycle examines the college and students' teaching practice class. The second cycle repeats the process of the first cycle after applying all relevant conclusions. The uppermost goal of action research is to effect change. Causing change as a means of improving my own professionalism and the early childhood curriculum is in fact the main goal of this action research. To achieve this, I have studied myself, in other words, my work methods.

Lately, new teacher training approaches have stressed that the teacher's own experiences are the most meaningful basis for constructing professional knowledge. According to these approaches, which are advanced by educators in the United States, Australia and Britain, self-study by teachers is an integral part of the teacher's schoolwork (Ponte and Beers, 2000). Who is the self-studying teacher? The self-studying teacher is a teacher who is curious and not satisfied with things that happen in class; who asks fundamental questions involving principles and operative matters, with a view to investigating practical problems pertinent to his work. Such teachers believe that education demands constant change. Besides carrying out his regular work, in order to bring about change or to carry out an intervention programme aiming at change, the teacher must investigate both himself and his pupils and also the educational and human events that arise in class (HaCohen and

Zimran, 1999). This description largely corresponds to the process executed in the present action research where my role is that of investigating instructor.

The research involves two parallel processes: the first is my own self-investigation, which seeks to change myself and my own work as a teacher and instructor, the second process is the one that the students undergo, they also investigate themselves and their work, while teaching the subject that their professional dilemma involves (e.g., Bible Studies, mathematics, social studies, etc.).

The first process is clearer, since it is assumed that during the action research, I will learn much and consequently my professionalism will increase. However, we need to further consider the process experienced by the students. The students' work will be similar in some ways to my own action research.

1. Identifying a dilemma which has occurred in their practice class using observation, interviews, and other structured and intuitive tools.
2. Formulating the dilemma thus identified.
3. Looking up the subject involved in the dilemma in the professional literature.
4. Devising an intervention programme to address the dilemma.
5. Implementing change and documenting the process.
6. Reflective analysis of findings that is linked to theory they have studied.
7. Self-evaluation regarding the process of coping with the dilemma.

This investigation allows students to gain qualitative research tools and to transform their personal experiences into a very significant foundation for constructing their professional knowledge. As they conduct their 'mini-research', the students will be aware of their own learning processes and their strengths and weaknesses. I believe that, as a result, they will be better equipped to handle problems in their day-to-day work at school, and even dilemmas.

This study may encounter difficulties. Two of the anticipated difficulties are:
- That action research involves specific ethical issues, which also arise in this study. The fact that I am researching my work and my place of work may lead me to promote my own wishes artificially (Morrison, 1999). However, since I am aware of this problem I hope to neutralize this effect.

11

- The research aim is to propose that the college management changes the curriculum or adds the proposed new topic to the curriculum -- particularly for the early childhood training programme course. The subject of this study has been received enthusiastically by college directors and acknowledged as an important subject. Nevertheless, they may decide not to adopt its conclusions and revise the curriculum; action research critics argue that this is one of the risks (Morrison, 1999). If this happens, I will be frustrated and disappointed, although, as a member of faculty, I still retain academic autonomy and can teach the subject to my students in my own classes.

The Importance of Reflection in Teaching

To achieve an action research objective, the researcher must think and investigate reflectively. Reflection is an essential part of this study. The term 'reflective' stems from the Latin 'reflectare' meaning to bend back; in other words, to cast one's sight backwards over an action, occurrence or event in the past. Most scholars link the reflection process to reviewing matters with hindsight. However, some conceive it as part of what happens in the present, as reflection in action (Schon, 1983, 1988), or even in terms of its contribution to the future in the teachers' ideas about planning (Zilberstein, 1998).

Reflection is not static but occurs in response to a need to decide what to do and ends with evaluating the course of action chosen (and then begins again) (Yifat and Zadonaiski 1999). Reflective thinking is integral to the work of any teacher wishing to move forward and create professional knowledge. The teacher should not just think reflectively when problems arise during teaching or when work does not go according to plan. Rather, her entire professional experience should be accompanied by reflective thinking.

In the present study, constant reflection forms part of the process, both on the part of the researcher and the students. The college classes I teach are accompanied by reflective analysis of what has happened and analysis of my observations of the students' teaching practice. My own reflection aims to draw conclusions and learn about my own teaching and how the students teach the children in their class.

The students' experience of reflectively analysing dilemmas is important beyond the limits of this study. Reflective analysis skills will help them to foster reflective thinking capabilities and be a great help when they are qualified. Studies have shown that teachers

who reflect on their work are more satisfied with their work, encourage their pupils more to learn through independent study, and are more confident (Ponte and Beers, 2000).

Summary

I will conclude this chapter with a brief summary of the proposed stages of this study.

In college, I will teach the students the subject of coping with professional dilemmas in school. This will prepare them to handle dilemmas. The next stage will involve the students in actively managing the dilemmas in school.

Instruction and supervision for the students involves multiple frameworks:
- college-based classes,
- supervising students in pairs (critical friends),
- school teaching practice,
- individually instructing students as needed.

As noted, the study lasts for two years, and involves two different classes of third year students. Five students are selected from each class to represent the research population, and a detailed description of their experiences is reported.

I hope that the study findings will have ramifications regarding the planning and management of the college curriculum and will result in new areas of emphasis in the pedagogic instructor's work and a fresh understanding of the instructor's role in training students.

CHAPTER TWO
Literature Review

In the previous chapter I discussed my dissatisfaction, and the dissatisfaction of various other pedagogic instructors, with the college's early childhood curriculum. This feeling of dissatisfaction led to the conclusion that innovation and change were required in the existing curriculum. Examination of the educational literature uncovered a large number of references to change in schools and the role of teachers in change. The literature also provided information on change in those teacher training colleges that had decided to introduce curriculum change.

Curriculum Innovation

"Curriculum as a field of study is elusive and fragmentary. What it is supposed to entail is open to a good deal of debate and even misunderstanding" (Ornstein and Hunkins, 1993, p. 1). This view is shared by Shremer (2003). According to Ornstein and Hunkins (1993) we cannot understand "curriculum" in just one way. In the past, it usually meant a list of headings, a syllabus, which supplied the basis for a course on a particular subject (Shremer 2003). In Israel, a distinction is made between *curriculum* and *subject matter* (Chen, 1978): the *curriculum* contains the main goals and headings for a subject and Ministry of Education employees must follow it; *subject matter* refers to textbooks and workbooks, the teachers' and pupils' guide, help and illustrative material, planning time and resources for teaching the learning material (Wheeler, 1967; Eden, 1980).

The international professional literature on the subject of curriculum planning makes no distinction, however, between curriculum and learning material and the term 'curriculum' is used in the broadest sense, encompassing the syllabus, learning material and teaching techniques. In fact, it concerns the entire learning process, or as Ben-Peretz (1995) says; "The curriculum encompasses all of the different experiences the pupil encounters at school" (p. 47). This definition already refers to the application of the written curriculum. According to this definition, curriculum implementation relates to the teaching and learning experiences of both teachers and their students. Thus, the actualization of the ideas and activities suggested in the curriculum translates them into experiences in the field and fulfils the curriculum planners' intentions (Shremer, 2003). Ben-Peretz (1995) stresses the key role of the curriculum planners in curriculum implementation and also regards the curriculum as the actualization of learning potential. The potential of a particular

curriculum includes the planners' intentions and suggests ways of implementing the curriculum as well as further learning opportunities. Schwab (1983) broadens this potential. He maintains that a system composed of bodies of knowledge, skills and abilities, chosen by those responsible for teaching a group of learners, which can be successfully transferred to different learners at different levels, deserves to be called a curriculum.

The teacher's role in curriculum implementation

Schwab (1983) identifies the teacher as a key figure with respect to the curriculum; he does not consider the teacher a passive figure that accepts the curriculum and does what it says. Instead, he regards teachers as professionals who use their knowledge and practical experience. He feels that teachers should be involved in curriculum discussion, and in the considerations and decisions relating to what teachers should teach and how they should teach it. In other words, the teacher's role is to decide what items to focus on and to how far to delve into the subject matter. It is also important for the teacher to have the right to change parts of the curriculum if she thinks this will further students' needs as the teacher perceives them (Ben-Peretz, 1995). A teacher of this kind is an autonomous professional individual who uses the curriculum while changing and adapting given material. Such active involvement by the teacher in teaching the curriculum according to specific situations is essential for the successful introduction of reform into the education system (Berman and McLaughlin, 1977; Connelly and Ben-Peretz, 1980). Of course, notwithstanding the above, the teacher still has obligations vis-à-vis the curriculum.

It is very important for teachers to be alert to the messages the curriculum planners wish to convey. These messages help the teacher to make decisions in the classroom regarding the learning material accompanying the curriculum (Ben-Peretz, 1995). Moreover, the teacher must transform the written curriculum into experiences in the field which can fulfil the curriculum planners' intentions. They themselves should suggest ways of using the curriculum and putting it into practice. However, these responsibilities on the teacher's part should not transform her into a curriculum technician but an agent who critically scrutinizes the curriculum and may change it considerably (Fullan and Pomfret 1977; Olson, 1980). Ultimately, the teacher is given responsibility for teaching planning, even if she relies on the external curriculum which she receives, since only the teacher knows her own class (Ben-Peretz, 1995). This inclination towards autonomous teachers raises many questions. For example, Fullan (1982) asks how far teachers should go in making changes

without damaging the spirit and meaning of the curriculum they teach to their classes. Taking this a step further, can teachers decide that a curriculum change is inadequate and take it upon themselves to devise a new curriculum of their own? And what relationship do we need between curriculum policy makers and the people actually compiling the curriculum? (Valli, 1992).

The graduate of the education system

There seems to be a connection between curriculum planning and the desired product of the education system. Indeed, the curriculum's goal is to train the graduate of this system. Of the main qualities that this graduate possesses, the skills for solving indistinct problems as suggested by Salomon and Almog (1994) stand out; they describe the requisite skills, ability to define problems accurately, to identify key concepts of a wider problem and its secondary problems, and to plan the path for achieving that goal. Salomon and Almog (1994) also suggest that the knowledge with which the graduate is equipped should be active knowledge, i.e., knowledge acquired in the context of problem solving and thinking, rather than through rote learning and practice, which creates a gap between knowledge acquisition and knowledge usage. The graduate is expected not just to quote knowledge and extract it from memory, but also to know how to use knowledge in new contexts and for solving new problems. In order for the knowledge to indeed be active, it must, as mentioned above, be acquired in a context of activity Gardner (1991), which brings us back to the notion of knowledge acquisition through an active problem solving process.

Other skills the graduate should develop are the ability to judge, decide, and take a stance in situations where there is a lack of clear, agreed criteria or relevant social precedent. A further key skill concerns the individual's ability to arrive at standards relating to values by means of close, critical scrutiny of what is happening around him. The graduate should have the capacity to create standards based on values, i.e., should ask himself what is good or bad about a particular solution (Baron, 1985). In order for would-be teachers to be able, when qualified, to educate the future generations in the skills mentioned, logically, their training college curriculum must develop these skills and equip trainee teachers with the tools they need to develop similar skills in their students. In order to achieve these goals, changes are sometimes necessary in the college curriculum.

Characteristics of curriculum innovation

Curriculum innovation is broadly described as a process, product, or experience which requires the actor to behave in a different way (Loucks and Lieberman, 1983; Ornstein and Hunkins, 1993). The decision to reform the curriculum generally follows in the wake of a feeling that matters need to be changed at school. In general, the curriculum does not remain static. Rather, as time passes, and at the right moment, a need for reform is felt. In fact, regular, ongoing change is normal in education and educational professionals must therefore be prepared for it. Schools do not always choose the changes that they would prefer. Sometimes, innovation and change is imposed upon them. Sometimes a school is uncertain as to which innovation to accept and which to reject. The challenge for the school is to choose what suits it from the various reforms suggested. While schools should obviously adopt changes that are truly significant and coherent, they should reject artificially imposed curriculum innovation (Fullan, 2001).

Innovation has many facets. These facets can be illustrated with examples relating to school innovation. The first example relates to technical innovation. This is when teachers are taught new and improved techniques. The second category of innovations relates to political innovation. Here, the emphasis is on the organization, i.e., what happens when the innovations are introduced to the school, what the relationship is between the innovation and the school's reality. The third type of innovation is cultural innovation, in which the focus is on the people in the school, for example, how teachers perceive their work, what happens when teachers are involved actively in the innovation, how the innovation process is described from the teachers' standpoint (Loucks and Lieberman, 1983).

Introducing a new curriculum naturally calls for change. This change can be on one level or on multiple levels; it might be fast or slow. Occasionally, professional goals have to be changed, or organizational changes are required in the school. For a proposed change in the school to really succeed, several conditions must be fulfilled. These include:

- Change must be accompanied by assessments of what has actually succeeded and what has not.
- For a change to succeed, it must be feasible for the teacher to conduct and manage.
- Those involved in the change must identify the need to change, especially because sometimes change requires a veritable 'revolution' and alteration of the traditional structure of the school (Levine et al. 1985; McChesney 1998; Berman and Milbery 1978).

- When the change 'sits well' with people's values it is more readily accepted.

- It is important to define the goals and resources needed for the proposed innovation (McChesney 1998).

- For the people involved to accept the innovation they must assess its value. In other words, they need to know from the practical standpoint, what the value and usefulness of the change is for them (Ornstein and Hunkins, 1993).

Lovell and Wiles, (1983) identified five skills that the individual requires in order to manage an innovation in the school curriculum: (1) leadership skills, (2) communication skills, (3) ability to identify the current human potential, (4) problem solving skills, and (5) ability to evaluate the change process overall (Rogers, 1995). These five skills have a considerable impact on the change process, i.e., they can lead to the success and participation of those involved or cause them tension and conflict. The latter may be particularly important because, while many people enjoy change, others find it very difficult to cope with (Ornstein and Hunkins, 1993).

Implementing curriculum change

Curriculum implementation is defined as the actual implementation of the written curriculum. Curriculum change is broadly defined as a process, product, idea or experience requiring a new behaviour from the actor (Loucks and Lieberman, 1983). Understanding how the various aspects of change develop allows us to shape the implementation of the innovation. If it is planned that the innovation will be introduced into a school, its planners should realize that the teacher sees change from a personal perspective. In other words, they wonder whether they can do what the planners of the innovation propose and what they will be required to do differently. Adopting new opinions requires teachers to change how they feel about things and sometimes change the skills they have become used to. These are not simple changes (Markee 1997; Fullan 1982). It is therefore important that, when making the transition from planning the innovation to its implementation;

- Teachers are personally involved in the decisions – this involvement increases the possibility of the curriculum innovation being successfully introduced (Cornett, 1995) However, there is no consensus among researchers regarding the extent to which teachers should be involved (Berman and McLaughlin, 1978, Louis 1980).

- Another key point for the successful introduction of an innovation relates to providing support for those directly involved in implementing it. The support may be physical or emotional. Of the two, personal support is the most important. **Physical support** may

18

take the form of the materials accompanying the curriculum, for example, changing and adopting new texts. However, it is important that texts are appropriate to the teachers required to teach them. **Personal support** can be expressed as trust building between management and teachers and building a climate that communicates openness (Prochaska and DiClemente 1982; Loucks and Lieberman, 1983). Collegial support is also an important part of emotional support (Little, 1993). Teaching is a lonely profession in which people work in isolation. Most of the time, the teacher works with her pupils, spending very little time working with colleagues. Innovation implementation succeeds best when teachers spend time working together, exchanging ideas, problem solving and composing the new material needed for the new curriculum (Loucks and Lieberman, 1983).

Sometimes, a gap arises between the curriculum producer and the curriculum implementer (Ball and Cohen, 1996). This is because innovation is always in the eye of the beholder; the change planner's intentions are not necessarily put into effect by those implementing the innovation. Therefore:

- When trying to determine the likelihood of them accepting a particular change it is very important to understand how teachers view different educational situations.
- Innovation and change will not be accepted if those proposing the change do not indicate how their proposal can be put into action. This applies even if they have built satisfactory learning materials.
- Time is also recognized as an important component in the success of an innovation, no less important than materials or moral support. Research shows that a complex innovation takes five years to effect since it takes time for teachers to understand the process, adopt the new material and solve any problems (Olson 1980).

Difficulties with implementing a curriculum innovation

When seeking to implement change, several difficulties may arise which must be considered ahead of time.

- Professional development should not be forced or coercive. The teacher alone is actively responsible for her own development.
- Changes that are not internalized may be cosmetic and temporary. Higher-level changes include changes in opinions, values, feelings and the perceptions which make up the activity (Day 1999). These changes are necessarily complex and time consuming (Lortie, 1975b).

- Change brings feelings of uncertainty and stress. The reason for this is that change is a complex, multi-dimensional process. The complexity may lead to confusion, ambivalence, and disorientation among those involved.

Innovation in the teaching college curriculum

Demands from many parents to improve the education provided for their children in preschools and schools, especially in early childhood, have led to a need for improved training for students wishing to teach children of this age. Consequently, staffs in colleges of education have tried to plan curricula that relate directly to students' teaching practice to help students improve their performance at school. The idea was that improved teacher training and teaching practice experience would improve the teaching standards of prospective teachers (Sluss and Minner, 1999).

Grossman and Williston (2002) also discuss the importance of the relationship between the curriculum taught in university and college and teaching practice experience in preschools and schools. They point out that teaching practice has long been recognized as an important and central part of teacher training. They also recommend adding important elements to teaching practice and believe that the part of the curriculum dealing with teaching practice should require observation of students and call for active student discussion in training college lessons. Wally (1995) also refers to the quality of student training and the content of their training curriculum. Like many of the educationalists mentioned above, he believes that the training students receive should be meaningful. He interprets meaningful as the importance of raising different issues relating to controversial issues in society as an integral part of the college curriculum. He believes that the curriculum cannot allow itself the luxury of ignoring these difficult issues while the schools themselves address them.

Hoogveld et al. (2002) and Wideen and Grimmett (1995) also suggest innovations and changes in colleges of education. Hoogveld et al. (2002) report the successful introduction of curriculum innovations into teacher training colleges in Holland. The aim of the changes was to influence student perceptions of the teacher's role. In the past, the curriculum led students to see the teacher as a conveyor of knowledge. The purpose of the new curriculum was to change student perceptions and get them to see the teacher as someone who would guide the students in their learning processes (Pratt et al., 1998, Vermunt and Verloop, 1999). When introducing the new curriculum, teacher training college teachers were

required to help students make the transition from learning the principles of the new curriculum to translating them into their teaching practice. To do this, students learned several skills, e.g., to supervise rather than convey knowledge. They acquired autonomous learning skills, they learned to cope with complex professional problems, they acquired the necessary tools for moving from theory into practice. They developed an alternative processes outlook to the one they had held previously. Any student studying a new curriculum will face a process of change. Change may occur in several areas, all of them related to the student's professional growth. One area that is considered particularly difficult concerns changing the student's educational philosophy (Hoogveld et al. 2002).

The process of change

The professional literature describes various strategies for coping with change. Olson (1985) recommends a reflective approach to change. Although the example he gives concerns teachers, we can also relate it to trainee teachers. His suggestion implies that in a context of educational innovation, the emphasis should not be on what teachers feel or think but on what they do. According to this approach, teachers' behaviour is rational. They try to solve the problems they encounter. However, they are not always aware of how they do this. According to this theory, change is likely to occur if teachers understand how they solve problems, and how they resolve the conflicting demands in their work and the dilemmas that are part of their work. Research based on this conception of change is interested in describing how teachers think. The conception has two aspects, one of which concerns helping teachers to understand how they think, while the other relates to helping teachers understand the role of curriculum materials in developing their awareness of how they think about themselves (Olson 1985).

Change is a dynamic process. It moves in cycles from initiative, action, creativity and enthusiasm to stress, feeling of suffocation and insecurity. This process occurs in three spheres: conscious, emotional and behavioural. In other words, what people think, feel and do regarding change is very important. Everyone sees change differently. People adjust to change at different rates and their outlook and perceptions all differ. In the course of change, the individual changes as well. Knowledge and opinions are enriched (Fuchs, 1998). Various researchers, including Sarason (1982) and Fuchs (1998) have suggested models of change development. Fuchs' (1998) model consists of five stages: (1) a preparatory stage, (2) an initial stage, part of which begins even before the change is introduced and part of which represents the opening stage. In this stage, the source of the

change may be internal, external or stem from personal needs, (3) the application stage when clarification and mutual adjustment occur. This stage contains a large amount of experience and activity such as learning, enquiry, clarification, and understanding of the change subject matter, (4) the ongoing application and establishment stage, which is characterised by ongoing processes of change, a deepening of understanding and an improvement in the skills used for carrying out and understanding the change, and (5) the results stage, this concerns the examination and evaluation of all areas of change and their constituents. This allows lessons to be learned and action decisions to be made.

The pedagogic instructor, her students and the process of change
It was impossible for the process planned in this study, which involved introducing a curriculum with new emphases in teacher training and which affected pedagogic instruction and teaching practice, to be straightforward for either the students or the pedagogic instructor (the researcher). It was a process of change in which the instructor had to train her students differently; in other words, instruct them in subjects and techniques she had not taught before. The students for their part faced a process of changing their opinions and behaviour.

Any process of change is complex and requires a lot of physical and emotional energy from the person undergoing it, (Globman, 1997). It is a process of passing from a familiar state to a new and unfamiliar one. Such change involves uncertainty, anxiety and tension that means that the person involved needs to receive practical and psychological support. It takes time and therefore requires patience (Prawat, 1992).

The process of change
People go through real change when they adopt a new point of view or a new type of behaviour.
Change occurs in three dimensions:
i. change in knowledge
ii. change of standpoint
iii. change in behaviour

Change in knowledge
Change in knowledge occurs when people can give themselves a cognitive explanation as to why the new way is better than the previous one. Moreover, change in knowledge

occurs if they can find a connection between the first belief and the newly acquired one, so that the new method is not a separate foreign entity (Prawat, 1992).

Change of attitude

Fullan (1982) points out that –

i.   Attitudes are learnt.

ii. Attitudes are learnt through relating to people, objects, and values.

iii. Attitudes exist for a long time, but can be changed.

iv. Once a person has shaped an attitude he is no longer indifferent to it.

Attitudes include a nucleus, a cognitive element and a behavioural element. The more central the attitude is, the more difficult it will be to change it. Changing one's attitudes is quite a painful experience, since it requires an internal change

Change in behaviour

Research literature emphasizes a necessary connection between standpoint and behaviour, but is not quite clear about whether it is standpoints that bring about certain behaviour or whether it is behaviour that affects standpoints. Based on the first assumption it can be said that in order to change people's behaviour they must first and foremost be persuaded to change their standpoints, change of behaviour will then follow. If the second assumption is correct and people's behaviour shapes their standpoint, then in order to change people's standpoints, their behaviour must initially be changed (Chen, 1989). There is no unequivocal answer, but both types of knowledge are recognized as important – knowledge that shapes a standpoint and practical behavioural knowledge – and there is a debate going on regarding the strategy of learning methods and knowledge acquisition. Should one move from theory to practice, or maybe the reverse? (Zilberstein, 1998). This debate is essential to this study.

Change relating to teaching practice

Educational change means changing teaching practice and involves three dimensions (1) introducing new or revamped material such as curriculum or technological material; (2) introducing new methods or activities, and (3) changing educational beliefs, e.g., assumptions, theories, plans, and introducing new policies. Change must happen in all three dimensions if it is to affect an educational activity. Innovations which do not encompass the three dimensions do not bring about significant change. For example, change in a textbook (first dimension) without changing teaching techniques (second

dimension) will only produce minor and non-meaningful change (Fullan, 2001). Real change is characterised by serious personal experience. It is always accompanied by uncertainty and ambiguity. If change succeeds, the person feels accomplishment, expertise and professional growth.

The change in the early childhood curriculum proposed in this study involved equipping students with the necessary tools for coping with the professional dilemmas faced by all teachers and preschool teachers. In fact, this is a central skill required by all educators. Whether a teacher or a teaching student, coping with dilemmas is no simple matter and demands an expertise and understanding of its stages in order to indeed cope with it, starting from the point of defining the dilemma and ending with the relevant coping strategies. Despite the complexity referred to in the literature, little mention is made of student teachers coping with professional dilemmas, and the literature lacks reference to teaching college curricula on the subject.

Professional Dilemmas in Education
Definitions and description of the term 'dilemma'
To understand what is meant by the term 'dilemma', we must first distinguish it from the terms 'problem' and 'conflict'.

Problem – generally defined as the gap between reality and the desirable (Ben-Peretz and Kremer-Hayon, 1990; Cuban, 1992) or, to quote Lampert (1985): "A teacher's problems arise because the state of affairs in the classroom is not what she wants it to be" (p. 180).

Conflict – conflict is a clash between two opinions, states or actions, in which the individual will most likely consider what to do as a sideline observer or participate in the conflict while deliberating between two options, even in a theoretical debate (Statman, 1991).

Dilemma – here the individual must choose between two actions, neither of which is desirable (Cardno, 1995). Whichever alternative is chosen will necessarily be negative (Berube, 1982, quoted in Volmann et al, 1998; Katz and Raths, 1992; Statman, 1991). This is different from the normal type of problem where one can choose between a positive and a negative action (Maclagan and Snell, 1992). In a dilemma situation, choosing an

alternative often means sacrificing the advantages offered by the alternative option (Katz and Raths, 1992).

A dilemma has two characteristics which distinguish it from the other two terms above. The first characteristic concerns action. The practitioner is unable to find an ideal solution to the situation, and no procedure or useful scientific principles exist to help them resolve it (Cuban, 1992). However, the person has to take some action in the area in which the dilemma arises. This is not so in the case of a conflict or problem; in theory, in such situations, it is possible to be concerned without taking any concrete action. The distinction between a problem, a conflict and a dilemma is based, among other things, on how difficult it is to cope with the situation. Someone confronted by a dilemma experiences helplessness to the extent of feeling frozen and unable to respond clearly (Statman, 1991). Cuban (1992, 2001) suggests that the way a person involved in the dilemma relates to values is a key factor for defining the term. He believes that, when people confront a dilemma, they must choose between values they consider important, but which they cannot "deliver" in full. In other words, whatever action they take will clash with one of their prime values. This, in effect, means a clash between their basic values. Thus the practitioner confronted with such problems, be they social, political or educational, will experience a sense of helplessness.

Characteristics of professional dilemmas

The professional literature discusses dilemmas and approaches for dealing with them. Some authors believe that **a dilemma is a situation, which can be solved** (Berlak and Berlak, 1981). Other researchers see dilemmas as **insoluble** situations (Cuban, 2001; Katz and Raths, 1992; Statman, 1991). Lampert (1985) compares the dilemma to an argument between rival disputants neither of whom can win. She argues that, given that this is the case, the tension will remain between the two issues, without resolution on the side of either.

Whether or not a practical dilemma can be solved, the practitioner who has difficulty finding the right solution must still 'do something' about it. Sometimes people feel that whatever solution they choose would cause a new set of problems and that any solution will force them to compromise on the goals they have set. In other words, whatever action is chosen will lead to further conflict. The fact that goals are involved leads to an internal struggle as the teacher debates how to do her job. When struggling with a dilemma, people

realize that there are no quick fixes and that in some situations, one either has to try to live with the situation or try to improve matters, even though there is no guarantee of success or an end to the situation (Berlak and Berlak, 1981; Lyons 1990).

Even though the professional dilemmas that teachers face have various features in common, it is still important to remember that each dilemma has its own unique profile. Similarly, coping with dilemmas is invariably a personal matter (Dimmoc, 1999). There maybe no objective truth or 'right' definition of a problem (Ben-Peretz and Kremer-Hayon, 1990; Cuban, 2001; Maslovaty, 2000). Teacher decisions are an outcome of teacher individuality, professionalism, values and, of course, personality (Lyons 1990). Therefore, suggesting arbitrary actions for resolving dilemma situations is not an option. With dilemmas, the decision regarding the best solution, and the teacher's ultimate choice of action, will be influenced by the teacher's perceptions and values, as well as the norms of the community in which the school functions. The decision will obviously be different for each person (Cuban 2001; Kidder and Born 1999; Lyons 1990). In response to every dilemma, the teacher will ask questions, investigate, search and deliberate afresh. Lyons (1990, p. 167) cites Follett (1924) who termed this process "creative integration".

We can summarize by saying that the three main things that influence teacher choice of strategy for coping with dilemmas are: background variables, teaching context and systems of personal belief (Maslovaty, 2000).

The teacher and the professional dilemma

The literature has relatively little to say on the subject of dilemmas (Ben-Peretz and Kremer-Hayon, 1990). What is more, there are no descriptions of how dilemmas arise and how they affect the teacher's experience (Berlak and Berlak, 1981). There are very few studies of the dilemmas that teachers face in their work (Cuban, 1992). This is very surprising, since teachers need to solve problems in their classrooms on a daily basis. Conflicts routinely arise in teachers' professional lives, and represent a serious burden to them (Ben-Peretz and Kremer-Hayon, 1990). Teachers face many professional dilemmas. In fact, teaching itself consists of a host of dilemmas simply because of the nature of the work (Lampert, 1986).

There are two explanations for the occurrence of professional dilemmas. One concerns the discrepancy between ideology and reality, and the difficulties this causes in terms of

teacher self-perception. The second explanation concerns the teacher's multiple duties, which may provide the key to many dilemmas (Ben-Peretz and Kremer-Hayon, 1990; Cuban, 1992; Lampert, 1985; Shulman, 1984).

It is important to distinguish between problems that the teacher routinely encounters and which lead to a degree of conflict, but can be resolved, and problems that cannot be solved (Cuban, 1992). The latter are what we call dilemmas (Dimmoc, 1999). The complexity and lack of certainty regarding the consequences of the dilemma are what make the dilemma difficult to deal with. Lack of response time and the need for a rapid, and often immediate, response do not allow the teacher much time to consider and reflect before acting, only afterwards can this be done (Corrigan and Tom, 1998). The teacher's struggle with professional dilemmas is also accompanied by social conflict. In Western society, one gains respect for one's ability to solve problems (Cuban, 1992; Lampert, 1985); the idea that many issues are insoluble and that one must compromise with "good-enough trade-offs" (Cuban, 1992, p. 7) clashes with this cultural attitude. This approach has been 'imported' from American society, which believes that all problems are indeed solvable, and that good solutions can always be found. This society believes that the main meaning in human existence lies in focusing on control and problem solving.

What is dilemma management?

Dimmock (1999) puts forward the idea that dilemmas should be managed not solved and Cuban (2001) suggests four salient characteristics of dilemmas:

- "Competing prized values;
- Unattractive choices due to constraints;
- Satisfying (compromising);
- Managing not solving." (p. 12)

A precondition for dilemma management is for the practitioner to know how to distinguish between dilemmas and problems. Knowing the difference between problems that can be solved and dilemmas where answers can only "suffice" will help to lessen the practitioner's feelings of guilt (Lampert, 1985, p. 193). Practitioners need to accept the limits of their control regarding human problems and realize that some conflicts cannot be resolved, and must therefore be managed, while at the same time letting go of the desire to solve them (Cuban, 1992; Zeichner et al, 1987; Calderhead, 1987; Ball 1990; Delpit 1986; Fenstermacher and Amarel 1983). Once this stage has been passed, the practitioner can start managing the dilemma in question.

27

The art of dilemma management lies in the ability to find better compromises (Cuban, 1992; Lampert, 1985). This ability is apparent in the practitioner's actions in a dilemma situation in coming up with solutions on the spot or by improving what there is; in other words, by making intelligent choices between alternatives (Berlak and Berlak, 1981). The choices are made following systematic examination and a search for alternatives. This search leads to finding new solutions, previously unknown to the individual, and to shaping the alternatives according to their own needs. The ability to choose and the decision regarding how to act are linked closely to self-awareness. Only human beings have this capacity for self-awareness, allowing them to grasp the implications of actions in the context of dilemmas (ibid). Practitioners analyse dilemmas in many different ways, since they have different dilemmas to solve regarding different sets of children at different times of the day or year, involving different issues (Berlak and Berlak, 1981).

According to Cuban (2001), there is value in educators placing the emphasis on dilemmas rather than problems. He suggests the following four-stage strategy for coping with dilemmas:

1. Decide whether this is a dilemma or an ordinary problem. If a problem, apply known solutions.

2. List and rank the values relating to the dilemma. Placing the values in their order of importance is naturally subjective, and asks teachers to consider which value is first in importance, which second, etc. The analysis must be carried out before and while structuring and considering the most acceptable compromise.

3. Identify which compromises are most acceptable or which actions would offer relative satisfaction.

4. "After identifying and ranking the relevant values in the situation, reframe the situation to accommodate the ranked values in order to create a new compromise" (Cuban, 2001, p. 22). This calls for imagination and creativity. It starts with asking questions like: How was the situation originally framed? What were the main assumptions? Which values had the highest scores?

Stage 4 involves creating new ways of coping. It is not an easy stage, as it requires looking at educational situations from a fresh angle and another standpoint. There is no guarantee that the process will offer the practitioner a better outcome. With regard to

conceptualizing the effect/outcomes phase of dilemmas, Dimmock (1999) suggests at least five possible outcomes that may be hypothesized:

- "The status quo is maintained, that is the existing dilemma remains unaltered
- The dilemma situation is mitigated in some way
- The dilemma is magnified and compounded.
- The existing dilemma spawns new dilemma
- Management of the dilemma generates new opportunities, thereby creating a constructive and qualitatively different set of conditions." (p. 100)

To summarize this section, we can say that human beings can manage dilemmas and take action, and even flourish and acknowledge the contribution that dilemmas make to the task (Berlak and Berlak, 1981; Lampert, 1985).

The role of values in coping with practical professional dilemmas

Coping with dilemmas involves such universal values as honesty, respect for others, friendship, assistance and the avoidance of violence (Maslovaty 2000). Some of these values are among the five values that, according to different studies, most people consider important. These are compassion, honesty, fairness, responsibility and respect (Kidder and Born, 1999, Maslovaty, 2000). However, the discussion of values is not straightforward since questions immediately arise – Does everyone share certain moral values? Does everyone have different values? Do we not have an obligation to respect differences in people's values in the field of education? When we talk about teaching values, whose values are we talking about? (Kidder and Born, 1999). These are complex and thought provoking questions. However, we can say in summary that teaching is accompanied by an ongoing and dynamic process of decision-making, in which moral and ethical dilemmas are addressed (Maslovaty, 2000). This leads to the question of what is a moral dilemma. According to Statman (1991):

"A moral dilemma relates to any situation where there is a moral requirement for a participant or agent in a situation to adopt each of two alternatives, that the moral requirements linked to each alternative course of action or decision do not override each other in any morally significant way, that the participant cannot adopt both alternatives together but that the participant can adopt each alternative separately." (p.26)

Teachers know whether they are facing an ethical or moral dilemma (Corrigan and Tom, 1998). Lyons (1990) found that 70 percent of his study's respondents defined their dilemmas as moral or ethical, while only a small number saw them as related to their own personalities. However, we need to be clear what 'moral' includes in this context .Such

dilemmas may have none of the clarity and certainty that the term often seems to imply (Jacobson, et al., 1996).

Sometimes, when dealing with dilemmas of this nature, educators must choose between two 'strong' values of equal weight, which may also be completely different. It is not a matter of distinction between right and wrong, but a rather delicate dilemma of choosing between two pertinent values that are equally 'right' (Handy, 1994). In other words, the student teacher must choose between two values with the same meaning and force, but which represent the two sides of the dilemma. Since it is impossible to make this choice, the educator must adopt creative measures and live with some degree of confusion (Tirri, 1999).

A significant part of teaching has moral dimensions. These dimensions may become more concrete when teachers confront conflict related to their professional work. Since conflicts often require teachers to take a decision, it can be assumed that teachers are good problem solvers. This view is questionable in the light of Lyons's (1990) study where teachers reported that they mostly found it difficult to decide on a clear approach to solving the conflicts they encountered. They wished to know more, particularly about approaches to coping with moral dilemmas in their everyday work.

Oser (1991, quoted in Tirri, 1999) claims that moral dilemmas occur in education when three moral claims cannot be met, viz., justice, care and truthfulness. These are critical issues in terms of the professional decision-making of teachers. Cuban (2001) suggests that when analysing a problem situation or dilemma, teachers must decide which professional, personal, organizational and social values are involved (Handy, 1994). When teachers observe a clash of values and must choose between them, they should ask themselves what compromises are reasonable and what can be sacrificed in the name of that compromise.

Coping with professional dilemmas and the teacher training curriculum

Little has been written about coping with professional dilemmas and the teacher-training curriculum (Corrigan and Toms, 1998). Cuban (1992) contends that the silence on the subject of defining the moral aspect of the dilemmas our future teachers face should be cause for concern. These moral dimensions have been ignored at all levels.

Cuban (1992) suggests a way of teaching the subject similar to the approach he suggests teachers use to deal with dilemmas. He proposes brainstorming as a method that can help students choose the best course of action. Deliberation should involve investigating the teacher's strongest values and beliefs. The teacher should also examine the principles, logic and underlying rationale behind the action (Corrigan and Toms, 1998; McPartland 2001)

Lyons (1990) also argues that this is an important subject to teach in colleges. Teacher training syllabuses should present students with practical ethical dilemmas. The syllabus should suggest principles for dealing with dilemmas in teaching. The student should be able to identify such situations in all aspects of teaching: dilemmas in the context of teaching different subjects, in the context of student teacher-pupil relations, and in the context of the information/material they teach. In all these spheres, the moral must have a presence in their practical teaching experiences (Donahue, 1999).

To summarize, we can say that, while researchers and educators agree that information/knowledge and values are important aspects of teaching, especially during the teaching practice phase; we nevertheless lack descriptions of how they affect teachers' professional lives and professional growth (Lyons, 1990).

Similar to any subject taught under the heading of pedagogic instruction, training students to cope with professional dilemmas has two main parts: theoretical preparation in college and school-based teaching practice.

The Relationship Between Theory and Practice in Teacher Training

There is very little consensus with regard to the contents of a teacher-training programme, and there is often a mismatch between how educational experts would like pedagogy to be, and how pedagogic skills are taught (Wood and Geddis, 1999). Compounding this is the fact that very little of the professional literature addresses the question of what constitutes positive experiences for student teachers (McNamara, 1995).

In Israeli colleges of education, about a third of the time is spent doing teaching practice. Perhaps the most important advantage of teacher training colleges over universities is that they offer students more practical experience which is also more thorough (Ziv 1988). Some colleges in Israel attempt to imitate university education programmes in their emphasis on theory. However, it is clear that the direction colleges of education (such as

the one in which this study was conducted) should be taking with regard to teaching practice, does not involve imitating this model. Imitation could lead to the loss of their relative advantage, perhaps the most important advantage that the colleges have to offer (Wood and Geddis, 1999; Goodson 1995). On the contrary, universities should introduce more relevant practical courses for teachers (Goodson, 1995). The most important professional contribution of the teaching colleges stems from their understanding that the experiential element of student training is vital to the teacher training process, and consequently, they take pains to systematically and continuously address these and other problems associated with teaching practice. The aim of Israel's teaching colleges is to produce 'professional' teachers, i.e., teachers who have integrated theory (which goes beyond common sense) and practical experience (Mahapil, 1997).

There are different interpretations of the relationship between theory and teaching practice in the context of teacher training (Bergem 1993). Bergem (1993) describes the interpretation practiced in Norway, which sets itself the goal of training efficient, responsible teachers, able to cope with classroom challenges. To achieve this, the decision was made to reform the technical approach that had dominated teacher training in favour of emphasis on teaching students' actual performance and focus on equipping future teachers with the tools for ethical reasoning. This, it was believed would affect prospective teachers' behaviour in the school and encourage them to analyse their actions in terms of morals, rather than entirely in terms of technical teaching performance. The reform was accompanied by a research study, which revealed that efforts to improve students' moral reasoning skills in fact caused their judgement to be less generalized and more focused. It was also found that students' social sensitivity and moral reasoning skills affected how they analysed dilemmas.

Oser and Althof (1993) oppose him and argue that defining values, principles or relevant explanations alone is not enough, because even if a teacher can define 'justice' as a principle, the definition is not sufficient to enable the teacher to choose the right action in a complex situation.

The importance of experience in teacher training

Teaching practice is crucial in shaping new teachers (Carr, 1992). It is the backbone of teacher training, since it enables students to apply disciplinary, pedagogic and social knowledge structures. Many researchers report that students of teaching see practical

training as the most important and central part of their learning process (Zeichner and Gore 1990; Koerner 1992; Johnstone 1994; Carr 1992). They believe that practical training provides students with the only significant learning within their teacher-training programme. It allows students to search their souls and ask themselves how much they really want to be teachers. It is also part of socialization when novice teachers enter their first teaching posts. Teaching practice lets students acquire content knowledge and accumulate experience in planning and general classroom management (Zilberstein, 1998).

Effective teaching practice enables student teachers to become thoroughly familiar with a particular class and to achieve a high level of teaching proficiency. It also equips them with practical skills (Ziv, 1988). One of the main points of the University of Virginia teacher training programme was to help students' gain as much experience as possible through their teaching practice in order to encourage them to be reflective and take responsibility for their pedagogic decisions (Oppewal 1993). Ability to assume responsibility was identified as an important variable for improving judgement skills in classroom management situations in general and in particular for developing pedagogic skills and expertise. To acquire these skills, practice such as working with children in small groups was more effective than say, observation.

Other researchers beside Oppewal (1993), for example, Goodson 1995 and Dunn 1999, believe that improving students' professional performance should be achieved through teaching practice which incorporates new theoretical knowledge learned by students. Zilberstein (1998) developed this subject. He contends that teaching practice helps students to actively engage in creating their own teaching concepts. The process of acquiring their own professional knowledge takes place when they experience authentic situations that require them to solve problems and take decisions, as well as in situations involving dilemmas and situations offering numerous choices of action. Teaching practice requires students to decide what to do based on theories they have studied through their own research (Oppewal 1993). Students must acquire information that is meaningful to them. The fact that the educational framework (kindergarten or school) is the catalyst for teaching theory, makes learning meaningful and increases the chances of students internalizing the theory (Pasternak 1994).

Teaching practice is the foundation and catalyst for altering perceptions of the profession and the way to approach it; it also helps the student to build up professional opinions,

which is a key component in the development of the teacher's personal credo. Munby (1999) contends that despite the differences between intellectual knowledge (structured, clear-cut) and experiential knowledge (spontaneous, unstructured) which can deter teacher instructors from including experiential knowledge in teacher training, the knowledge gained from experience is so rich and significant that it must not be abandoned.

According to Zilberstein (2005), the wish to combine theory and practice, and the need to do this, have brought about changes in the relationship between the training college and the school. In the past two decades, we have seen intensive work in western countries and the United States in order to forge a partnership between teacher training colleges and schools with regard to the teacher-training curriculum. The aim of the school-college partnership is to emphasize the importance of clinical experience in training programmes. Indeed, research has shown that, even though students learn a lot about teaching in college, they mainly learn to teach through practical experience that allows them to experience authentic teaching situations. Thus, we must seek constructive points of interconnection between the two worlds of school and college (Goodson 1995). Moreover, unlike previously, the new approach maintains that schools are not merely service providers, but also an irreplaceable source of knowledge on teaching and practice.

The above points to the conclusion that the students' curriculum must provide a large number of teaching practice hours, and that the more practice provided, the better teachers the students will be. However, we must explore this conclusion more closely. There is an urgent need to examine the efficacy of teaching practice in terms of the prospective teacher's training goals. In other words, we should examine the connection and gap between the goals of teacher instructors and what actually happens in teaching practice (Erdman, 1983) and the effectiveness of practical training in terms of realizing the objectives of training future teachers (Schneider, 1987).

We can summarize this by saying that teaching practice helps students to familiarize themselves with the system and to really discover what it means to be a teacher professionally. It is hardly surprising that students and the teaching faculty identify teaching practice as the most important part of training with most impact on the students (Ziv, 1988). Students report that teaching practice offers them the only important learning of the course (Johnston, 1994; Koerner, 1992; Zeichner, 1980). Given this, it would be reasonable to think that students need more teaching practice, since the more teaching

34

experience the individual can gain, the more professional he or she will be, and the more comfortable they will feel about teaching unsupervised, when fully qualified (Beyer, 1984).

However, although many will agree that experience can contribute to the teacher's pedagogic knowledge, little consensus exists regarding which type of experience is most valuable for prospective teachers (Oppewal, 1993). Indeed, despite the various advantages noted, there are also certain difficulties associated with this approach to conducting teaching practice. The following section describes some of these:

1. Teaching practice runs parallel to students' studies of educational theory at college, and what they study in college does not always keep up with the pace of their teaching practice (Pasternak, 1994).

2. Students might be placed with poor role models. The teachers of the classes students use for teaching practice and who provide role models are not always good examples for the students. However, for different reasons, sometimes colleges have no choice but to compromise with what is available and assign students to teachers who are not the best role models (Pasternak 1994).

What it is clear however is that even when students' training is complete, there is still a long way to go before they are professional teachers. Indeed many researchers and teachers (Carter and Richardson 1989; Griffin 1986; Koehler 1985) believe that learning to teach is a lifetime process with no formula for how to teach because no two classroom situations are alike and no two classrooms are alike. Thus, the teacher must be able to evaluate, hypothesize and resolve any 'extraordinary' classroom problems that arise.

The importance of teaching theoretical subjects as part of teacher training

Besides the hands-on experience that colleges provide, they also teach the theory of education with reference to such subjects as psychology and sociology. Theory is taught because it is believed that students must be familiar with and understand theoretical concepts. Colleges believe that theory helps students to understand the didactic aspect of teaching and provide them with insights into issues occurring in the classroom during teaching practice (Mahapil, 1997; Bain et al., 1999). Goodson (1995) supports this position; he contends that there must be a bold relationship between theory and practice. If the theory students learn is not disconnected from their practice, then its contribution will be optimal and will, in fact, improve it. He calls for balance between theory and practice, with neither being more emphasised than the other.

In fact, however, it is difficult to put theoretical knowledge into practice, since pedagogical studies and psychology, which often comprise the theoretical training aspect of teaching and education, are often learned without any attempt to apply them to real life situations in schools, or to the methodology for different subjects, or the teaching practice programme. Good theory, by definition, speaks to actual experience (Barrow, 1990). Thus, theory and practice are divorced (a situation which is reinforced when teaching and learning principles are studied while the student lacks relevant experience) and not integrated into teaching practice (Goodson, 1995). Moreover, teaching practice is not accompanied by an explanation of the principles that guide it, and so remains specific, unable to be extrapolated to novel situations (Ziv, 1988).

The college of education syllabus

In order to achieve the goal of integrating the theoretical and practical aspects of teacher training, students carry out teaching practice with different constellations of children in preschool and school settings. This ranges from teaching part or all of a lesson to teaching complete content units. Trainee teachers also receive experience in working with pupils in situations ranging from one to one, through working with different size groups with different types of children, to working with entire classes. The teacher trainer has overall responsibility for the teaching practice class and pedagogic instructors supervise teaching practice from the lesson preparation stage, through the teaching practice itself, to finally providing feedback individually and in groups after the teaching practice (Kainan et al., 2004). The pedagogic instructors have an important function in the teacher training process as a whole, specifically by mediating between theory and practice. The supervision they provide is oriented and interprets the student's teaching practice with the help of the instructor's own personal experience and knowledge of educational theory (Mahapil, 1997; Ziv 1988; Kainan et al., 2004). Other teacher trainers also contribute significantly to the development of the student teacher's knowledge. Teacher trainers focus on training students in the practical aspects of teaching children. Pedagogic instructors, on the other hand, also focus on issues from the theoretical point of view (Calderhead, 1988; McIntyre, 1988; Richardson and Koehler, 1988; Carr, 1992).

Teacher training programmes in colleges of education in Israel last for four years: students spend three years studying and one year as a novice teacher (students attend a supervisory learning workshop during this final year). The first three years of the course involve the

gradual progression from education theory to teaching practice (Mahapil, 1997). Students take various foundation subjects such as courses in cognitive psychology, history, or sociology, which have traditionally, and correctly, been seen as the basic elements in educational theory (Barrow, 1990), and try to implement their theoretical knowledge, which is essentially a set of methodological concepts, during their teaching practice.

Only in the fourth year of the course, the year of apprenticeship, is there a movement in the opposite direction, i.e., from the practice of education to the theory of education. The starting point in the fourth year is the specific, concrete teaching and learning situations that novice teachers encounter, and the immediate context in which their teaching experience occurs. For the trainee teachers to understand what these situations mean, they turn to the theory in the hope of finding guidelines to support them in their work (Mahapil, 1997).

In both models presented, there is an indispensable relationship between the theoretical content of the education sciences and the practical guidance derived from them. In other words, we find that throughout the training process, the curriculum relates both to theoretical principles and to practical principles. On the one hand, there is the commitment to the discipline, which requires that the college's students receive a substantial, broad theoretical foundation. On the other hand, there is commitment toward the field and a wish to respond to the needs of soon to be teachers. There is an undertaking to provide them with adequate practical tools to enable them to cope with actual situations.

To summarize this section: it appears that current teacher training seeks to achieve the correct balance between the theoretical and the practical elements of teacher training. However, this model contains various difficulties, of which the following three are particularly problematic:

1. There is no link between what happens in practice in the field, in schools and preschools, and the training offered by colleges. The criticism is often voiced that pedagogic supervision is divorced from what transpires in the field, and that its contents are drawn from a general menu of didactic and methodological topics without any real connection to circumstances in the field (Stenhouse, 1980, 1981).

2. No connection is made between the content of the educational sciences and the student's experiences during teaching practice.

3.	There is no connection between the teacher trainer, the student and the pedagogic instructor (Mahapil, 1997).

How to improve the link between theory and practice in teacher training

Stones (1987), Borko and Mayfield (1995) and Mcintyre (1988) believe that teacher training needs to change drastically. Stones (1987) and Oppewal (1993) argue that instruction on the subject of teaching should be regarded as equipping students with problem-solving capabilities, rather than as a transitional process from theory to practice. Stones (1987) sees the pedagogic supervisors with a key role in the suggested improvement. He maintains that instructors should particularly emphasise pedagogic problem-solving. They should perceive the process of teaching this as an investigation in which problems met when teaching are subjected to ongoing pedagogic analysis. Stones (1987) and Goodson (1995) also discuss the means by which theory and practice could be integrated, suggesting that the pedagogic instructors should be responsible for integrating theory and practice and reducing the distance between them. The theory these instructors teach has to be an integral aspect of the course and the practical issues dealt with. Stones (1987) argues that when planning their teaching activities, students should follow the pedagogic principles they have learned and not simply rely on their instructor's advice or opinion. He recommends that students should meet their pedagogic instructor after teaching practice to discuss what they did with reference to the theory, not to discuss cosmetic points such as how the trainee writes on the blackboard or matters of diction.

Bengstsson (1993) and Zilberstein (1998) also view theory and practice as two separate worlds. Theory and practice are necessarily related, and the divorce or split that we are all too familiar with is between practice and pure theory, rather than between practice and theory as such (Barrow, 1990). The teacher trainer must teach theory in order to help students improve their work and generate work-related knowledge. Bengstsson (1995) proposes three ways of producing such knowledge: reflection, dialogue and scientific research.

A.	Reflection refers to self-knowledge or self-scrutiny regarding one's work (Bain et al., 1999).

B.	Dialogue refers to dialogue with a fellow agent – this dialogue entails official rather than random conversations with colleagues on issues that arise during teaching practice. In such dialogue, each person brings something from his own experience and receives new knowledge.

C. Scientific research – focused, ongoing activities aimed at investigating reality, where the result of such research is sometimes expressed through the organ of a professional periodical or journal.

All three methods appear to be products of field experience.

Dunn (1999), on the other hand, argues that experience alone cannot guarantee a good teaching performance, and that a good performance cannot be achieved through a set of acquired skills, since it is a continuous and ongoing process. He agrees with Stones' (1987) conception of the process, noting that professional teachers are doers and problem solvers who combine theory with practical principles. However, he points out that self-criticism is essential. He cites Schon (1983, 1987) when analysing the different forms of this criticism. Schon (1983, 1987) describes professional teachers as able to analyse problems as they experience them, in the context in which they happen. He calls this "reflection in action", a reference to the ability to identify and investigate problematic events and situations in real time. The teacher's self-scrutiny results from direct interaction between the actor and the action, where the actor experiments and interprets until the most suitable combination is found.

Professional teacher performance

Dunn (1999), like Ericsson et al. (1993), describes oriented experience as an ongoing process. During this process, activities occur which are relevant to helping teachers improve their performance. In other words, what motivates teachers or teaching students to conduct activities is not pleasure but rather the desire to improve their work and performance; this is the direct orientation – to attain an even better performance. Thus, even if an experienced teacher feels satisfied with his or her own performance, he or she will continue to persevere in trying to improve the standard of his/her work. This process is analogous to a professional musician who never stops trying to improve his or her performance. Practice in this sense is not about enjoying the activity, but about the ceaseless desire to improve its standard.

Like his colleagues, McNamara (1995) emphasises two goals of teaching practice:

A. To provide students with practical experience in problem solving

B. To train students to examine their own practical experience.

According to McNamara (1995) and Oppewal (1993), in order to acquire teaching expertise, students need practical experience and also need to experience problem-solving

in the classroom. Nevertheless, McNamara (1995) cautions that the danger of putting the entire emphasis on practice is that students will gain the impression that teaching is just about being skilled in conducting activities with children. He also thinks that students must be trained to explore how children learn, and to assign appropriate tasks and activities for the different skills children have. To achieve this, the student must learn about roles, have experience of teaching practice alternatives, develop a capacity for self-evaluation of performance, and be conscious of personal weaknesses, capabilities and limitations.

Learning, whether in the college classroom or through teaching practice, demands reflective thinking. This is important because it represents a different form of thinking from everyday, non-critical thinking. Critical thinking is directed toward the specific aim of solving problems and, consequently, it is a vital aspect of learning to cope with dilemmas.

The Reflective Process in Relation to Teacher Training

A definition of the term 'reflection' was first suggested by Dewey (1933); his notion of reflection meant cautiously and persistently dealing with problems. The role of reflective thinking is to transform an unclear situation marked by conflict into one of clarity and harmony.

Various interpretations have been applied to the term 'reflection' (Calderhead, 1989; Schon, 1983).

The dictionary definition of 'reflection' is:

"1. Image, likeness;

2. Cogitation, consideration, contemplation, deliberation, meditation;

3. Conviction, idea, impression, opinion, thought;

4. Evidence, indication, mark, sign." (Funk and Wagnall, 1961, p. 1059)

Korthagen and Wubbels' (1995) definition of reflection encompasses features suggested in many other definitions, and reflects teacher-training needs:

"Reflection is the mental process of structuring or restructuring an experience, a problem or existing knowledge or insights." (p. 55)

Despite the plethora of definitions and the widespread use of the term in the educational literature, the precise content, character and nature of reflection remains very unclear

(Sellick, 1996). This is because the term can be explained in several ways and can have a number of meanings (ibid). Nonetheless, overall consensus exists regarding its importance and contribution to assisting student teachers to improve their teaching methods through personal deliberation. Perhaps this is the reason that, in many countries, the term, which is applied to both teaching students and veteran teachers, is now in fact synonymous with professionalism, (Knowles and Holt-Reynolds, 1991; Freese, 1999).

Main characteristics of reflection

The discourse regarding the different conceptualizations of reflection suggests using a general frame for describing reflection and its chief characteristics. We can divide this frame into three factors: **time, process** and **content**:

Time

Regarding the time factor, most forms of reflection involve a retrospective examination of actions that have already happened. Nevertheless, reflection opens up new possibilities for future thinking. This means that, despite its dependence on experience, reflection is future-oriented (Amdore, 2000). Schon (1988) introduces a new way of relating to the time factor in the context of reflection. He distinguishes between reflection-**in**-action and reflection-**on**-action, and suggests seeing reflection-**in**-action as conducted by the thinking, acting teacher, whereas with reflection-**on**-action, the teacher can involve colleagues, advisors, instructors, etc. However, the distinction he makes is still somewhat unclear.

Process

The process of reflection is known for its considerable importance in the professional development of the teaching student. In the past fifty years, this has become a key concept in the field of teacher training (Conway, 2001; Korthagen and Wubbels, 1995; Hoover 1994). The aim is to encourage the development of a student who is reflective. Reflective students will possess the following characteristics and approaches to their work:

1.   They will be able to discover the qualities inherent to teaching, which they will regard as important and useful (Klinzing, 1988).

2.   They will be able to apply a variety of different questions to the process of examining the characteristics of teaching experiences in order to reconstruct them (Korthagen and Wubbels, 1995).

3.   They will have the ability to construct and create a set of concepts and personal beliefs regarding teaching (Spilkova, 2001).

41

Student professional identity is constructed and influenced by teaching practice and experience in the classroom (Shulman, 1996; Tillema, 2000; Van Manen, 1995).

Reflection on these experiences is the starting point for the developing professionalism. Individuals who practice reflection try to understand past events, and more importantly, they process what they have learned from teaching practice (Conway, 2001; Moran and Dallat, 1994; Leat, 1995). This is a relatively new approach to teacher training compared with the previous model, known as the Traditional Model. According to the latter, students use their experiences in different environments to synthesize the subjects they learn. Thus, they receive theories of education, educational approaches and skills from the teacher training college, and a practice classroom, pupils and a syllabus from a school, which allows the student to make connections and learn new things concerning the profession (Penny et al., 1996).

In contrast to this, we have an alterative approach, known as the Reflective Approach, according to which, the teacher is a kind of educational researcher and teaching is a type of reflection in action (Britzman, 1986, quoted in Penny et al, 1996; Hoover 1994; Freese 1999). Therefore, teaching cannot be limited to a series of automatic techniques or to the mere implementation of a set of skills (Britzman, 1986, quoted in Penny et al, 1996; Hoover 1994). Instead, the student reflects on his or her actions, chooses from a number of alternatives during or after these actions, and then critically evaluates the processes involved (Emberson 1993). This is in fact a tool students are taught which helps them to understand their own experiences and how their thinking and actions relate (Schon, 1983; Hatton and Smith, 1995). Similarly, this approach allows them to express new information and matters that trouble them (Moran and Dallat 1994).

Today, a consensus seems to exist on the need for change, of the need to move away from teaching based on technical skills toward teaching based on reflective skills, without giving up the former. This being said, we still lack enough information on how to link the two (Korthagen and Wubbels, 1995).

One might say that reflection is a practice with no clear guidelines whose advantage lies in the fact that students can constantly re-examine their personal and professional values with respect to their educational work (Schon, 1988; Emberson, 1993). Another benefit of reflection is that it encourages students to develop their own educational philosophy. Such

dynamic development demonstrates to students that schools are human structures that are open to change. Any teacher training approach that does not encourage future teachers to reflect critically on their ideas regarding education and the meaning of education in the context of the school is likely to be extremely conservative or dangerously prone to a single doctrine (Carr, 1986; Golby and Appleby, 1995). Notwithstanding the above advantages of reflection, it should be stressed that we presently lack sufficient information on how critical reflective teaching contributes to student development (Dinkelman, 2000; Hatton and Smith, 1995). Many times, teachers who try to inculcate critical reflection in their students only encounter limited success, which seems to indicate the need to develop this important practice further (Dinkelman, 2000).

Content

Luzati (1999) has proposed a model containing a set of reflective questions which should be asked; he calls this model the Reflection Portmanteau. The model contains four stages: reconstruction, innovation, summary and future. The following are examples of some of the questions he suggests:

1. **Reconstruction**: What were your considerations when choosing the activity/choosing the resources?

   What did you find difficult? How did you overcome the difficulties?

   Was the activity appropriate to the goal?

2. **Novelty** – What was new to you?

3. **Summary** – What did you learn about the activity/the children/yourself?

   What did you feel?

   What was the most significant factor for you?

4. **Future** – What would you like to learn? What do you want to improve?

   How can you apply your experience in practice in order to improve your professional performance?

How to practice reflection

There are various forms of reflection and techniques which can be used to promote professional development (Golby and Appleby, 1995). The individual can practice it alone, independently, with assistance from someone who provides criticism, or with a critical professional community. Discussion and support are key factors for conducting reflection in all these contexts (Conway, 2001; Golby and Appleby, 1995). While some legitimize the practice of independent reflection, others believe moving from one level of reflection to a

higher one, requires dialogue (Smyth, 1991; Moran and Dallat, 1994; Freese, 1999; Emberson, 1993). Thus, the reflective process should be collaborative and not purely individualistic. According to Smyth (1991), collegial collaboration enriches personal reflection.

A consistent process accompanied by support can empower the individual and provide the motivation for professional development (Moran and Dallat, 1994). Spilkova (2001) highlights the importance of reflection with regard to student opinions, beliefs, values and attitudes; he contends that during reflection, the student's tacit knowledge, i.e., intuitive opinions and personal theories formed in the past, gain expression. However, it should be noted that most teacher training curricula in which reflection is described are fairly general and lack details of the activities and techniques that can help the trainee teacher to use the teaching experience for critical self-inquiry (Korthagen, 1992). A small number of curricula that do describe techniques recommend the use of video, metaphors, portfolio photographs or keeping a journal.

Smyth (1991) divides the reflective process into four stages:
"1. Describing (what do I do?)
2. Informing (what does this description mean?)
3. Confronting (how did I come to be like this?)
4. Reconstructing (how might I do things differently?)." (p.175)

Difficulties associated with reflection

Beside its many advantages, reflection also has its fair share of challenges. The following are some of the main difficulties associated with reflection in teacher training:

A.   Students may see personal writing, a very common tool used in reflection, as requiring them to bare their souls and may object to this (Moran and Dallat, 1994).

B.   Sometimes, it is difficult for students to connect their personal beliefs with their personal professional practice (Tillema, 2000).

C.   Especially when recorded in a journal, reflection is generally more subjective than objective and preconceived ideas may be expressed (Moran and Dallat, 1994).

Keeping a journal

Recording a teaching practice journal helps student to develop as professionals and offers numerous advantages (Emberson1993).

A. Jarvis (1992) contends that the journal helps teachers or **students to reframe the familiar**. It allows the authors to give what they think happened in class a personal meaning, by expressing it in words of their own. Naturally, there is significance to the choice of which thoughts are written down and also to how they are expressed in the journal.

B. Knowles and Holt-Reynolds (1991) maintain that recording a journal, writing personal stories and other reflective exercises **help students to develop their reflective thinking skills** (Spilkova 2001; Hatton and Smith, 1995). Moran and Dallat (1994) also claim that journals are extremely important because the journal is personal and not structured by a supervisor. The journal helps the author to arrive at an analytical and personal description of events. Moran and Dallat (1994) found that the theoretical approach students expressed in their journals helped them with their reflection and in **reaching a deeper understanding** of situations they faced with the children.

C. Emig (1977, quoted in Hoover 1994) identifies parallel lines between learning strategies and writing. He argues that writing **helps to synthesize ideas**, as when thoughts are put in order during writing, the writer must sharpen his/her thoughts and focus his/her ideas.

Ballantyne and Packer (1995) claim that:

"Student journals are used extensively in university contexts as a means of facilitating reflection, deepening personal understanding and stimulating critical thinking." (quoted in Bain et al. 1999, p. 51)

Zeichner (1992) adds that this is true:

"Particularly in the field of teacher education, where reflection has come to be widely recognized as a crucial element in the professional growth of teachers." (quoted in Bain et al. 1999, p. 51).

The process of writing a journal is a gradual one, ranging from generalized writing, with no clear direction, to generalization or the development of a new personal theory, to keeping records that are relevant to the student's professional development (Jarvis, 1992). At the start of the process, it is normally expected that students present whichever theory they were taught. Later, however, they are expected to make the connection between

personal research and existing theory, in order to speed up the construction of a new theory (Leat, 1995).

To summarize this section: reflective teaching is deeply embedded in teacher training, and there is a lot of material on the subject in the professional literature, along with different models of reflection. Despite this fact, not enough is known about encouraging student reflection, and many more studies are needed in order to develop effective methods and techniques for advancing this important process.

When students learn to cope with professional dilemmas, they must be able to think, weigh, search for evidence and new data, and decide. In other words, they must apply critical thinking to their decisions. This involves measured, reflective thinking focusing on decisions regarding the necessary actions to be taken. It is chiefly marked by scepticism applied in the right way, i.e., moderately and with a view to finding a better solution or insight into the issue at hand.

Critical Thinking

What is critical thinking?

When discussing thinking in general, and critical thinking in particular, the one indisputable fact is that everybody thinks, with or without practice. Thinking is not like learning mathematics, chemistry or physical education, or even reading and writing, which require study, but is a natural action performed by every human being. Human beings evaluate, classify, make assumptions, weigh up evidence, arrive at conclusions, and consider various alternatives. This can be accomplished without any study or practice, just as people breath without instruction (Nickerson, 1987; Dewey, 1933). However, despite the above-mentioned, it is widely accepted among educators that it is important to teach pupils to think, and more particularly, to think in a critical manner.

The discussion regarding what constitutes critical thinking shows that, despite divergences in how researchers describe this concept, the choice of skills needed for critical thinking indicate common threads. For example, logical reasoning is common to all definitions of the concept, as are judgement and analysis. However, despite the similarities, differences are also found, mainly in the emphases reflected in the definitions. Ennis (1962) suggests 12 different aspects of critical thinking, for example, "judging whether a statement is specific enough" (p. 88). Ennis (1987, p. 10, quoted in Baker, 1996, p. 21) refers to some

of these skills. He calls critical thinking "reasonable reflective thinking". His particular emphasis is on the critical thinker's decisions not just regarding what to do, but what to believe.

Paul (1984) concurs with these definitions. He stresses the connection between the abovementioned skills and suggests that critical thinking links the language of reason, and the ability to analyse, criticize and side with ideas, with the ability to justify opinions and judge conclusions. Like his colleagues, Nickerson (1987) explains that critical thinking combines a number of skills, for example, logic and reflection, among others, and contributes vigilant listening and self-scrutiny by the thinker.

Defining critical thinking

The term 'critical thinking' has many definitions and it is often confused with other thinking skills. This confusion leads to a situation in which many forms of thinking are defined under the common definition of 'critical thinking', including distinction between reality and imagination and between facts and opinions. Critical thinking is often included in the list of skills associated with 'good' thinking. This list includes, inter alia, formal reasoning, reflective judgement, and problem solving (King, 1994).

However, to define critical thinking as one of a number of forms of thinking means losing the uniqueness of this specific form of thinking and, in practice, declaring that it has no definition of its own (Beyer, 1985). In order to be able to characterise and define critical thinking, educators have associated it with similar forms of thinking, such as Bloom's (1956) taxonomy, investigation, or logical reasoning. However, the most common error is to link the process involved in critical thinking with that involved in problem solving. Many researchers, including Beyer (1985) and Tanner (1993), claim that the two processes are not necessarily connected. The problem-solving process is strongly focused on defining, dealing with and finding ways of solving a given problem, while finding solutions to problems is only one of the goals of the critical thinking process.

As previously mentioned, thinking is present in every human being Dewey (1933) and likewise, criticism is also present in every human being. The function of such criticism is to distinguish between what is acceptable and what is unacceptable. We become sceptical of quick-fix solutions, of single answers to problems, and of claims to universal truth. We also become open to alternative ways of looking at, and behaving in, the world. "The

ability to think critically is important in our lives in many different ways", (Brookfield, 1987, p. 9). Critical thinking can be recognized in the context of our personal relationships, work activities, and political involvements.

Why is it necessary to learn critical thinking?

A question that precedes this question is: Why do we need to teach people how to think? Ostensibly, the answer is simple. We must teach people how to think because, although everyone needs to know how to think, many people do not know how to, and therefore the education system must help by teaching them. However, in terms of deeper thinking, the answer is less straightforward, since how can we teach people to think when we have no clear, obvious answer to the question "What constitutes good thinking?" (Nickerson, 1987, p. 29). The literature reveals that researchers consider critical thinking an important and sound form of thinking. They have several reasons for this view.

1. Due to the 'explosion of information', human functioning in every sphere of life now requires decisions involving many pieces of information. Critical thinking is likely to assist in substituting accepted and traditional thinking patterns with new thinking patterns if these are potentially more efficient (Brookfield, 1987).

2. People who possess critical thinking will be better citizens – they will be able to analyse what is happening in their countries more proficiently and agree or disagree with policies and oppose or support policymakers. It may be stated that critical thinking is at the heart of every individual who wishes to develop, and who lives in a democratic society (Brookfield, 1987; Nickerson 1987).

3. Critical thinking contributes to individuals from the psychological perspective, enhancing their well-being and helping them become better adapted to society. The assumption is that critical thinkers live more balanced lives and find these lives more interesting and worthwhile (Baker, 1996).

4. The skill of critical thinking is essential to the understanding of interpersonal behaviour (Brookfield, 1987). This skill helps develop empathy, in other words, the ability to place oneself in others' situations, understand their point of view and feelings, and thus take their interests into consideration in a serious manner (Siegel, 1988).

5. A person who can think critically will succeed more in life.

6. Another reason why we must learn to think critically is that we should not allow ourselves not to think critically since we face complex problems in which this is required (Nickerson, 1987).

Critical thinking – skill or characteristic?

Siegel (1988) and Passmore (1980) distinguish between critical thinking as a skill and critical thinking as an autonomous personality trait. The former is a specific skill, similar to checking solutions to maths problems, while the latter involves nurturing a special relationship with the world by adopting a critical attitude that should serve as a guide in every situation in which an individual must take a stand or evaluate.

Passmore (1980) refutes the possibility that critical thinking is a skill, stating that it more closely resembles a personality trait. He claims that, unlike in the case of skills, it is difficult to teach critical thinking, the only way being through the educator's personal example. Ennis (1962) feels that there is a need to teach critical thinking skills, but that such teaching will be inadequate if the recipient does not have a natural propensity for such. In defining ideal critical thinking, McPeck (1981) relates to the personality of the critical thinker, and not to the required skills. He describes critical thinkers as being self confident in their ability to reason, open-minded and willing to accept different worldviews, flexible, sincere, logical and diligent. Paul (1984) agrees with the opinion that people characterised by critical thinking are open minded; he claims however, that such open-mindedness is not a natural tendency, but that individuals must strive to develop this characteristic. In conclusion, on considering the question of whether a critical thinker needs to be 'equipped' with the required skills, or with the proper personality, it may be stated that despite different researchers giving different weightings to each of the two components, there is unanimity concerning their importance.

If this is the case, what skills are required in order to develop critical thinking?

Skills required for critical thinking

Clarification of the skills required for acquiring critical thinking is central to the discussion on educating towards critical thinking since, although it is undisputed that critical thinking has become the agreed goal of education, the aims and means are still unclear. Such

clarification is likely to dispel some of the fogginess and cast some light on the aim and the means of critical thinking.

Definition of the term 'skills' must relate to both performances based on proficiency and relevant criteria for evaluating such performances. When individuals think critically, they apply a wide range of cognitive skills, such as thinking skills, investigative skills and translation skills. Cognitive skills can be categorised into groups, such as questioning skills, and analogical thinking skills (Lipman, 1991). Many researchers have attempted to characterise these skills and even to compile lists on which basis educators can teach their pupils. Ennis (1962) compiled a list covering 12 aspects of critical thinking including such skills as identifying ambiguity and contradictions in arguments. The required skills can be classified into two different groups a) skills relating to a specific subject and b) general and neutral skills – that is, logical, formal and non-formal skills (Siegel, 1988).

The former group of critical thinking skills is always practised on a specific subject and cannot be learned in an abstract manner. The criteria for critical thinking differ according to discipline and area. Every area of activity has its own essential skills, which cannot be isolated from the activity itself, for example, scientific problems require a scientist's knowledge and skills (McPeck, 1981). Paul (1984) believes that the higher skills involved in critical thinking, i.e., skills that can be applied to other subjects and are not exclusive to a particular field, are not only helpful in tackling a specific question, but also affect the person's intellect, emotions and moral autonomy.

However, there is lack of agreement regarding criteria for the latter group of general skills. Different researchers propose different essential skills, the most prominent of which are:

- Proper use of all obtainable evidence in order to solve a given problem (McPeck, 1981). In other words, making a purposeful effort to examine a belief or knowledge in the light of collected evidence and the conclusions drawn from said evidence. This process involves a meticulous, precise and objective analysis of every piece of knowledge, claim or belief worthy of justification or validation (Beyer, 1985).

- Postponement of consent, whether regarding a given statement, norm or method of action. Such doubt might be replaced by acceptance, but such acceptance is not automatic and takes arguments, explanations and possible alternatives into account (McPeck, 1981). This skill, which is also referred

to as reflective scepticism, asks questions concerning beliefs, concepts or social structures that have been in existence for a long time without change. Such a skill is likely to come into expression, for example, by negating the concept that there is only one true way or a comprehensive truth (Brookfield, 1987). Scepticism must be applied in the correct manner, moderated by experience, and must lead to a good solution or new understanding with regard to a given problem.

- The ability to provide justifications for opinions and beliefs, or in other words, to judge the rationality of one's own judgement (Brookfield 1987; Siegel 1988). The intention in this case is for critical thinkers with a good ability to evaluate their own arguments and to make use of them. Lipman (1991) adds that an argument is considered to be good only if it is relevant to the opinion under discussion and if it can be labelled as a strong argument – in other words, if there is a strong tendency to accept the argument or to negate its validity. King (1994) calls this skill 'reflective judgement' and claims that it is the ultimate outcome of critical thinking.

- Skills for examining the relationship between values, beliefs or moral codes that can only be understood in their entirety when their interrelationships are appreciated. In other words, when examining a given value, the context in which it is organised must also be examined and understood (Brookfield, 1987).

Critical thinking and teacher training

When discussing how to train students who can think critically and develop critical thinking in their own pupils, we first need to ask whether thinking necessarily leads to action because if it does not, the importance of thinking lessens. Logical thinking may lead to indecision or a decision not to act (McNamara 1990). Often it is easier to think than to do. Teachers are willing to think reflectively about their work, but it is much more difficult to teach them to apply this thinking and incorporate it in their work (ibid). Student teachers also find it relatively easy to reflect on their experiences both in writing and in oral discussion. They report finding the reflective process enjoyable and discover that it makes their professional work much more meaningful. The reflective diary helps the students to see what they have done in a new way and encourages them to ponder work experiences (Baker 1996).

However, it is very difficult for them to translate this into practice and often they do not apply what they have learned but operate using a different more practical method. These facts are recognized both from experience and from the professional literature (Baker 1996). In order to bring about improvement in this, we must rule out certain assumptions and adopt certain measures. As teacher educators we assume that, in order to promote critical or creative thinking, our teaching approach must be open rather than didactic, since logical judgement requires freedom, and critical thinking is unable to develop if teaching is highly structured. However, according to McNamara (1990), we have to question this position. He contends that if we wish to develop critical thinkers, we must teach people critical thinking skills up to a certain point and that this requires didactic and structured teaching. Instruction should be detailed and clear but should not rely solely on the professional literature, which mainly concerns social science studies.

Obviously, classes aimed at developing critical thinking will use appropriate teaching methods. Paul (1984) maintains that these classes should be based more on dialogue and open discussion than frontal teaching. McNamara (1990) urges us not to present subjects dogmatically, but in a way that encourages discussion. Discussions should explore opinions and arguments that students raise and that are based on a criterion or standard. Another suggestion by McNamara (1990) and Baker (1996) aimed at encouraging teaching students to think with a view to action is to address their specific problems and what they feel is important to them.

In conclusion, and based on the above discussion, critical thinking can be defined as: "The process of determining the authenticity, accuracy and worth of information or knowledge" (Beyer, 1985 p. 276).

Summary
The first section of this literature review examines the question of introducing change into an existing teacher training college curriculum. The second section describes the subject of the curriculum innovation: coping with professional dilemmas in the field of education (preschool or school). The third section discusses the two parts of teacher education, college based theory and school-based practice. The fourth and fifth sections describe the two main skills needed to cope with professional dilemmas. First, reflective thinking, which every students needs in order to be able to deliberately consider what steps to take, to improve teaching competence, and enable conclusions regarding addressing similar

issues in the future to be reached. The second skill is critical thinking, which is necessary for deciding what to do when facing a dilemma. Regarding such thinking, it is argued that teaching is the outcome of deliberation and applying judgement.

CHAPTER THREE
Some Research Background

Introduction

Personal sense of dissatisfaction: Author's realization of the problem during her professional career

This study was not chosen by chance, nor was it a hasty decision or sudden whim. It stemmed from a deep sense of unresolved difficulty that crystallized over my 25-year career in education. It was a feeling that intensified during my present tenure supervising student teachers What I experienced was a great dissatisfaction with the training programme. I saw how my students struggled with the professional dilemmas they encountered in teaching practice, and how the curriculum failed to help them deal with these problems. Seeing this reminded me of my own problems at an early stage in my career, and of the difficulties I observed while supervising teachers. One could say that my observations of students and working teachers made an important contribution to my growing sense of a problem in my current position.

Throughout my professional career, I have often wondered how teachers deal with the more serious problems they face at work. The questions that concerned me accrued an added note of frustration to do with the method being used for training at the college where I now work. These experiences compelled me to undertake this study.

The section that follows describes my experiences and their contribution to my perception of the problem addressed in this study.

1.   Elementary school experiences

A.   As a teacher

I have been working with my present employer training early childhood teachers (pre-school teachers and teachers of the first two grades of primary school) for 11 years. The first year of my 25 years in the profession was, however, spent in an elementary school, teaching the first grade. How I remember that year! It was not easy. I had to teach the rudiments of reading and arithmetic, establish myself as a team member, gain parents' trust, and cross many other hurdles. Still, armed with large quantities of motivation, enthusiasm and appropriate training from training college, I survived. Surviving involved daily decision-making and problem solving. Even in that first year, I realized there were

54

different levels of problems: some were quite easy to resolve, others were more challenging and, after consulting with my colleagues, could be solved. Some, however, remained unresolved issues I could not cope with to my own satisfaction. At the time, I was not aware that certain situations constituted dilemmas, nor had I read about the subject in the literature – I did not even know this literature was out there. I often felt helpless, frustrated and very miserable at being unable to solve or cope with such problems. I felt anxious about asking the school head what to do in case she thought me unsuited for the profession, and colleagues would shrug me off with a "What can you do?", or "Don't worry yourself about it", or "That's just the way it is – ignore it!". Indeed, I often chose to ignore these situations or not respond, although, inside, I felt edgy. There was a clash going on between some of my most basic values. On the one hand, I could not ignore my values but, on the other hand, I could not figure out a compromise on these value-related issues. Difficult situations like these continued to plague my nine years as a schoolteacher. The following example describes the kind of problems I mean:

Example

The school principal announced that all children would wear fancy dress to school on Purim (a Jewish festival when fancy dress is traditionally worn) and that the theme would be the sea. One little girl's mother declared that her daughter wanted to come as a ballet dancer and that's what she would do! My efforts to dissuade her came to naught. I deliberated that if I barred her from the school party she would be punished for her mother's behaviour. However, if I let her come as she liked, she would feel left out and different. In addition, agreeing was not good for discipline.

B.   As an elementary school teacher instructor

I was a teacher instructor at four schools situated in different localities. My role involved helping to improve teachers' teaching methods, pupil performance, and helping teachers to identify weaker pupils and develop methods of teaching them. I had many opportunities to observe how teachers handled dilemmas. I saw how hard it was for them to identify that what they faced was a dilemma, and how far they lacked the ability to manage dilemmas. I observed that the most popular tack was to brush a dilemma aside. The following is an example of this:

<u>Example</u>

A teacher with a class of 40 children, mostly from weak socio-economic backgrounds, had five pupils who were new immigrants from Russia. The teacher hardly spoke to the new immigrant children and never taught them individually. The teacher claimed that she felt helpless and that she had reasoned as follows: "If I pay extra attention to the immigrant children, the others will suffer - and they also need help. On the other hand, focusing only on the native children is detrimental to the immigrant children". The teacher said that she was losing sleep over it because she herself was not born in Israel - her family had come from Romania when she was just a girl. This notwithstanding, it was too hard for her to work with the immigrants and she chose to ignore them. When I visited her classroom, I could not stand seeing the immigrant children with nothing to do. I was extremely sorry that this teacher, like many of her colleagues, was unable to formulate the dilemma for herself and could not cope with it appropriately.

The complex picture I found in my work as both a teacher and a teacher instructor, sent me searching through the professional literature for answers to the big (two-part) question that I kept asking myself, namely, (1) are dilemmas a fundamental and inseparable part of teaching? and (2) if they are, why is coping with dilemmas so problematic?

What the theory has to say

The questions that concerned me are addressed by Shkedi (1996), who describes teaching as difficult, full of the uncertain, the unexpected and the non-routine. Maslovaty (2000) adds that teaching is dynamic, reflective, and associated with complex decision-making processes. Another special feature of teaching is that it cannot be repeated through imitation of what others have done – even an individual teacher cannot repeat what s/he has done. This is because teaching is, by its nature, context dependent and dependent on the time it takes place, which can obviously vary (Shkedi, 1996). Lampert (1985) broadens the description of teaching further. Accordingly, she claims that the teaching profession is characterized by routine confrontation with problems, many of which are insoluble. These problems, she suggests, may be defined as dilemmas. There is no uniform way of dealing with dilemmas. The dilemmas which teachers handle and solve relate to different children and occur at different times of the day or year (Berlak and Berlak, 1981).

Ben Peretz and Kremer-Hayon (1990) claim that it is very onerous for teachers to deal with a wide variety of problems and conflict situations; the teacher's inner world may be over-

burdened with dilemmas that must be addressed. These dilemmas often concern multiple moral issues, adding further to their complexity. In these studies, most of the teachers reported seeing no clear way of resolving the dilemmas. According to Lyons (1990), all of the teachers in these studies indicated a desire to acquire tools to better prepare them to cope with dilemmas in general and with the moral issues that some dilemmas concern in particular.

The more I thought about the problems I had experienced and the more literature I read, the more I realized that this was a generally important and thorny issue - especially where the teaching profession was concerned.

Dissatisfaction with the training of student teachers

When I began to teach and instruct student teachers, I asked myself a number of questions:

1.   What kind of teacher do I wish to train?

2.   How should the professional training the student teacher receives relate to what the novice teacher experiences during her early professional years?

My own professional experience, and the professional literature just mentioned, naturally influenced my outlook on these questions. I was thus astonished to find that although the curriculum for early childhood education dealt with important and relevant subjects, it nevertheless failed to deal directly with how students should cope with professional dilemmas in the classroom. I recalled that the professional literature says that a considerable part of the teacher's routine work involves coping with dilemmas, and that coping with dilemmas is especially hard in the teacher's first year. I therefore decided one could not ignore the imperative to try to equip trainee teachers with the requisite professional tools in this area. By this, I do not mean intuitive tools, but tools taught in the curriculum. This idea was further bolstered in my career at the college.

In my professional work, I came to realize that the absence of this subject in the curriculum was reflected in how students coped with problematic situations during teaching practice. When analysing classroom events that occurred during teaching practice, and while observing my students' work, I realized that students lacked the ability to describe what constitutes a dilemma and could not identify dilemma situations in their teaching practice. Essentially, the notion was not a part of their professional lexicon. Students who encountered especially thorny problems mostly chose not to confront them – which they could do since the classroom teacher was there, in the classroom. Another option they

chose was to go for black and white solutions, not requiring long deliberation. For example, "Disruptive children must be punished to discourage others from following suit". I was sorry to think that future teachers chose fast, unambiguous solutions without further deliberation. Students sometimes reported that dealing with highly problematic situations in their teaching practice often made them despair. They shared with me concerns that maybe they were not cut out for teaching. This only strengthened my resolve regarding the need to train them optimally to cope with problems complex enough to represent a dilemma.

Summary of problem factors

When I review what made me feel there was a problem, the feeling that has accompanied me throughout my working career, I am able to identify certain difficulties which have recurred during my work as a teacher, in my experiences as a student teacher instructor, and in the practical work of the students I have supervised in recent years. What characterizes these difficulties is that my fellow educators and I lack suitable professional expertise and skills for dealing with such situations. These inadequacies are important *vis-à-vis* education in general and are especially relevant where handling dilemmas is concerned.

The analysis below examines the main failures highlighted by my personal experiences in education.

A. There is a lack of **theoretical** knowledge at all levels of dealing with the subject: ranging from awareness that a dilemma exists, **recognition and formulation of the dilemma**, and ending with dealing with the dilemma.

B. Another element identified was the **value-related** factor. The teachers I cite in the comments above were obviously upset by dilemmas which involved a clash between their basic values. However, while they felt this conflict intuitively, they could not correctly identify the situation before them and lacked the professional tools to judge or justify their actions in response in **value** terms.

C. From what I could see, the above problems caused helplessness, distress and ultimately a poor capacity for **managing dilemmas.**

D. Despite the fact that dilemmas, unlike conflicts (which can be theoretical), must be dealt with, there is a distinct lack of **practical** tools for coping with dilemmas effectively. Thus, people who encounter dilemmas are invariably dissatisfied with the results of their response to and handling of the dilemma.

E.	The teacher's handling of a dilemma involves **subjective-emotional factors**. Thus, a situation will often assume the dimensions of a dilemma for the teacher due to some event associated in the teacher's past.

F.	Although teachers **reflect on their work**, i.e., they conduct post hoc analysis of their teaching (and sometimes analyse their actions during teaching), they are unable to handle dilemmas effectively if they lack the necessary knowledge in the areas described above.

After the analysis .... some decisions

<u>Planning the new syllabus</u>

The situations I encountered during my role as a student teacher instructor caused me to question the quality of the teachers I was training and to doubt their ability to manage a classroom of children. I determined to develop a new syllabus for the one-year course I teach - "Third Year Pedagogic Instruction" - which comprises three hours of college-based instruction and two days teaching practice a week. The main syllabus topics were a direct result of the observation described above, namely that teachers lack the necessary knowledge and skills to handle classroom dilemmas. This lack of knowledge is apparent in several areas.

As I taught the new syllabus, I investigated how students coped with dilemmas during teaching practice. The study involved two different levels:

1.	**The personal level**: I hoped that teaching this new course would allow me to help final-year teaching students to cope more effectively with dilemmas.

2.	**The college level**: I wanted to see whether the new course topic I had developed for the third year students of the early childhood programme might be suitable to replace the current syllabus.

<u>First step toward data collection</u>

To plan the new teaching topics, I needed information that would show me where to start. As my intervention programme began to take shape in my head, I realized that I needed to hear the students' voices on the subject of my proposed research topic. I mostly needed information on two points: the first point concerned student opinions of the importance of teaching this subject; the second point concerned student perceptions of their own ability to handle dilemmas. On the first point, I wondered whether students would corroborate my sense of the importance of teaching the subject, or whether I would meet with disinterest or

dismissal of the subject, perhaps because it was too complex. On the second point, I needed to discover whether students felt at a loss to cope with dilemmas or whether they felt competent to deal with them.

To achieve my goals, I compiled a **questionnaire** (see Appendix 1), which was administered to two classes (45 students) after the completion of year 2 of their studies. The questionnaire was administered on the understanding that students had never formally learned about dilemmas, and I therefore opened the questionnaire by defining the notion of dilemma. I also explained the meaning of dilemma orally before students completed the questionnaire.

The findings of the questionnaire along with an analysis of my own professional experiences enabled me to develop the main headings of the course on dilemmas which I would eventually introduce into the curriculum.

Summary of Results

Diagrams 4.1, 4.2 and 4.3 which follow summarize the data from the questionnaire responses. All questions addressed the three main issues and the diagrams show student responses to these issues.

Diagram 3.1: The ability to solve professional dilemmas is an essential component of the teacher's work

Totally agree - 60%
Agree - 32%
Partially agree - 7%
Do not agree - 1%
Do not agree at all - 0%
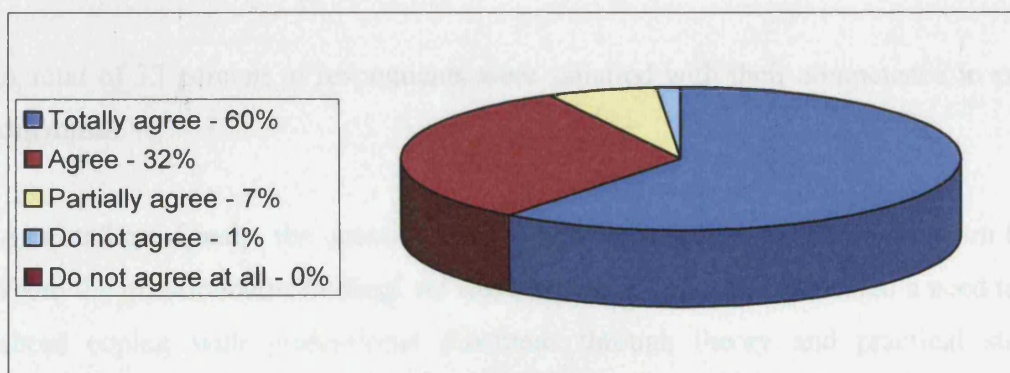
We can see that almost all the students (92%) feel that this is a very important issue in the process of teacher training.

Diagram 3.2: My studies so far have provided me with many tools for dealing with professional dilemmas

- ■ Totally agree- 10%
- ■ Agree- 28%
- □ Partially agree- 38%
- ■ Do not agree- 20%
- ■ Do not agree at all- 4%
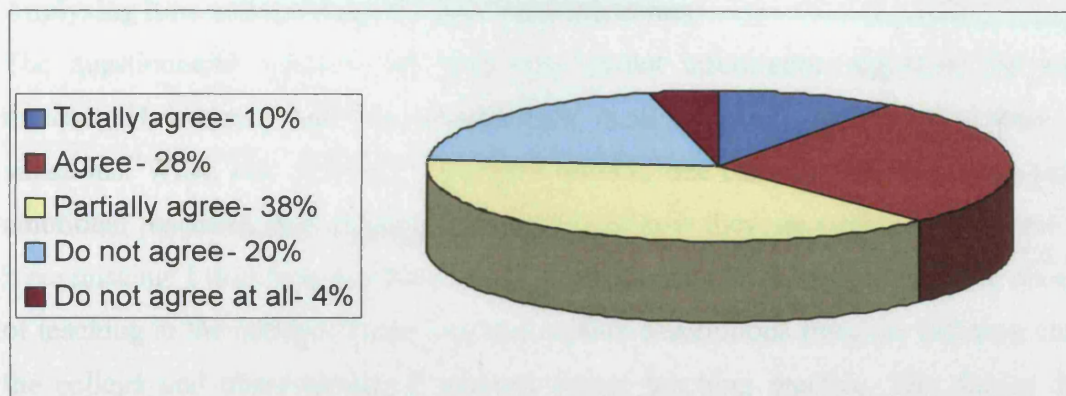
Some 40 percent agreed that they had been taught skills, while 40 percent partially agreed with this statement.

Diagram 3.3: I am able to solve professional dilemmas

- ■ Totally agree - 4%
- ▣ Agree - 29%
- □ Partially agree - 46%
- □ Do not agree - 17%
- ■ Do not agree at all - 4%
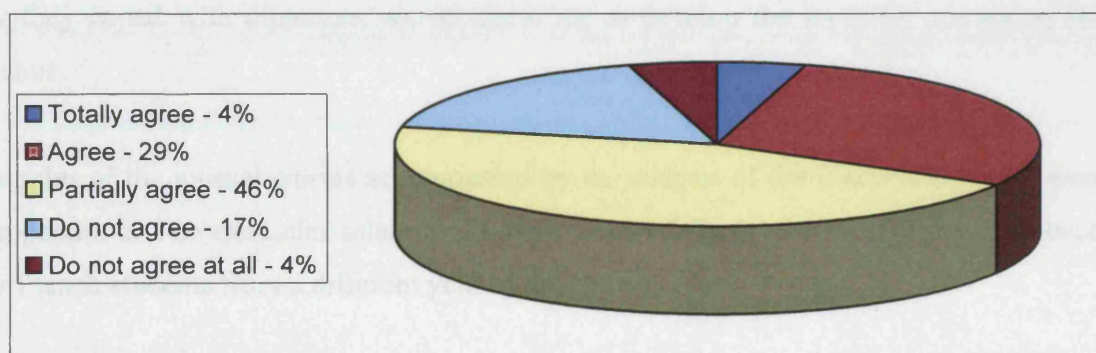
A total of 33 percent of respondents were satisfied with their competence in coping with dilemmas.

As noted previously, the questionnaire sought to examine student opinions on two issues. From the questionnaire findings we can see that students also indicated a need to be taught about coping with professional dilemmas through theory and practical studies. The questionnaire also shows that, two years into training, students do not feel helpless regarding their competence to deal with professional dilemmas. This finding corroborates my own sense that the new syllabus is more appropriate for third year students, since third year students already have two years of experience in college studies. This experience

61

includes pertinent theoretical knowledge and practical experience in working with preschool and school age children. These are two very important knowledge areas for teaching students to cope with dilemmas, which, by nature, are very complex.

Analysing how college students cope with dilemmas

The questionnaire supplied me with only partial information regarding the students' mindset. However, I had not actually seen them in action, tackling dilemmas in real situations. When one observes a person's actions, one can observe their body language, emotional reactions, and obtain an impression of how they are coping. I felt these factors were missing. I therefore decided to refer to the journals I had kept through my many years of teaching at the college. These journals contain descriptions from my teaching classes at the college and observations of students during teaching practice. The diaries describe activities, incidents, thoughts on teaching, etc. Some entries were transcribed directly after class, others were taped with assistance from a colleague to help me learn from the lessons and the analysis recorded in the journal. I anticipated that this longitudinal analysis would be useful for understanding how students coped with teaching dilemmas. Understanding how they coped with dilemmas would allow me to develop the tools for compiling the syllabus.

Examples of the journal entries accompanied by an analysis of the issues involved appear as appendix 2. The examples relate to all three years of the teacher-training course (each year I teach students from a different year of the course).

Formulating categories based on the journal entries

As I analysed the educational scenarios described in appendix 2, I found that the data could be grouped according to certain headings that seemed to emerge. It was found that various issues recurred in the situations described above while other issues were unique to a particular student practice (the topics are marked in italics in the text). All were exposed in the texts that I analysed.

As I compiled the category list, it became clear that while I was addressing one main level of reference, each category had several levels of reference, which had emerged from the data pertaining to that category. Several levels exist for the various categories since the students are at different levels in terms of their coping competency. Learning the methods for coping with dilemmas is a process, and it is only natural that students should be at

different levels within that process. I therefore developed three levels of reference for each category: high, intermediate and low.

The categories offered me tools for developing the syllabus. In other words, they served as the building blocks for decisions regarding what subjects the syllabus should contain. At a later stage, the categories helped me to give meaning to the data collected when I began teaching the syllabus.

The categories and derivative sub-categories are now identified:

Dilemma Classification Categories

A.   Identifying the Dilemma

B.   Formulating the Dilemma

C.   Culture-Reference

D.   Relating to the Dilemma

E.   Perceiving the Dilemma

F.   Coping with Ambivalence

G.   Coping with Conflicting Values

H.   Expressing Emotions

I.   Choosing the Coping Strategy

(From now on categories mentioned in the text appear in italics)

Each category contains three levels, where 1 is the lowest and 3 is the highest.

Category A.   Identifying the Dilemma

1.   Sensing that a dilemma exists

2.   Defining the dilemma

3.   Making a connection between the definition of what constitutes a dilemma and the situation one is facing.

There are three levels involved in pinpointing a dilemma as distinct from other classroom situations.

Level 1 (lowest level) – the student recognizes that a dilemma exists yet cannot conceptualize it.

63

Level 2 – the student knows the definition of a dilemma, i.e., she has the necessary theoretical knowledge.

Level 3 - the student can identify a dilemma and find a match between the dilemma and the definition of a dilemma (dilemma = a situation demanding action, inability to decide what the right action is; a situation which involves a clash of values that are basic for the person facing the dilemma).

Category B.   Formulating the Dilemma
1.   All dilemma indicators are missing
2.   Some dilemma indicators
3.   All dilemma indicators are present.

Level 1 – the student articulates the dilemmas but does not relate to the properties comprising the dilemma (see paragraph above).

Level 2 – the student articulates the dilemma and can relate to certain of its constituents although she still cannot relate to all of them.

Level 3 – the student articulates the dilemma, relating to all its components.

Category C.   Culture-Reference
1.   Lack of reference to cultural context
2.   Relates the environment to own cultural context
3.   Addresses the environment in its cultural context.

Level 1 – the student decides to deal with the dilemma but ignores the cultural context of the place where the dilemma has arisen. Her actions may totally clash with the local culture.

Level 2 – at this level, even though the student is familiar with and understands the culture of the place where the dilemma has arisen, she deals with the dilemma according to her own cultural mores.

Level 3 – at the highest level of coping with dilemmas, the student is able to cope with the dilemma by adapting her behaviour to the cultural context of the place where the dilemma has arisen.

Category D.   Relating to the Dilemma
1.   'Blaming' others for the dilemma

2.   Partly linking the dilemma to own professional behaviour

3.   Entirely linking the dilemma to own professional behaviour

Level 1 – the student can articulate the dilemma but sees other professional factors, such as her practice class teacher, as responsible for the dilemma.

Level 2 - the student sees the dilemma as connected to her own professional behaviour, albeit in a limited way.

Level 3 – at the highest level of coping with dilemmas, the student can address the broader issues of her own professional behaviour. For example, the management of her class as a whole.

Category E.   Perceiving the Dilemma

1.   Black and white perspective

2.   Perceives some aspects of the dilemma

3.   Broadly perceives of all aspects of the dilemma

Level 1 – at the lowest level, the student is entirely judgmental. She cannot address the options or reflect on what to do. She is confident about her approach to dealing with the dilemma.

Level 2 – at the intermediate level of coping with dilemmas, the student recognizes that there are two sides to the dilemma, but cannot handle all facets of the dilemma. She therefore just addresses part the issue. For example, she deals with one side of the problem only.

Level 3 – at the highest level of coping with dilemmas, the student is competent to address all facets of the dilemma. Her actions address both sides of the equation.

Category F.   Coping with Ambivalence

1.   Student chooses to deal with issues that promise success

2.   Student chooses to address difficult, but solvable issues

3.   Student chooses intractable issues

Level 1 – when a student faces an ambivalent situation, she tries to solve issues she thinks she can settle.

Level 2 – the student tries to address complex situations she thinks she will cope with adequately.

Level 3 – the student is equipped to handle situations that cannot be resolved, but rather 'managed'.

Category G.   Coping with Conflicting Values
1.   Simplification of situation, relates to global values
2.   Only addresses one of the values involved in the dilemma.
3.   Copes with the clash between all values involved in the dilemma

All educational dilemmas involve relating to the values pertaining to the dilemma.

Level 1 - at the most basic level of coping, the student addresses what she considers the key value. This value does not necessarily pertain to the situation and is not specific to the dilemma, but is of a broad and general nature.

Level 2 - at the intermediate level, the student can see that the dilemma concerns several different values, but only relates to one.

Level 3 – at the highest level, the student can identify conflicting values and relate to them while handling the dilemma.

Category H.   Expressing Emotions
1.   Student presents the dilemma ignoring the emotional dimension
2.   No cognitive-affective symmetry
3.   Expresses emotions when handling dilemma

Invariably, a dilemma is hard to handle, and can arouse feelings of helplessness.

Level 1 - at the most basic level, the student deals with the dilemma but only on an intellectual, not on an emotional level.

Level 2 - at the intermediate level, the student mostly describes how she handles the dilemma cognitively and places little emphasis on the affective factor.

Level 3 – at the highest level, student emotions are involved in the account of the dilemma.

Category I.   Choosing the Coping Strategy
1.   Student addresses only one aspect of the dilemma
2.   Student addresses the entire dilemma but in a limited fashion
3.   Student fully addresses all aspects of the dilemma

Level 1 – at the most basic level, the student decides how to cope with the dilemma and decides to address one facet of the dilemma only and ignore all others.

Level 2 – the student addresses all facets of the dilemma albeit in a limited, asymmetrical fashion.

Level 3 – the student decides how to address the dilemma in advance, and addresses all teaching issues raised by the dilemma.

Main Syllabus Headings

Based on my experience as a pedagogical instructor, I became aware of the necessity to introduce the subject of dilemmas into the college curriculum for training student teachers. My proposed change in the curriculum has been accepted and I started applying it in my classes.

The new syllabus is specified below:

Part I – Teaching the Subject of Professional Dilemmas
Section 1 – Teaching the concept of dilemma

1. Definition of Dilemma
2. Problems, Conflicts and Dilemmas
3. Professional Dilemmas
4. Applying the Definition in the Classroom
5. Dilemmas and Values: (A) What are Values; (B) Clashes of Values; (C) Determining the Clash of Values in a Professional Dilemma Context

1. Definition of Dilemma

   A dilemma has three characteristics, none of which are simple and so must be taught in stages.

   A. The first characteristic is that a dilemma is not a theoretical situation but a situation where one is required to act.

   B. The second characteristic is that a dilemma requires a decision involving some form of action. The person must choose between the two options of the dilemma. Whichever option is chosen involves a loss of the advantages

of the other option. The choice is exceedingly difficult and produces a feeling of helplessness.

C.   The third characteristic concerns the conflicting values causing the dilemma. The conflict between important values produces the perplexity in (B) above.

2.   Problems, Conflicts and Dilemmas

These three terms are close in meaning and it is important to differentiate between them in order to identify and diagnose dilemmas.

3.   Professional Dilemmas

The term 'professional dilemma' is a specific example of the general concept of dilemma, and when teaching it one must explain its distinctive properties.

4.   Applying the Definition in the Classroom

Linking the definition to real life events helps clarify its meaning and makes it easier to apply the definition in the classroom.

My goal in teaching this chapter is that when I have finished, students will be able to *identify a dilemma* at the third level. At this level, the student can apply *the definition to real life situations*. Teaching the subject in pedagogic supervision classes will enable the student to *formulate a dilemma* if they encounter one at school. Again, I would like them to reach the highest level, Level 3, which involves *formulating a dilemma containing all the constituents*.

5.   Dilemmas and Values

(A) What are Values; (B) Clashes of Values; (C) Determining the Clash of Values in a Professional Dilemma Context

As noted, values are a fundamental part of a dilemma. However, values are abstract and culture-dependent and must be taught slowly, moving from the general definition to analysing a dilemma in which the person's values clash. However, unlike the other skills mentioned, in this case, because of the complexity of the intervention, I am not fully confident that every student will be able to achieve the highest level (at the highest level, the student is equipped to *deal with a clash*

between fundamental values). However, I hope that they will at least attain the second level, where they *relate to one of the values*, and that some even reach the highest level.

Section 2 – Preparatory stages for dealing with a dilemma

1. Studying and using qualitative research instruments for data collection, e.g., observation and interview.

2. Identifying a classroom situation as a dilemma

3. Choosing to cope with a professional dilemma – preliminary definition, description, rationale, and formulation

4. Studying relevant theory relating to dilemmas.

Students will use qualitative research tools to help them identify dilemmas and not for a comprehensive academic research study. It is assumed that some will identify dilemmas relatively easily. Others will find that these tools improve their ability to recognize classroom phenomena and problems. They will be able identify dilemmas or over and above that, be able to *define a dilemma and make the connection between the situation they are observing and the definition of dilemma*. Furthermore, these tools may also be useful education tools for other purposes, either at college or once they are qualified teachers.

The student will choose her dilemma once she has reached a high level of competency in *identifying a dilemma,* since the choice will require the application of the *theoretical definition to the subject the student chooses.* The student will also need to support her selection by presenting the two options involved in the dilemma and justifying each option. The student will also be required to address the values concerned in each of the options which make the situation hard to cope with. The dilemma they choose must *focus* on broad classroom problems that involve them. In other words, this must be a situation which concerns a subject that interests them and which touches broadly on their ability to manage a class. It must therefore not contain only one aspect of teaching, but all aspects of classroom teaching or a large number of them. It will include, for example, relationships between children, the physical classroom environment, classroom behaviour and other relevant factors.

Once they have described the dilemma and explained why this constitutes a dilemma for them, they can present the preliminary *formulation of the dilemma.* I believe that at this

stage, they will only address some of the factors that constitute a dilemma according to the definition. The student will provide a more focused formulation after studying the theoretical material pertinent to the chosen dilemma. This will later help students *formulate the various components of a dilemma.*

There are several ways in which the theoretical background to the dilemma will help in formulating the dilemma (a) a more professional formulation of the dilemma can be obtained if it is based on knowledge; (b) planning ways of coping in the future based on knowledge of the subject in question will involve familiarity with the content areas of the dilemma; (c) when the student comes to address the dilemma in practice, each of its options will be examined not only the basis of existing personal knowledge but by relating to the theories on the issue in question.

Section 3 – Planning an intervention programme for dealing with the chosen dilemma
1.   Sharper formulation of the dilemma
2.   Formulation of goals for coping with the professional dilemma
3.   Planning a strategy for coping with the dilemma – exploring the options; examining the implications of each option; reaching an action decision.
4.   Planning activities appropriate to the chosen goals while relating to the theory studied.

Once the students have gained the necessary skills for identifying and describing a dilemma, and have studied the relevant theory, they will be competent to clearly *formulate* the dilemma and describe all components of the *dilemma* in the formulation.

The student will be required to formulate two goals, one relating to the student's own goals concerning enhancing her professional competence in coping with dilemmas, the other relating to what is expected of the children affected by the student's intervention programme.

The literature suggests several strategies for coping with dilemmas. The student will choose from one of these strategies or suggest an independent strategy to be applied initially. Of course, at a later stage it will be possible to alter the strategy or continue with the one chosen from the literature.

The theory the student has been taught should serve to 'prepare the ground' for choosing a strategy that will address both *options of the dilemma,* although it is likely that, at least at first, she will choose a strategy that addresses just *one side of the dilemma* or *both sides but in a limited way.* Whichever strategy is chosen must seek the desired resolution to the dilemma. In other words, planning the intervention must take into consideration the process the children will undergo. It is likely that there will be a link between the student's ability to handle ambiguity and the level of her ability to think about a dilemma and the strategy she chooses. In other words, a student who can perceive all constituents of the dilemma and chooses to deal with something that she knows cannot be resolved, will tend to choose a more complex strategy on a higher level.

The students will be required to plan 10-12 teaching units for their intervention programme. The planned activities must involve the following learning settings: whole class, groups, and individuals. Plans for activities must be discussed with me first, as well as with the regular class teacher and, where appropriate, the subject lecturer at the college. For example, if the subject of the dilemma concerns maths, then the maths specialist will be consulted. The main aim of the teaching units is to help the children progress in the student's chosen topic, which the student believes requires intervention. The subject will of course contain an element that represents a dilemma for the student. The intervention represents the student's way of coping with the dilemma. The intervention will not only contain a practical aspect but also a *value component.* Before or during the intervention, the student must decide whether she wishes to address *all of the conflicting values* or just one.

Part 2 – Facing the Dilemma in the Teaching Practice Setting

1.   Implementing the intervention programme
2.   Reflective analysis following every teaching session.

1.   The intervention programme will be flexible. In other words, the student can change some of the activities planned during the programme or alter the method used to deal with the value issue. I will support the students with guidance and supervision throughout their intervention. I will also observe them teaching and provide feedback. This will provide the students with an evaluation tool for each stage of the intervention and may affect both the intervention plan and their work in the school.

When supervising them, I will stress that they are working with real children in a real school and a real *cultural context* which must be taken into account While I expect that most will be able to relate to the *cultural context of the school*, I also expect some to have difficulty in doing this, at least initially, and consequently that they will relate to the environment in which they conduct the intervention from the point of view of their *own cultural perspective*. In case of the latter, I predict that some students will advance to a higher level in terms of their capacity to consider the culture of their work place as they teach and learn from what they are doing.

2.   For their reflective analysis of their own teaching for the project, the students will be asked to report on didactic incidents that occurred during the intervention. They will examine their own performance and analyse the relationship, if any, between the material taught, the child and the teaching method used. This self-evaluation will involve identifying successes and areas for improvement. They will draw conclusions regarding the intervention activities they teach and specifically regarding the professional dilemma. Some of these conclusions may also carry implications with respect to wider issues such as the education system in general.

While I obviously expect cognitive input to be involved, as I move through my own syllabus with the students, they will be encouraged to describe the affective issues regarding each of the stages of the dilemma and to *express their feelings* regarding the processes they have undergone both verbally and in writing.

Part 3: Student Reflective Evaluation and Analysis of the Entire Process

1.   The student will be required to evaluate the efficacy of her chosen strategy for addressing the dilemma.
2.   Evaluation of the results of addressing the dilemma.
3.   Self-evaluation of the student's learning skills and her competence in coping with professional dilemmas in particular.
4.   Analysis of conclusions and implications *vis-à-vis* future coping with dilemma in schools and regarding education as a whole.

The students must decide on the dimensions for self-evaluation of their performance in coping with the dilemma, both at the stage of planning how to cope with the dilemma and,

if necessary, during implementation. During implementation of the intervention, the students will analyse their performance on the basis of these dimensions.

The students' evaluation of the findings at the conclusion of the intervention will involve several tools: existing knowledge, reflective thinking and comparison of their own findings with those discussed in the literature. Besides improving their ability to evaluate their own work, this comparison will be helpful in encouraging them to study more about the subject of dilemmas. This will facilitate coping with other dilemmas in future. As already noted, the evaluation is essentially a reflective process and the individual student must therefore be responsible for the authenticity, thoroughness and productivity of her own education. She will, however, have instruction and guidance from both her practice class teacher and myself as in everything else involved in the intervention programme.

In addition to the advantages noted above, the extensive process of evaluation and conclusion-drawing at the end of the intervention programme will also improve the student's critical analysis regarding different teaching tools such as planning intervention programmes, planning a subject to teach from beginning to end, teaching time management, and planning work in different learning settings (groups, full class, etc.).

CHAPTER FOUR
Methodology

Introduction

This study is an example of an action research. It documents and analyses the way third year student teachers cope with professional dilemmas at work, and the factors affecting their decisions regarding dilemmas. Lomax (1994) defines action research as "an intervention in practice to bring about improvement" (p. 156).

The researcher in this study wished to develop an action programme which would contribute to her own professionalism. Thus, the methodology used in this study is based on the principals of action research, of which one of the main features is change as a cyclical process (Middlewood et al., 1999; Burgess, 1994).

> "Research is a feedback loop in which the first findings generate possibilities for action/change, which are then implemented and evaluated as a prelude to further investigation..." (Morrison, 1999, p. 1)

This relates mainly to "a double loop of action, (Morrison, 1999, p. 1). Therefore, the researcher conducted two cycles of research, each lasting a year. Two separate groups of third year students taught by the researcher served as subjects.

In the first cycle, students were taught the theory of professional dilemmas, this was followed by training, supervision and evaluation of the students' application of the theory in their end-of-year project. For this project, students were asked to select a professional dilemma encountered during teaching practice (with first and second grade children). They then had to research the dilemma using qualitative tools, and develop an intervention programme to deal with it. This was similar to action research, in that it had characteristics similar to this type of research. The researcher was involved in teaching and training the students, and examining their project-related experiences.

In the second cycle of the research, all stages of the study were the same as the first cycle, except that a new class of students were involved, and lessons learned from the first cycle were applied.

The following section explains how the action research methodology helped in answering the research questions.

Research Design

Action research as a methodology

Good action research shares the basic characteristics of all good research, but it also has its own characteristics (McNiff et al., 1996). The following describes the characteristics of action research and their application in this study.

1.   "Action research is about **improving practice** rather than producing knowledge" (Elliot, 1991, p. 49). Two factors are involved in performance improvement (a) bringing about change through practice, and (b) the promotion of self-reflection. These two dimensions are related, as they centre on the key word 'action', viz. action that seeks to produce the aforementioned processes (Elliot, 1991; Middlewood et al., 1999). This study contains both dimensions.

The following describes how the researcher addressed the first dimension, i.e., change through practice. The researcher's goal in this action research was to enhance her professionalism at work as a pedagogic tutor in a teacher training college. This improvement involved:

a.   Better preparation of students to deal with the issues they would face as teachers: in this case, coping with professional dilemmas.

b.   Enhancing the researcher's ability to teach students critical thinking and value-based reasoning with respect to educational issues.

c.   Improving the researcher's ability to plan and teach a new and important subject that has not been addressed by the extensive educational literature.

d.   Improving the researcher's skills for training students individually while relating to the divergencies between students (differences in cultural background, learning pace).

e.   Learning how to teach students to produce a final project on professional dilemmas they have encountered.

The following describes how the researcher addressed the second dimension, promoting self-reflection. One of the most important features of this study is reflection. The study was accompanied by reflection at all of its stages. Because the researcher is also a member of the college faculty and not just a researcher, reflection was an

essential factor. The deliberation and action that followed were not isolated or limited to certain times, but rather an ongoing process during the entire study (Hacohen and Zimran, 1999). Since the researcher-teacher planned and carried out practical activities with the class of student teachers while researching those very same activities, the reflective process was helpful for examining her values, opinions and feelings at each of the stages of the teaching/research (ibid). The type of reflection was reflection on action (Schon, 1983, 1988). This critical reflection regarding the activities initiated by the researcher/teacher was useful for systematically processing information, understanding the activities carried out, and planning further activities based on the conclusions drawn from the activities.

2. Kemmis and McTaggart (1988) emphasise that improved understanding of practice, and any consequent change, must be effected in the **location** in which the educator works, and not some other, non-relevant location. The educator studies the connection between his/her own educational theories and daily experiences in the actual place where he/she routinely practices. Only here can the educator's own research process play a direct role in improving practice and pedagogic understanding (Elliot, 1991; Oja and Smulyan, 1989).

In the case of this study, the researcher's location was Kibbutzim College of Education where she works on a full time basis as a pedagogic instructor.

3. Action research differs from other types of research since **action** forms an integral part of the actual research process. It focuses on the researcher's professional values as opposed to methodological considerations. It is necessarily 'insider' research, in the sense that practitioners research their own professional activities (Lomax, 1994).

Within the framework of the study, the actions undertaken by the researcher were:

a.   Teaching the theory of coping with professional dilemmas.

b.   Assigning practical tasks for students to implement in their teaching practice location (the school).

c.   Supervising the planning and execution of the aforementioned tasks.

d.   Evaluating students' progress in learning the subject and their ability to explain, in value terms, what they had done with regard to their research topics.

4. Action research is **collaborative,** (Oja and Smulyan, 1989; Atweb et al., 1998; Kemmis, 1999). "Researchers and practitioners contribute their knowledge and skills to a jointly defined research project and process" (Oja and Smulyan, 1989, p. 13). But, as Wallat et al. (1981, quoted in Oja and Smulyan 1989) point out "parity and equal responsibility in collaboration do not mean that each member has an equal role in decision making or input during all phases of the study" (p. 13).

This study involved a mutually beneficial exchange between the researcher and the student-subjects. Essentially, the conduct of the study, and the researcher's progress in it, was dependent on the subjects of the study, i.e., the students. It was the students who set their own pace, and the depth and detail of each of the secondary subjects of the study. Ultimately, it was they who evaluated its contribution to their training. Based on student responses to the first lesson in their supervised session, the researcher was able to construct the secondary subjects. The researcher reached decisions regarding the planning and execution of the study after analysing the students' thoughts and feelings at each stage of this subject. From the connections students made between their own experiences and ideas and the educational theory they studied in college, the researcher could see the importance of the relationship between theory and practice in the subject she taught.

The researcher and the students collaborated closely at all stages of the study of their final project. The students consulted the researcher at all stages of the project, reporting on their progress, and sharing their successes and difficulties. They did this both for the sake of their own work, and to be part of the researcher's study, as they understood the importance of promoting the research topic.

It is important to note that the students' desire to contribute through their experiences, and to suggest new ideas which could be used in the future, was also evident during their interviews with the researcher. However, we must bear in mind that the students were not researcher colleagues in the usual sense of the word, but partners. This was because the relationship between the subjects and the researcher was asymmetrical

unlike in the case of collegial collaboration. The researcher could not therefore involve them completely all of the time. For example, the researcher could not report the students' own achievements to them at each stage, because, for example, if their evaluation was poor, it could lower their motivation and spoil the study.

Action research models

The following describes the three models of action research:

1.   The Technical Model

The technical model of action research does not usually generate new theories, but validates and improves existing ones. The knowledge produced by such research is deductive.

2.   The Practical Model

The practical model of action research encourages teachers to apply reflective thinking in their daily work, in order to improve it. Unlike the technical model, with this form of action research people working in the field participate actively in the research process.

3.   The Emancipatory Model

This model of action research is based on the post-modern perception of change. Such research is not only intended to improve the researcher's practice in the field but has wider implications regarding the social and educational system (Zelemaire, 2001; Morrison, 1999; Grundy, 1987).

From the description of action research in this chapter, we see that the present study fits in with the description of the second model, i.e., the practical model. However, it contains some critical elements of the emancipatory model. The classroom situations analysed with the students involve issues that are related to a broader social context; they involve aspects of a cultural and moral nature. Students who choose a course of action have to distinguish between conflicting social values, this involves moral judgement. Therefore the process of decision-making involves a broad social and moral perspective.

The advantages of action research

* Participation in action research is supportive for teachers and encourages them to introduce change **in their own classroom** practice and their approach to professional problems. Action research contributes to teachers' professional development, and helps them to acquire new knowledge useful for solving problems routinely encountered at work. The knowledge acquired through action research is practical, and involves learning such important professional skills as problem analysis, work methods, collaboration and enlisting collegial support to solve said problems. Teachers practising action research also learn to evaluate the results of their actions (Oja and Smulyan, 1989).

* Action research can also improve levels of self-confidence in teacher-researchers, enhance cognitive flexibility, encourage a more positive attitude towards reflection, and increase correspondence between teaching experience and educational theory (Kemmis, 1999; Lomax, 1994).

* Elliot (1985, quoted in Oja and Smulyan 1989) explains that teachers who are aware of and who actively participate in developing theories derived from their own practical teaching experience tend to accept and apply the results of the research. Teachers who have undergone a process of planning and implementing new practices and analysing the results ultimately introduce change into their practice (Kemmis, 1999).

The advantages of action research are not confined solely to the narrow perspective of the teacher in the classroom, but can be applied on a larger scale, extending to all aspects of the education system. The following are examples of the widespread advantages of action research.

* This type of research is likely to help resolve specific situational problems and lead to improvement in the context within which the problem arises (Elliot, 1985, quoted in Oja and Smulyan, 1989).

* Action research is a tool for promoting professional advancement and learning for teachers with regard to new subjects. Such post-qualification training helps change the teacher's mindset, leads to greater self-awareness and improves teachers' analytical skills (Oja and Smulyan, 1989).

* Action research helps to rejuvenate the education system by 'injecting' innovative approaches and methods (Evans et al., 2000).

* Action research encourages and improves communication between teachers and academic researchers. Although, as a rule, such communication is virtually non-existent, action research can help to foster communication between teacher and researcher that is both practical and effective for the teacher (Oja and Smulyan, 1989).

* Action research is extremely effective and efficient when specific knowledge is required regarding a specific problem in a specific situation, or when it is necessary to apply a new approach to an existing system (Kemmis and Wilkinson, 1998).

* Action research is well suited to the development and research of curricula, the improvement of existing teaching methods and learning skills, and the development of new methods (Cohen et al., 2000; Rearick and Feldman, 1999).

This study demonstrates the advantages from both the more limited perspective of the teacher in the classroom and the wider perspective of the education system as a whole. These advantages are reflected in the fact that this study arose from the teacher-researcher's own professional need, and from a genuine desire to research a subject the researcher believes is important to her own professionalism (**narrow perspective**), and which will help to improve the track syllabus (early childhood education) she teaches (**broad perspective**).

Recently the researcher has worked as pedagogic instructor for third year students in the early childhood education programme. During this time she has come to realize that the syllabus is wanting. One subject, which from the researcher's own experience and her reading of the professional literature is professionally extremely important for educators, has vanished from the course. Researching the topic of this study and, subsequently, changing the early childhood syllabus therefore represents one of the researcher's main priorities.

Benefits of action research for the researcher

* The researcher benefited from a dual learning experience - the experience of conducting the study and the achievement of insight into the learning process itself (Altrichter et al., 1995).

* Many researchers have found that this type of process – in which the teachers participate in self-research – enhances the teachers' professional development,

hones their reflective ability, and broadens their knowledge regarding teaching, education and society (Kemmis, 1999).

* Educator-implemented action research contributes towards **changes in the educational research literature**, thus teachers have many more resources for coping with their real-life problems. Action research studies are considerably more useful to teachers, since they contain a symmetrical relationship between research and action, theory and practice, and between the researcher from academia and people working in the field (McNiff et al., 1996; Oja and Smulyan, 1989; Kemmis, 1999; Burgess, 1994).

Indeed, in this study, we see the 'tracks' of these contributions. The first two contributions are discussed in the previous paragraph while the third - regarding the changes in the literature – represents one of the most important contributions of this study. The researcher believes that, by addressing an issue not previously covered, this study **contributes to the literature on teacher training** in Israel and, perhaps, in other countries as well. The study reveals the various methods used by students cope with dilemmas, and the value-related reasoning students use to cope with them. Moreover, the study also examines the usefulness of planning and conducting 'action-type' research to student handling of professional dilemmas. Fresh information is presented which concerns the processes experienced by students when coping with such dilemmas and the skills they need in order to manage these complex dilemmas.

The study also enabled the researcher to establish the main headings of an outline for a new syllabus on handling professional dilemmas, which will eventually by used by the teaching faculty at the college. These subject headings also help to illuminate the issues and processes that the student teacher must address in order to be optimally trained as a teacher capable of consciously managing dilemmas in the classroom

The advantages of action research for teaching students

Noffke and Brennan (1988) maintain that there are many advantages to be found in encouraging student teachers to perform action research. The democratic nature of such research means that everyone can be involved in generating pedagogic knowledge. The unique structure of action research encourages students to develop as active, reflective and critical teachers, which in turn helps improve their practical work. Action research invites students to ask questions about the curriculum and pedagogy in general as an integral part

of their routine work. The spiral nature of action research prevents the research process from setting artificial limitations while at the same time causing the development of an agile way of thinking. Other approaches also exist for developing critical reflection in students, among them ethnographic writing, observation analysis, and the understanding and development of personal theories. It is important to note that these approaches can also serve as action research tools.

The principles of action research guided the researcher when developing the structure of the end-of-year student project. It was evident that the students could not conduct action research with the minimum of two spirals that such research requires. The reason was the short time at their disposal, just one year, only part of which could be devoted to their research (the rest of the time being spent on other course topics). As a result, the researcher decided that the final project would be an action research 'type' of project, rather than action research *per se*. The students' research therefore contained certain central properties of action research and reflected its general 'flavour'.

For their project, the students were asked to identify a problem or difficulty they had encountered in teaching practice, to perform a status evaluation using qualitative tools, to plan and execute an programme of intervention aimed at improvement and change, and finally to evaluate the research process in its entirety. The process was accompanied by reflection on all the steps involved. The goal of the project was to help to enhance the students' professionalism, their capacity for value-related reasoning and their critical thinking.

Although there are many benefits of action research, this type of research has also been subject to criticism. The following describes the main problem areas and their appearance in this study.

Critique of action research

Validity in qualitative research

Validity "tells us whether an item measures or describes what it is supposed to measure or describe", (Bell, 1989, p. 50). There are several kinds of validity; in this action research I will examine external and internal validity.

1. External validity

> "External validity refers to the degree to which the results can be generalized to the wider population, cases or situations. The issue of generalization is problematical." (Cohen et al., 2000, p.109)

Generalization in action research is directly associated with the external validity of the action research.

* Generalization:

The research sample is limited and not representative. The research findings are not such that can be generalized, being limited to the environment in which the research is conducted (Kemmis and Wilkinson, 1998).

According to the positivist approach, validity only exists where a generalization (i.e., a rule) can be made based on the data acquired, or if the conclusions can be applied to other locations besides that studied (Hacohen and Zimran, 1999). In action research, however, it is difficult to make generalizations. This is because researchers who conduct action research believe that we cannot imagine human behaviour that is divorced from the situation or context where it occurs, and that, in effect, there is little that can be said regarding human behaviour if the generalization is divorced from the context in which the generalized phenomenon exists (Hacohen and Zimran, 1999). In action research, the idea of being able to generalize something tends to be replaced with the idea of something being congruent with other events or situations.

In the opinion of the researcher, the conclusions from this study can be applied and made congruent **with other courses at the college,** for example, the special education or elementary education courses. This is because coping with professional dilemmas is important and relevant to all students as educators, not only those taking the programme in the study, early childhood education. Moreover, all third year teaching courses in Israel share one aim, to offer students practical, professional training before they enter the classroom. It is clear that the congruence would involve different nuances and emphases to provide compatibility with other tracks. This study offers a basis for each track to plan a curriculum tailored to its needs.

Triangulation

Another method of combating the researcher's inability to make generalizations is to use a variety of different research tools: observations, questionnaires, interviews, recording a

research diary, and gathering relevant documentation (Hacohen and Zimran, 1999). In the research literature, this approach to validation is referred to as 'triangulation'.

> "Triangulation may be defined. This is a useful means of exposing internal contradictions or causally or systematically identifying the source of a problem." (Hacohen and Zimran, 1999, p.11)

In order to answer its research questions, this study employed triangulation, which meant gathering data with five different research tools: (1) observation of students working with children; (2) interviewing students; (3) written papers, students keeping teaching practice diaries; (4) documenting discussions and conversations in pedagogic supervision classes; and (5) researcher's diary.

This study also employed **methodological triangulation**: "using the same method on different occasions or different methods on the same subject or study", (Cohen et al., 2000, p.113). Thus, the study was conducted using the same format for two years, each year with a different group of students (also following the early childhood education track) from the same course year (third year).

2. Internal validity

> "Internal validity seeks to demonstrate that the explanation of a particular event, issue or set of data, which a piece of research provides, can actually be sustained by the data. The findings must accurately describe the phenomena." (Cohen et al., 2000, p.107)

* Objectivity: The strength of action research lies in understanding the subject in a subjective manner; however, this is also one of the problems with such research. Personal values and interpretations interfere with research and prevent the structuring of a clear picture (Lomax 1994; Morrison 1999; Middlewood et al., 1999).

Despite the broad consensus among researchers regarding the inability to achieve complete **objectivity** in action research (Hacohen and Zimran, 1999; McNiff et al., 1996; Lomax, 1994; Middlewood et al., 1999;) Hacohen and Zimran (1999) argue that, while lack of objectivity may be disadvantageous, it can also be beneficial. They also believe that an advantage of action research is that the researcher can gather information from real life events. This notwithstanding, the researcher aspired to as much objectivity as possible (Zabar 1999) and took several steps to achieve this as follows:

a.   The researcher endeavoured to be systematic in examining her work and evaluating its outcomes, (McNiff et al., 1996).

b.   The help of a 'critical friend', a colleague at work, was enlisted – someone with good sense of professional critique - to review the researcher's assessments and interpretations at every stage of the study.

c.   Triangulation itself contributed to the objectivity of the study.

d.   The researcher repeated the study twice in two different years, also in order to raise the standard of objectivity.

Reliability

"Reliability is the extent to which a test or procedure produces similar results under constant conditions on all occasions." (Bell, 1989, pp.50-51)

The research aims in action research are situation dependent, which is not the case in quantitative research. It should be noted, however, that the points made above become less valid the more extensive and far reaching the action research (Lomax, 1994). One cannot expect to repeat an action research study accurately and get the same or even similar results owing to the unique character of the situations involved. However, this is more a strength of this type of research than a weakness, (Cohen et al., 2000). The methodology for qualitative research differs from that of quantitative research. With the former, there are no objective, external criteria as in quantitative research, instead; the criteria are reliability, authenticity, detail, depth and significance of responses and the researcher's ability to understand. While conducting the study, the researcher was conscious of the reliability factors, and relates to them at all stages of the study (Cohen et al., 2000).

Also, another issue must be taken into account - it is unclear which plays a more significant role in action research - the 'action' or the 'research' component. What methods are available for this type of research? Are they valid? Can the research results be published? (Bassey 1986; Oja and Smulyan, 1989).

Cohen et al. (2000) resolve the quandary thus: "It is clear that action research is a blend of practical and theoretical concerns, it is both action and research" (p.237). Because the action and the research elements of the study are interconnected, they both appear very prominently. For its part, the action element is examined earlier in this

study in "Action research as a methodology" in characteristic 3, while with respect to the research element, the study is consistent with the basic definition of what constitutes research: "research is investigation and study for the purpose of discovering previously unknown scientific subjects" (HaHoveh Dictionary, 1995 p. 308). In this thesis, the 'research' addresses the development of a new topic in the field of teacher training in Israel.

In terms of the research, the innovation concerns the systematic investigation of the cognitive and behavioural approaches employed by third year teacher training students when coping with professional dilemmas found during teaching practice. With regard to the action and research goals of this study, the aim was to develop a new approach to determining priorities for teacher training programmes. (For further information on this, see the section headed "Benefits of action research for the researcher").

Research population

The study was undertaken at the Kibbutzim College of Education in Tel-Aviv. The college trains teachers for all levels of education, from preschool onwards, and for many types of education. The study subjects were third year students in the college's early childhood education track. The third year marks the final year of the student's full time study programme. In year four, students are required to find placements as trainee teachers in schools: this means working for one third of the working week in a school while continuing to study for their B.Ed.

The study comprised two cycles of research in two different years - 2003 and 2004. In both years, the research topic was implemented for a whole class of students (22 in total). However, for the purpose of more focused investigation and documentation, five students were selected from each class. These five were treated as cases and thus the thesis is based on a total of ten students. The students formed a heterogeneous group. The variances between them were cultural and reflected the general Israeli population, with Jewish and Arab students, new immigrants from Russia and Israeli born students. There were also variances in academic achievement. Some were highly articulate, both in written and verbal expression, while others were less articulate. Heterogeneity was important in providing a varied research population. The research took place partly in the college classrooms, but mostly in schools nationwide where students had their teaching practice.

The research population for the students' own dilemma studies comprised the children in their practice classes.

Ethical considerations

Discretion, i.e., anonymity and confidentiality, is a basic rule of research ethics, (Flick, 2002). With action research, however, this confronts the researcher with difficulties and dilemmas of varying degrees. One of the more serious dilemmas concerns 'exposure'. Exposing the researcher to the group of subjects might discourage them from revealing things about themselves or, alternatively, cause them to try to please the researcher and thus largely influence the quality of the data. However, non-disclosure of the researcher's goal would qualify as deception, in itself a serious matter, and the researcher would run the risk of discovery and the loss of the subjects' trust, (Hacohen and Zimran, 1999).

While planning and executing the study, the researcher found herself facing this dilemma, together with other concerns on several issues. One concern was that, if the students knew the research topic and study goal, they would 'rig' their own studies, mainly to satisfy their pedagogic instructor and do well that year. The following steps were taken to overcome this difficulty:

a.   In class, the teacher-researcher (i.e., the pedagogic instructor) involved students in what she thought and felt. This aroused in the students a genuine interest and desire to carry out their project.

b.   The subject was taught in stages, which meant that students gradually learned the terminology, thoroughly explored the dilemmas they encountered during teaching practice, and became highly involved in all stages of their project.

c.   The teacher-researcher spent a considerable amount of time with each student, trying to identify a dilemma of personal interest to each one. The researcher never chose or imposed a dilemma on a student.

The other problem related to the converse - that the students might jointly object to receiving such a complex assignment given that their fellow students had simpler topics, totally unrelated to dilemmas. On the other hand, not informing students that they were the subjects of a study might produce a breakdown in trust between them and the researcher should they learn that their research would provide material for the researcher's study. This crisis might have led to a lack of cooperation *vis-à-vis* their research, with implications regarding the instructor's relationship with her students.

The following helped to overcome this difficulty:

a.   The college's academic administrator and early childhood education programme coordinator gave their agreement and blessing to this study, as suggested by Bell, (1989).

b.   Names of study subjects were not disclosed.

c.   Research planning and methods of data collection and analysis were decided in consultation with each of the five students.

In the end, it was impossible to resolve the dilemma fully, and the researcher chose to inform the students of the research topic and what it entailed. She also took a number of steps to ensure that ethical standards were maintained. On the one hand, this meant maximum transparency *vis-à-vis* the students in the study and, on the other hand, limiting the information given to the students and thus preventing them from adapting themselves to the researcher's requirements.

Summary

This section briefly explains why action research was chosen as the most suitable method for this study.

The main goal of action research is to improve professional performance; it enables educators to ask questions and search for answers by systematically examining processes, while conducting an educational intervention programme. The reason for my asking the research questions, and for undertaking this study, was a sense of frustration with the teacher-training programme at the college where I teach. Based on my years of experience teaching children, as well as my reading of the professional literature, I was aware that the teacher's routine involves dealing with professional dilemmas - a more complex part of the teacher's work, and a cause of teacher burnout. This notwithstanding, the subject of coping with dilemmas in teaching is completely overlooked by the college's three-year, early childhood education programme.

In my opinion, there are three reasons why introducing this topic to the teacher training curriculum is important: (1) it would not only equip students with the tools needed to deal with professional dilemmas, but would also enhance their future professional performance as teachers; (2) it would teach students to carry out

critical appraisal of their work, and (3) teaching this topic would enable students to articulate their professional actions in value terms.

Action research appeared to be the most suitable method for investigating student methods of coping with dilemmas in the classroom for several reasons: (1) it allowed the researcher to scrutinise her own work; (2) it allowed the research subjects to be involved in the research process - an advantage when studying students, who are able to participate actively because of their age (through the students' involvement, the researcher could gain an authentic picture of the subjects' thoughts and feelings and the processes they experienced); (3) the reflective process encouraged by action research helped to improve the standard of professionalism in this study; (4) the thorough analysis which followed the various activities of both students and researcher facilitated decision making as to the next step of the study, and assisted in reaching conclusions at different points in the study, and (5) the process of recording thoughts and feelings in a diary used in action research also contributed greatly to the researcher's clarification of her own experiences while studying her students.

As noted earlier, the researcher's reason for conducting this action research was her desire to improve her professional environment. Specifically, this desire was based on the researcher's assessment of the curriculum as incomplete in that it failed to address the issue of professional dilemmas. The researcher hopes that, following her study, the topic of coping with professional dilemmas will become an accepted part of the curriculum, not only in her own college but also in other Israeli colleges and in colleges around the world.

Figure 3.1 presents the process of the entire research. Its structure, which consists of two cycles, corresponds to that of Action Research. The first cycle comprises my intervention plan and the second, a revised intervention plan. Each chapter throughout the entire paper will elaborate on one of the rubrics in this figure.

Figure 4.1: The Research Process

MY RESEARCH

sense of dissatisfaction

Reflection and definition of the problem

Designing intervention plan

Teaching dilemma issues in college

Monitoring how students cope with dilemmas at school

Reflection and evaluation

discussing   reflecting   understanding

Revised intervention plan

Teaching dilemma issues in college

Monitoring how students cope with dilemmas at school

Reflection and evaluation

discussing   reflecting   understanding

REFLECTION AND CONCLUSION

(adapted from Kemmis' 1982 model, quoted in Ebbutt, 1985, p. 163)

90

The following is an explanation of each rubric in the figure.

- Sense of dissatisfaction – this refers to my own sense of dissatisfaction with certain aspects of my professional practice.

- Reflection and definition of the problem - My dissatisfaction resulted from a problem existing in the traditional curriculum which had to be defined.

- Designing intervention plan - Having defined the problem I was able to proceed with my intervention plan designed to research that problem.

- Teaching dilemma issues in college – This rubric presents the new teaching unit I designed in the curriculum, which was taught in my class in college.

- Monitoring how students cope with dilemmas at school – At this stage the students applied their own intervention plans in their practice classes at school. My task was to observe them as they performed their plans with the children in the practice class and later guide the students with follow up of their work.

- Reflection and evaluation - At the end of my intervention plan in the first cycle, I reflected on my initial planning and performance, reached my conclusions and devised an improved plan.

- Revised intervention plan – After evaluating the first research cycle a revised intervention plan was formulated and performed with a new class of students thus beginning the second cycle, which contained the same steps as the first one.

- Reflecting, understanding, discussing – The whole process was accompanied by reflection, discussion and insight. The action research was entirely based on Kemmis' 1982 model (quoted in Ebbutt, 1985, p. 163).

Reflection and conclusion - The second cycle concluded with reflection and conclusions regarding the whole study.

Data Collection

Data were collected from the researcher's students using qualitative research tools such as questionnaires, observations, semi-structured interviews and diaries for teaching practice documentation.

Diary

A diary is a spontaneous, personal record of someone's experiences and a reflective response to them. Teacher-researchers tend to use diary writing as an aid for reflection as part of an action research programme in their classrooms and schools, (Burgess, 1994; Altrichter et al., 1995).

The diary is a useful means of encouraging professional development. It helps to create new meaning in existing ideas concerning the educator's work. It facilitates a reframing of the familiar. The teaching profession is characterized by discovering self-meaning through the practice of teaching. One way to achieve this is for the teacher to keep a diary of what s/he thinks happened in class. Of course, which ideas they choose to record in the diary also says something. This choice determines what the teacher will learn from what occurred (Jarvis, 1992).

The researcher recorded a diary in which she systematically documented pedagogic and teaching practice supervision with her students. This diary mapped the researcher's progress in the study and served for data analysis purposes, i.e., reflective analysis of achievements, problems and new information (Bell, 1989). The diary elucidated the researcher's plans, actions, evaluations and planning revision. Naturally, it also described events and situations that occurred. Everything recorded served for data analysis (Bell, 1989). Mostly, the diary was entered after class/sessions although sometimes brief comments or ideas were jotted down during teaching practice observation as food for later reflection. The researcher also addressed new experiences, thoughts and feelings in this documentation. The diary enabled the researcher to examine things that happened from a distance and analyse her own teaching methods from different perspectives.

Questionnaire

Prior to planning the study and putting it into effect, the researcher decided to carry out a status evaluation, with a view to discovering what, if anything, the student-subjects' knew about the subjects in the study.

The aims of the questionnaire were to find out:

1)   How my students understand the term professional dilemma.

2) Whether they have experienced a situation which included a professional dilemma either from their personal experience or while observing the class teacher.

3) What are their ways of copying with such a situation?

4) Do they feel they can cope with professional dilemmas successfully?

5) What resources they can access to enable them to cope with professional dilemmas when they have no immediate solution.

6) The significance of their practical guidance in the above respect.

Since these subjects were not taught at college, it was difficult to predict student answers, even though they were third year students.

There were two reasons for using the questionnaire tool to achieve these goals: (1) the questionnaire enables data to be collected from a relatively large population, in this case, two classes of students in the early childhood programme, and (2) the questionnaire allows specific information to be tracked quickly. It was completed anonymously and allowed respondents to express their ideas freely (McNiff et al., 1996).

In summary, although questionnaires are necessarily limited by the fact that their results are superficial (Munn and Drever, 1995), in the case of this study, the questionnaire appeared to be the most appropriate tool for gaining a preliminary impression of what, if anything, the students already knew about the research subject.

Observations

Observation goals - Focused data collection with the aim of finding relevant material for investigating the research questions, (Flick, 2002).

- Documentation of student activities in real time.

- Comparing what students say during supervision and interviews, and what they practice (McNiff et al., 1996).

-

Description of activities - in each year of the study, the researcher conducted 20 observations, a total of 40 observations altogether.

Subject of observation – activities in the various stages of the students' intervention programmes. The intervention programme was part of their final project which involved the study of the chosen dilemma.

Type of observation – non-participatory observation (McNiff et al., 1996; Flick, 2002): the researcher observed the activities conducted by the student in the classroom, and took notes with the aim of collecting data. There was no contact whatsoever between the researcher and the students. The researcher was a complete observer "observer who watches from outside or with a passive presence" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000, p.379-380).

Observation duration – each observation session lasted approximately 20 minutes. This is the longest that very young children can concentrate intensively.

Method of conducting observations - each student who was selected to take part in the action research organized activities for the children in her teaching practice class in groups or as a class. The researcher sat to one side and noted down everything that happened in the group. No specific subjects for observation were chosen in advance, although the research questions did provide an orientation.

Method of recording observation notes – each sheet of paper was divided into two columns. The wider column contained a description of the activities, and the researcher tried to describe everything that happened in detail. The narrow column contained reflective notes, comments, assumptions, difficulties, or unexpected outcomes.

Post-observation feedback to students

After the teaching activity, I sat with each of the student subjects and delivered my feedback on their work. This discussion was an integral part of the students' activities. I made the atmosphere of these sessions as relaxed and friendly as possible. For these sessions, I 'wore two different hats': that of the pedagogic instructor, and that of the researcher. Thus, during the feedback session, some of my questions to the students concerned the pedagogical aspect of the observed teaching practice, while others addressed the component of the dilemma. Some questions naturally contained references to both the pedagogic and the dilemma components. However, it is important to note that to some extent, this separation of roles is contrived and most of the issues raised pertained to both roles. Nevertheless, from the description of the session goals, it is evident that some of the

goals were common to the students' work in general, while others pertained specifically to this study. The main function of the goals focusing on this study was to allow the researcher to analyse the activities observed, and collect data that would further the researcher's understanding of how the students handled dilemmas.

The following describes the feedback goals:

- To help the student identify professional strengths used in the activity.
- To help the student identify weaknesses which required improvement.
- To examine the student's methods of handling her chosen dilemma.
- To explore the attitudes and opinions of the student with regard to her research topic, which were reflected in the observed activity.
- To trace how the student's intervention programme developed from one activity to the next.

The first two goals apply to all the students' work. The last three goals concern this study specifically.

The following are examples of sentences used in the post-observation feedback discussion:

- Tell me about something positive and important that arose during the activity.
- Share your thoughts and feelings during and after the activity.
- Share **one** important difficulty you experienced as you were conducting the activity.
- How did the activity help you to learn new issues regarding your research topic?
- Did dealing with the dilemma during this activity help you to gain new insights/generate new dilemmas/resolve questions? Other?

Personal feedback for each student – a tool for enhancing professionalism

In the last part of the reflective session, the researcher provided the students with feedback on the activity in the classroom. The researcher's approach to giving feedback was the same as that used by the students when giving feedback to themselves. Thus, the reflective session was prefaced with comments addressing the positive aspects of the activity. There are a number of reasons for this:

1. Looking at the positive gives the person strength and facilitates their professional development.
2. It is easier afterwards to accept less positive remarks.

3. This method offers students a model for working with pupils. They grow accustomed to looking for and finding unique and positive points in every child.

The following issues were addressed in the body of the session:

- Student's communication with the children.
- How the student supervised the children's learning.
- The achievement of the general goals that the student had set herself, and the specific goals pertaining to the chosen dilemma and her progress regarding the project.
- How the activity had contributed to the student's professional development as a teacher.

After this, the researcher selected **one important area that needed improvement**. In her experience, students find it hard to cope with several problem areas at once.

Drawbacks of using observation to collect data

A major drawback associated with observation is that the very fact that there is an observer affects the subject's behaviour (Flick, 2002). Although the researcher sat quietly, taking notes on what was happening, her very presence produced a non-verbal interaction characterized by a degree of tension, mainly at the start of the year. In the researcher's opinion, this led to artificial behaviour (Flick, 2002). It is important to note that the students felt they were being tested whenever the researcher observed them in action (nothing to do with this study). The main reason for this is probably that the researcher evaluates and grades them on their progress at the end of the year and there is no way of gauging how much my presence affected their conduct of the activity. Nevertheless, I can testify that the students changed during the year: after several months of working together, they reported feeling more relaxed when I observed them and I also sensed this during the year. I assume this occurred because we grew to know each other, and because they gradually learned that the aim of the feedback I provided after the activity was more to teach them than to criticize them. One can therefore say that after several weeks the effect of my observation on their teaching performance was greatly reduced. Of course, the impact did not entirely dissipate since observation will inevitably have some effect on a subject's behaviour.

Another drawback of this tool concerns validity: the observer needs the explanations of the observed, since without them, the observations are the subjective interpretation of the observer, which are sometimes based on preconceptions (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). In this study, I was able to ask the observed subjects questions at the conclusion of the observation. Moreover, the observation was carried out with the awareness of the issue of perception and the values that they (the observer - RK) were bringing to the observation, (Altrichter et al., 1995).

While observing and taking notes, the researcher may gather a large amount of material not directly relevant to the study. Indeed, for the researcher in this study, there was a lot happening during the activities, which meant having to quickly categorize the issues, and jot down what appeared relevant, all the while continuing the observation.

Ethics

There are no clear-cut, unequivocal ethical guidelines to cover all situations relating to observation. The most important guideline is nevertheless **integrity**. This crucial value involves respecting the confidentiality and dignity of the people being studied. It is important for the researcher to form some sort of connection with the subjects, to build a sense of trust and confidence, (Cohen et al., 2000). This is important since the technique of observation usually 'bothers' the person observed, especially if they are followed or recorded (Flick, 2002). We must bear in mind that any research, whether quantitative or qualitative, will raise ethical questions and, at times, dilemmas, although in the case of action research this is an especially sensitive issue. In fact, ethical principles have been framed for this type of study, some of which are relevant for this thesis. For example, it is important to ensure that those observed have consented to the observation. Furthermore, one should obtain the observed subjects' consent to the publication of the data obtained, and ensure that this does not cause embarrassment (Cohen et al., 2000).

Interviews

Background

In order to gather data regarding the students' experiences during the two years of the researcher's study, the latter interviewed the five students who formed the research population for that year. Each student was interviewed twice. Thus, there were ten interviews during each one-year cycle, 20 interviews over the two-year period of the study.

The interview had two stages: one interview was held at the beginning of the year, the second a few months later when the students had completed their intervention programmes.

Interview location - each student was interviewed in private, mostly in a room not being used as a classroom at that moment. During all the interviews, I tried to create a friendly atmosphere. I asked the questions in a pleasant manner to avoid giving them the feeling of being tested or interrogated.

Interview duration - this varied from one student to the next. For some the discussion and description of thoughts and emotions took a long time, for others it took less time. The first interview lasted about 30-45 minutes; the second 45-60 minutes.

Documentation of interviews - all interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Type of interview

The research instrument chosen was the semi-structured interview (Flick, 2002). This type of interview provides the study subject, whether an individual or a group, with an opportunity to express themselves, i.e., to reveal emotions, ideas, plans, which would not otherwise be observed (Bell, 1989). It is therefore the most popular research tool of all (Wragg, 1994). Although the semi-structured interview is based on set questions, it nevertheless offers flexibility. There are no constraints with regard to how the questions are organized or worded. The responses are personal and intuitive and allow for spontaneous interaction (Drever, 1995). In addition, the interview structure is determined in the course of the interview as opposed to in advance.

Pilot stage

A pilot of three interviews was administered to interviewees similar to those eventually used, with the aim of obtaining as much information as possible from objective individuals outside the research population. The pilot interview questions had two aims: (1) to determine whether the interview questions generated answers to the research questions; (2) to see if the researcher's questions were clear and what kind of responses they obtained. With the results of the pilot interviews, the researcher was able to finalize the interview questions.

Ethical issues concerning the interview

Relationship with the interviewee – during the interview, I treated the interviewees respectfully, which was not difficult since I am interested in people/my students. I took great interest in their stories, their emotions and their ideas. I felt that they gave me something through their personalities, and not just because of what they offered regarding the interview and thesis (Shkedi, 2003). At the start of each interview, I explained the goal to the interviewee and described my own study to them (Cohen et al. 2000; McNiff et al., 1996). I chose to explain in general terms, without going into detail. This was to avoid interfering with the intuitivity of the respondents' answers. I was afraid that too detailed an explanation of my goals would encourage the respondents to say what they thought I wanted to hear (Shkedi, 2003; McNiff et al., 1996). For the same reason, I tried to speak in a neutral tone of voice to avoid disclosing myself (McNiff et al., 1996).

Integrity – before the interview, I obtained the interviewees' consent to the interview and to the publication of the findings. I also guaranteed the anonymity of the interviewee, and reached an understanding based on mutual trust regarding what would be reported and what would be left out of the study (Morrison, 2002). While transcribing the interviews, efforts were made to reflect the spirit and content of the interviewees' statements. To my delight, the students enthusiastically greeted the idea of being interviewed and contributing toward the research; there was a sense of a shared goal of illuminating a phenomenon on which the subjects had opinions that could benefit society (Morrison, 2002).

Stage 1 – student interview prior to planning intervention programme

Aims of the interview

- To examine the situations that the students regarded as professional dilemmas.
- To identify the conflicting values that caused the student to decide that she was facing a dilemma.
- To determine the cognitive and affective reference to the issue chosen by the student.

Interview I: Pre-action study interview questions

1. What were your reasons for choosing this research topic?
2. Did you have uncertainties about your choice? What were they?
3. Which values is your study concerned with? Was there a clash between several values?
4. What excited you about the issue?

5. How did the class teacher respond? Why did she think this was an important issue to address with her class?

6. How did you collect the data that helped you determine that you wanted to investigate this dilemma?

7. What were the dynamics between you and your partner which led to your joint decision to study this issue?

8. How did you feel once you had made the decision to study the subject? Were you anxious/enthusiastic/excited/looking forward to it/other?

9. Which other dilemmas did you encounter but decide not to study and why?

10. Is your chosen dilemma linked to a discipline you enjoy, e.g., mathematics?

Stage 2 – student interview post-intervention programme

Aims of the interview

- To examine how the students dealt with their chosen dilemma.

- To examine the students' opinions on adding the subject of coping with professional dilemmas to the early childhood curriculum.

- To discover how the students coped with the clash of values represented by the dilemma.

- To determine the impact of the students' final project on their handling of dilemmas encountered during teaching practice.

Interview II – post-intervention programme interview questions

1. Did you encounter any difficulties at the intervention planning stage?

2. How did you and your partner divide the work?

3. What principles guided you when planning the intervention programme?

4. How were the conflicting values of your chosen dilemma expressed in the intervention programme?

5. Describe the stages involved in tackling the dilemma.

6. Did you gain any fresh insights during the intervention?

7. Have you acquired any new professional skills?

8. Has your ability to deal with professional dilemmas improved? If so, how?

9. Did the process of reflection during the intervention help to improve your professional efficacy? Give details.

10. In your opinion, how will this experience affect your response to dilemmas as a teacher?

11. What was the most exciting part of the intervention?

12. Did you experience any real difficulty during the intervention?

13. How do you think we can train students to deal effectively with professional dilemmas?

14. What could we add to the curriculum to improve the way students cope with dilemmas in their professional life?

15. Can you give examples of other dilemmas you encountered in your teaching practice after the intervention?

Critical friend

From the outset of the study a critical friend assisted the researcher. This colleague occupies the same position as the researcher in the college, but with a different class. Last year, the colleague replaced the early childhood track coordinator who was on sabbatical. Prior to joining the college, she served as head of an elementary school for many years, and before that taught elementary school children. The positions in the education system that she has occupied have proved helpful in this study; for example, she was able to fill in administrative detail. Having a critical friend also helped in exploring issues objectively, for example, when it came to analysing my observations of student teaching practice she enabled me to review their work from a fresh angle. Our sessions depended on my progress with the research and various related requirements that arose along the way. On average, we met once a month, and discussed a wide variety of issues and questions.

CHAPTER FIVE
First Action Step

Introduction

My research includes two cycles or action steps, each one conducted in college and in school. My whole college class was involved but five students were chosen to represent the whole student population in each cycle (for further details about the selection process see Chapter 4, Methodology).

This chapter describes the first action step conducted in college followed by its analysis. This is then followed by Part B, which describes the subsequent process in school, again followed by an analysis.

Firstly, I will introduce the five students whose progress will be analysed.

Details of the five students representing the research population

There are 22 students in my class. The class is heterogeneous and contains 17 Jewish and five Muslim Arab students. The students are aged from 21 to 37. For this study, five students were chosen to represent the class constituency.

Ella

Ella is the oldest student in the class. She is 37, and has two sons, aged 13 and six. Not only this singles her out from the other students; she is also the only student who was not born in Israel. She comes from Russia and has only been in Israel for five years. Her Hebrew is not fluent, and her writing is full of mistakes. The college makes concessions in this regard and her written papers are reviewed bearing in mind that she is a new immigrant. Her financial situation is difficult and she has no choice but to work part time after college each day.

In terms of her studies, she is extremely conscientious and does not demand concessions despite her many challenges. She submits all her papers on time and tries to do her best. For teaching practice, Ella teaches a primary school class (6-7 year olds) twice a week. Socio-economically, her class is split. On the one hand, she has children from a poor socio-economic background; new immigrants from Russia newly arrived in Israel. At the other extreme are children from well off families who live in prestigious neighbourhoods. The

two groups of children do not always associate after school; they mostly associate with children who live in their own neighbourhoods. Ella gets on well with the children and their parents; in particular, she has a common language with new immigrant parents from Russia. Ella is highly respected by her training teacher who has trained other students in the past. The training teacher thinks that Ella is very industrious and reports that Ella takes great pains to adapt to Israeli teaching methods. In Russia, Ella studied teaching at a teacher training college but, since Israeli teaching methods are different, she must accustom herself to an entirely new approach; she does well in this despite the considerable drawbacks she faces.

Fatma

Fatma is the youngest student in the class; she is 21 years old and one of the five Arab students in the class. She and the other Arab students are Muslims (the college also has Christian Arab students). Unlike the other Arab women in the class, Fatma dresses in western style clothing. She has tremendous drive to succeed despite the considerable difficulties she has with her studies. Some of her problems are a result of language difficulties, while others stem from lack of confidence, which may be because she is relatively quite young. She explains her somewhat childish behaviour in terms of her home and family life. Until she started college at 18, she was more or less secluded, hardly ever leaving the house. She says she feels she has matured since she began attending college and has gained in independence. Despite the abovementioned behaviour, Fatma tries very hard to succeed. She asks about every detail, almost to the point of nagging. She is always making appointments to speak to me and the other members of faculty. She revises papers which teachers feel are not up to scratch.

For teaching practice, she works with a first grade class (ages 6-7) in an Arab school. The school is located in the town where she lives, in a neighbourhood close to her home. She thus knows some of the parents and children. Her town has a mixed Arab-Jewish population. The school catchment area is poor socio-economically, and there are serious problems involving violence. Fatma's training teacher is impressed with Fatma's conscientious attitude and says that the children have benefited greatly from Fatma's work; she has also said that Fatma needs to work on herself as a figure of authority.

Lena

Lena is another Arab student; she is 28 and the mother of three children. She is a devout Muslim and always dresses in religious garb. She does not participate much in class, but when you talk to her, she comes across as an intelligent and serious thinker. She explains that the reason for this 'discrepancy' is that she feels very different as an Arab student in a Jewish college and also because of her traditional dress. She also points out that her Hebrew is not as fluent as her Arabic. Despite this, she is conspicuous for her leadership qualities and is highly respected by the other Arab students. As for the college, she is regarded as a serious student although she has considerable difficulty with her written and verbal Hebrew.

Lena practices teaching in a first grade class of an Arab school (the same school where Fatma teaches) and also lives in the same neighbourhood. Her training teacher has warm praise for her professionalism. She says that Lena can be relied upon and that she has greatly contributed to the advancement of the children in her class. The school principal has promised her a job when she graduates.

Limor

Limor is 24 and was born in Israel. She is an average student academically, although she works very hard and diligently both in college and in her teaching practice. Limor is quite introverted, which leads me to encourage her participation in class. Another trait that distinguishes her is her generally cultured and respectful behaviour and her pleasant, courteous manner. She can accept criticism and instruction very readily and tries hard to adjust accordingly. She is eager to broaden her knowledge and develop professionally. Her ability to work in a team is admirable. This quality stands out when she is working with her partner at school and with her training teacher. Limor practices in the first year class of a primary school. The school is located in one of the most prestigious suburbs of a city in the centre of the country. The homes of the children in this school are among the wealthiest in the country. Limor, on the other hand, comes from a far less well off background and lives in a town where most of the residents are not well off.

Maya

Maya is 24 and is studying to be an early childhood teacher. She is in a special programme for outstanding students, the 'Excellence Program'. This programme is especially for

students who produced particularly high initial grades. The course lasts for three years instead of the usual four.

Maya impressed me for her auto-didactive abilities, her thoroughness and her intellectual curiosity. She takes pains to broaden as well as deepen her knowledge. Despite her exceptionally good grades and her commensurately high written and oral language skills, Maya's contributions to classroom discussions show signs of fluctuation. On some days, she is very involved, particularly when teacher discussion involves what she sees as nitty gritty issues. However, often she will sit in class, contemplating and not taking part. She says that this is because she is thinking deeply to herself about the subject under discussion. She is conspicuous for her sensitivity toward others in general and to children in particular. When the class is discussing a moral question the way she expresses herself reflects this sensitivity.

In her teaching practice class, she relates to the children in a very personal way. She treats each child with respect and is alert and sensitive to the children's needs. Maya lives in a farming locality a long way from the college. The school where she goes for her teaching practice is not very far from where she lives. The children at the school come from kibbutzim and agricultural settlements round about. They come from middle to high socio-economic families. A high proportion of the children Maya teaches come from the same place as she does and she also worked with some of the children when they were in preschool.

Having described the students, I will describe the teaching units I devised for my class in college. Later in the chapter I will observe my students applying these in their practice classes in school

Year 1 of the Study
Part A – In College
Section 1
This section describes the course units I developed to prepare students to cope with dilemmas in classroom teaching.

Structure of section 1

- This section describes the teaching units. A unit is defined as the lessons on a given topic.

- The topics are followed by an analysis. The analysis explains the criteria for identifying student approaches to coping with dilemmas and the process students underwent in studies on the subject.

- The teaching units conclude with a summary of my relevant reflections.

  The summary is divided into two parts: part one concerns my own learning when teaching these topics; part two provides new ideas for teaching the course in the future.

- Most of the data in section 1 is based on journal records that I kept. Other data were obtained from student end of year projects and student interviews.

The following two comments apply to all data in both stages of the action research:

- *Regarding the gender references used in this thesis. Please note that all subjects in the study were female (the students) and therefore the feminine personal pronoun appears almost consistently throughout.*

- *As in any qualitative study, this study collected large amounts of data about the subjects. However, for reasons of space, it is not feasible to present the entire body of data regarding the five students in the sample, therefore a representative sample of data collected has been described. In the analysis of the Teaching Units section, a summary has been provided of all results for the five students.*

Teaching Unit 1
Problem/Conflict/Dilemma: The Same or Different?
Dates: 15.10.02, 22.10.02, 29.10.02

A.   Initial exploration of the concept of 'dilemma'

We spent the first lesson exploring the idea of 'dilemma'. I wrote the word 'dilemma' on the board and asked students to relate to it freely.

Ella – "A situation that is difficult to solve."

Limor – "When you don't know which side to choose."

Lena – "A dilemma is a very serious problem."

106

I thought they were familiar with the term 'dilemma', but were not confident when describing it.

Fatma – "I know how to use the word, but I can't describe what it means."
Maya (joking) – "A dilemma is when there are two men and you don't know which one to date!"

Analysis

The students seemed to have a preconception about the meaning of 'dilemma', but lacked the structured theoretical background to support it. Their understanding of the word was intuitive and based on life experiences. This seems to indicate that initially the students were *identifying the dilemma* on the intuitive level; they *sensed that a dilemma existed* about what constitutes a dilemma. They referred to some of the features which characterize a dilemma, but could not define the concept and did not mention the conflict of values intrinsic to a dilemma.

B.   Starting to distinguish between 'problem' and 'dilemma'

Encouraged by the fact that I was not starting from scratch with the students and that they were familiar with the notion of a dilemma, at least intuitively, I went on to teach them about the difference between two apparently similar terms. My strategy involved taking examples from the students' teaching practice and then moving to the theory.

RK (author) – "I would like some examples of problems and dilemmas you have encountered in the field" (intuitive differentiation).

The group members had no difficulty listing all kinds of problems:

Limor – "Children are not motivated to come to school."
Lena – "The slower students aren't given enough attention."

RK – "These are real and pressing problems that you face as teachers. Now try to think of situations which you think involve dilemmas."

Ella – "Children don't do their homework. The teacher speaks to them about it, writes to parents, but it doesn't help."

RK – "What makes that a dilemma?"

Ella – "Because it's harder to solve."

The students were not talking about dilemmas, but more routine classroom problems.

Most of the problems they called dilemmas had nothing to do with situations they encountered in the classroom or with their own classroom observations. These so-called 'dilemmas' in fact consisted of serious criticism of the student's adoptive teachers. Their examples stressed unprofessional behaviour by their teacher mentors, but they were not dilemmas. Many of the students insisted that the dilemmas they saw in class were due to their mentor's behaviour. The following are examples:

Fatma – "The teacher yells and punishes the children which makes the atmosphere unpleasant."

Lena - "The teacher is not consistent when setting boundaries for the children, which confuses them."

Analysis

Here too we see budding signs of the students *identifying the dilemma*. This is the first stage in coping with a dilemma, when the individual *senses that a dilemma exists*. The problems described by the students could indeed be formulated as dilemmas, but at this point, the students can only describe elements which can be formulated as dilemmas in the future. The problems they indicated and reported as dilemmas did not relate to their own professional behaviour or to general professional situations, but rather focused on *'blaming' others for the dilemma*, in this case, their practice class teacher.

Another explanation may be that at this stage, i.e. early on in their third year of training, a time when they are constructing their professional identities, they find it hard to *cope with ambivalent* situations and look for experiences that *promise success* and categorical answers. Intractable issues threaten their professional expansion and so the message we hear is 'If I was that class's teacher, that sort of thing would not happen'.

C. Heightening the distinction between conflict and dilemma

After relating to the concept of dilemma intuitively, it was time for some theory. I asked the group to read something by Daniel Statman (1991) where he defines the terms 'dilemma', 'moral dilemma' and 'conflict'. I then conducted an open discussion with the group to clarify and sharpen the various terms. The students raised the questions and ideas that their reading had prompted.

Ella – "Before I read the chapter, I hadn't thought about the difference between dilemma and conflict."

Fatma – "I still don't fully understand the difference between dilemma and conflict."

Maya – "Is a dilemma an absolute situation or does it depend on the individual's opinion?"

Lena – "The definition says that, in a dilemma, the person must reach a decision and take some kind of **action**. Why can't it be that you be in a dilemma, not know what to do, and not do anything?"

Ella – "I tried to think about my own deliberations in life and saw that I don't know the difference between a serious problem and a dilemma."

The students' responses showed that my idea of working on the distinction between a conflict and a dilemma was correct. The students' questions showed that they were taking their first steps towards constructing an idea of what the term 'dilemma' meant, and that reading about apparently similar terms had aroused their interest.

We prefaced our discussion of the difference between the terms 'dilemma' and 'conflict' by talking about the definition of conflict they had read for the class. I followed this with a discussion of euthanasia and the arguments for and against, which are well known in Israel, where opinion is divided, mainly along a religious-secular divide. In this lesson, I presented the difference between a person who takes part in a theoretical discussion on the issue and a doctor who must decide whether to switch off someone's respirator. I told them this was the difference between a conflict and a dilemma. In the first scenario, the person involved in the theoretical discussion may have a conflict. She may have arguments of equal weight for and against euthanasia, but does not have to do anything particular in that regard. Not so in the case of the doctor, who faces the dilemma of what to **do**. He is aware that whatever he decides will cost him a very high price in terms of moral value.

The students were divided in their response. Some thought my example had helped to explain the difference between dilemma and conflict. Others felt that euthanasia was not a dilemma but an act of murder which they could not treat as a dilemma. Let us look at Limor's response as representative of the thinking of the latter group:

Limor – was active in the discussion and thought euthanasia was not an example of a dilemma. To bolster her point, she gave another example, which she felt was similar to my example. She thought the euthanasia debate resembled the debate on abortion in Israel. As soon as she mentioned this subject, the group was in uproar. The heated debate was between those who thought women should have free choice regarding their bodies and the anti-abortion camp. More than euthanasia, the abortion question excited the girls in the class to express their opinions. As with my euthanasia example, I found it hard to persuade the antagonistic group (Lena, for example) that this was a dilemma. She felt that abortion was also murder and therefore no dilemma.

I took this as an opportunity to explain another quality of dilemmas, and explained that dilemmas have a subjective quality. In other words, what poses a dilemma for one person does not present one for the next. We added this characteristic to the previous quality we had identified, namely that a dilemma calls for a decision which must be acted upon.

Analysis

The examples helped to clarify the difference between the terms 'dilemma' and 'conflict'. I was surprised, however, by the intense emotional response; the refusal of a large proportion of the students to even consider that issues like euthanasia and abortion were dilemmas took me aback. There were several possible explanations for this.

1. It represented a cultural reaction, showing that student handling of dilemmas was *culture-referenced*. How they saw my examples of dilemmas was based on their *cultural context* on the question. The culture of several of my students took an unequivocal position on the questions of euthanasia and abortion and there was no other way of looking at them.

2. The second explanation concerned something I had noticed before, namely, the students' overall way of thinking and their attitude to dilemmas in particular. Here I am referring to their *perception of dilemmas* where they view dilemmas with an unambiguous, *black and white perspective*. When a person thinks this way there is no hesitation regarding the right decision on the issues at hand.

3. The third explanation concerned their difficulty in relating to *ambiguous* situations. Even though my questions were on a theoretical level, they still found it difficult to analyse situations where both sides had arguments of equal weight to support their position. By their very nature, situations like this are irresolvable. My conclusion in this regard was that at this point in their training, my students have a need to deal with situations which can offer them *successful outcomes.*

D.   What is a 'professional dilemma'?

After discussing dilemmas in general and the differences between dilemmas and conflicts, I felt that an additional step was required to help us understand the term 'professional dilemma'. Once again, I developed the discussion from the professional sphere to the theory, this time with an example taken from my own professional experience.

I told the class that as a teacher in a second grade primary school I once organized a big end of year party for the parents and their children. Besides the singing and dancing for the whole class, each child was given a speaking role. My professional dilemma was whether to give a child who stuttered a role to speak in front of the audience.

I began by describing both sides of the dilemma, giving a variety of pros and cons for and against asking the child to speak. And indeed, this first session went smoothly. The students straightaway saw the 'price' that I would have to pay no matter what I decided. In other words, they successfully identified the two facets of the dilemma. However, I was prevented from progressing to stage two of my plan. As the class began listing the pros and cons, there seemed to be a general feeling that this dilemma could be easily resolved. Excitedly, they began to fire questions, some of which are given below (as per my journal record).

Ella – "Why didn't you ask the child what he wanted to do?"

RK – "I did but he himself wasn't sure. He was very young after all.

Fatma – "Why didn't you ask his parents?"

RK – "They didn't know either."

Maya – "Why didn't you give him a speaking role; it would explain to the audience the importance of accepting the others less fortunate?"

RK – "Of course accepting differences is very important. However, I did not wish to make a big issue out of this little boy's difficulty"

A heated discussion arose between those who favoured not hiding individuals with impairment, but rather involving them wherever possible to acclimatize society to accept them, and those who opted for discretion, i.e. not asking a stutterer to speak in public to avoid drawing attention to the defect. The numbers for and against both sides of the argument were more or less equal and each side offered lots of support for its position. The consensus was that we should respect those who are different, and that everyone should be treated equally.

When the argument was at its height, one student decided to share her personal story. Very emotionally she recalled how, as a little girl, she had been very overweight and how at school the teachers always gave her 'fat' roles to play in the school performances: "for example, when the teacher gave out the parts for the Hanukah play (a Jewish holiday) it was obvious I got the doughnut part (Israelis eat doughnuts on Hanukah). I went along with it, but inside it hurt. I don't think people should use a defect to achieve an effect", she concluded.

Everyone found her story very moving and the class fell silent. I felt that the student's personal experience had brought home to everyone that the case I had once wrestled with as a teacher was in fact a dilemma. No more questions or doubts were expressed after that.

I felt that the discussion had gone according to plan and covered every possible action on both sides of the dilemma.

Analysis
The class's response to the personal example I gave (the boy with the stutter) was either that the situation was not a dilemma or that it was an easily solvable dilemma. I have two explanations for this. One explanation is that they found it *difficult to cope with ambivalence*. At this stage in their professional development, the students *need to succeed* and therefore rejected whichever situation I described as impossible or very difficult to solve. I felt the other reason was that their studies on humanistic principles and the educational values that derive from them have greatly influenced them. Notwithstanding the clear benefits of studying humanistic principles, the students also seem to have become fixated on those principles. They often use them to explain their own educational deeds or thoughts regarding education, but not always in the right context. The case of the little boy

who stuttered forced them to *address the dilemma with reference to the values involved.* In this case, they tended to choose a *generalized value* from those they had learned in their first year, for example, human dignity or human equality, and apply it to the circumstances. This led them to see just one side of the dilemma and to think that it had a clear-cut solution.

Providing my own professional experience as an example helped students to identify with the dilemma. I also wanted to bring different examples of professional dilemmas and practice defining the term 'dilemma'. To make this easier, I asked if anyone wanted to share their own experience. I thought this would help to take them through the intermediate stage of identifying their own professional dilemmas. The following are some examples of these:

Maya – "I am not sure I have chosen the right career. My dilemma is, therefore, whether to begin searching for another career or to finish college and then decide."

Limor – "My mother remarried and I have younger brothers who are a lot younger. I help my mother and face the daily dilemma of how much to be their 'mother' and invest in their education, and how much to be their sister."

When a student offered a dilemma, I asked her to analyse it according to Statman's definition (1991), which we had covered in class. Because relatively few students gave examples, I thought that splitting into smaller, more intimate groups might encourage them to open up and give personal examples.

Analysis

Asking students to give an example and to weigh each situation according to the dilemma traits they had studied helped them to hone their ability to *identify a dilemma* in their personal and professional lives. From their phraseology, it was evident that they could now *define a dilemma.* I hoped they could now apply the theoretical concept in their teaching practice.

I divided the class into groups whose members all had teaching practice in different schools. The assignment I gave them was as follows:

1.	To share any dilemmas they had encountered in teaching practice at school.

2.   To analyse the dilemmas according to the three characteristics of a dilemma that we had learned.

3.   For the group to select a dilemma which a group representative would describe to the class.

This time the discussions were livelier, and everyone seemed eager to share their professional dilemmas with the rest of their group. The following describes a dilemma provided by Limor and selected for presentation:

The school aide told the teacher of my teaching practice class that they expected her to produce high achievements in arithmetic and reading. This was the first year that the teacher had been employed by the school. She told me about the dilemma this had caused: if she spent most of her time trying to get the results, it would force her to neglect educationally enriching subjects, which she felt were very important to her as a teacher and for motivating children to learn. On the other hand, if she taught enriching subjects, she would have less time to spend trying to gain high achievements in the two required areas, which might interfere with the children's results and her own record as a novice teacher.

The dilemmas described were evaluated by the class according to the three criteria we had learned to use in order to determine whether problems should be classed as dilemmas. The three criteria were:

1.   A dilemma is a situation involving two alternative actions, choosing one option requires the heavy price of setting the other option aside.

2.   The situation has practical implications which require a decision and follow-up based on the decision

3.   The decision causes a clash of fundamental values.

My emphasis when analysing the student dilemmas was more on the first two of the above criteria. I only alluded to the third as I still needed to teach it and felt it should be addressed at length, which I would do in the next lesson.

Analysis

There was an obvious improvement in student ability to *identify dilemmas* and the criteria for identifying a dilemma. Again, this showed that the students had progressed to Level 2

(*competence in defining a dilemma.*) As in earlier lessons, the students were still unable to *relate the dilemma* to their *own professional behaviour* and their actions, but rather related the dilemma to *others.* However, in the lesson described above, there was a clear development in their thinking; when they described the dilemmas their practice class teacher faced, they were much more empathetic and less critical than before. The theory they had learned had engendered a better understanding of the situation.

Reflection

It was no surprise to find that the students were not well acquainted with the concept of a dilemma since the questionnaire the second year students had completed the year before had indicated this. Also, I had not yet begun teaching the subject.

I thought that the fact that they could *sense a dilemma* was a good start. Although what they described was not formulated as a dilemma, the problems they raised did actually contain two facets. For example, in the first example, if one reads between the lines one sees that the dilemma concerned whether to say something to the 'mentor' teacher about the latter's teaching methods or just to ignore it. On the one hand, the student felt compelled to tell the teacher that her approach clashed strongly with the humanistic style she had been taught at college, but on the other hand, the student felt that if she criticised the teacher, the teacher might get annoyed, and that she would lose her teaching practice slot, which she obviously needed.

Teaching the students about dilemmas showed me that it involved a process. To understand the idea thoroughly, i.e. to be able *to identify and formulate dilemmas*, the students needed many more lessons which combined theoretical learning with examples based on my own and the students' experiences. In this Unit, involving the students by encouraging them to give their own examples helped bring the subject closer to home and encouraged them to participate more actively in class. The example I gave from my own experience served as an opening for them to express and share personal stories.

I learned that when one teaches this subject, it is important to remember that other people relate to dilemmas from their own *culture-reference.* The examples given showed that labelling something a dilemma is a subjective matter which is influenced by the student's view of the world. Even though students might have clear-cut opinions on a subject not being a dilemma, I nevertheless wanted them to know how to analyse a situation and even

feel empathy for those for whom it was a dilemma. This would allow them to develop their critical faculties, and thence improve their handling of dilemmas. To achieve this I needed to pursue the exercise of *formulating dilemmas* and understanding dilemma situations, especially in my work with the whole class when the class could hear their colleagues' dilemmas.

Realising that students had difficulty handling *ambivalence* and needed situations *that promised success* showed me that the first and second year syllabuses ought to contain material that would bring students to realise that, as a teacher, one often meets difficulties that are irresolvable. It is a contradiction to search for quick and preferably good results for every situation that one meets when teaching. If the students had experienced some situations that could not be resolved in the first and second year of college, they might have found it easier and more natural to cope with professional dilemmas in their third year.

Teaching Unit 2
Intertwining of Professional Dilemmas and Values
Dates: 5.11.02, 12.11.02

A.   Exploring values
After discussions with the students regarding the two main characteristics of the definition of dilemma, I taught them the third primary characteristic, namely, that a dilemma involves the individual in a clash of values. To help me teach this, I assigned the students two tasks as homework. The first involved looking up the definition of 'value' in the dictionary. The second required them to draw up a list of values they were familiar with. We read out the definitions in class and moved on to the next task, which was to compile a joint list of the class's values on the board.

The students suggested familiar values such as justice, honesty and truth. However, even at the beginning of the class, I could sense that something was wrong. They seemed uncomfortable with the task and I could see they were not yet ready to draw up this list since they still had questions on the subject, for which I was not ready. The following describes a small sample of the various issues they raised (as per my journal record).

Maya – "How can I give you an example of a general value, when there is no such thing? People see values differently. Everyone has his or her own values. In some countries, you can kill a woman for adultery, in Arab countries, for example. In those countries, killing the woman is a matter of family honour, a value. What we see as murder, they see as a moral obligation."

I could sense that the five Arab students in the class were uncomfortable with this topic. The students then came up with new ideas.

Maya – "I am sure in our class itself, there are differences between different people's values and the importance people ascribe to the different values, particularly because of the different countries our parents come from."

Limor – "The first thing that springs to mind is the youth movement I belonged to when I was younger. There they talked a lot about national values. Then too, I had problems about this subject. I disagreed with many of the values they wanted me to pass on to the kids I led."

Ella – thought that teachers should set a personal example and said she saw this as an important value. She then queried whether serving as a role model was actually a value. The class debated the pros and cons of this question.

Others asked similar questions which were also debated. For example, is punctuality a value which some people live by or an innate personality trait?

Limor – made a connection between the Ten Commandments and values. "I try to behave according to a set of values and follow the laws we are commanded to keep as Jews. However, sometimes circumstances interfere and prevent this from happening. Sometimes I find myself lying to avoid hurting someone. This made me think that a value can change depending on the circumstances."

After listening to the students' ideas on values, I decided to address some of the points they had raised; I believed this would help us to develop the theme of clashing values in the context of a professional dilemma, which is what I wanted to teach.

117

After our lengthy discussion, the task before us went far more smoothly. We wrote up a long list of values and split them into groups: moral values, national values, social values and religious values. We naturally found strong links between the value groups.

I now felt it was possible to examine the relationship between values and dilemmas in schools.

C.   The students identify value clashes in professional dilemmas

I briefly reviewed Statman's (1991) definitions of the term 'dilemma'. A clash of values is a basic tenet of this definition. I asked the students to describe classroom situations involving a clash of values they felt were important. The following are some interesting situations the students described, as recorded in my journal.

Lena – "During teaching practice, I sometimes feel a clash between my own values and those of the class teacher. Things I regard as critical educationally are minor to her or too theoretical and non-applicable. For example, planning **learning for pleasure** with the children. **I** see this as a fundamental educational value, especially in early childhood, but **she** thinks differently. When I teach I find myself debating whether to put my values aside or remain loyal to them. If I stick to my guns, I risk confrontation with the teacher."

Maya – "My teacher uses the frontal teaching approach. The children sit in rows all learning the same material. I experience a clash between my values when planning class activities. One value relates to respect for a more experienced teacher than I, the other value is **showing respect for each student and his/her uniqueness/abilities**, as I learned in college. The latter would require me to teach the children in groups according to their different levels, but this is different from the class teacher's approach."

Reading between the lines, I could discern that my students were experiencing strong emotions. I therefore decided to help them to vent these emotions during the lesson.

Analysis

Presenting examples of clashes of values supplemented the third criterion in the definition of a dilemma. The students had now covered *all components* of the dilemma (the first two having been covered in earlier lessons). By thinking about the various examples, they

learned how to *formulate a dilemma* and, at a later stage, to form the connection between this formulation and the actual event in the field.

The students all 'blamed' the clash of values on *other's behaviour* (the class teacher in this case). We can explain this in two ways: first, they are still at the first level of *relating to the dilemma* and thus find it hard to relate the dilemma to their own behaviour or philosophy of education, preferring instead to criticise the teacher. The second explanation concerns my sense that throughout the entire unit, the students had seemed very perturbed by the gap between the principles taught to them in college and their scant application of those principles in the field. This gap gives rise to frustration and criticism of the teacher's behaviour. But, even worse than that, this gap raises questions regarding their ability to apply what they have learned in college. This feeling intensifies when they are faced with *ambivalences* characterized by a lack of possibilities for solving them. This makes them feel even more that what they were taught in college does not help them to resolve these situations and they therefore prefer to confront situations which *can work out for them.* When, at school, they are nevertheless brought face to face with irresolvable situations, the nearest person to blame is their practice class teacher. I hope that identifying dilemmas regarding teaching practice, analysing the values that clash in each situation and managing the dilemmas under my guidance will reinforce their faith in education. They will discover that the principles they learned in college have a practical and value related, not just theoretical, basis.

The professional values presented by the students for *coping with the value related issues in a dilemma* had already been raised in previous lessons. Students learn these humanistic values in their first year. Since this is the first lesson explicitly addressing the subject of values, it was predictable that they would fall back on the familiar. In fact, this was a basic condition for the student's 'knowledge development' and for her progress in identifying *clashes of values* in a dilemma on the one hand. On the other hand, I discovered that their adherence to the *general values* they had learned made it difficult for the students to broaden their horizons and adopt different ways of relating to values.

D.   The emotional issues in clashing values

I decided to confide in my students; I said that when they gave their examples, I had sensed a lot of emotion behind their words which was not being revealed explicitly. I asked whether anyone was willing to tell us how she felt in the situation where the clash of

values occurred. There was silence. The students did not rush to respond. I thought that perhaps they needed time.

After a while, **Ella** spoke up – "I felt bad", she said.

I pressed her – "What exactly did you feel?", I wanted to know.

Ella – "Sadness."

Slowly, the others added their voices.

Limor – "Frustration and helplessness."

Maya – "I actually felt it was a challenge."

Fatma – "I felt it wasn't right for a teacher to behave like that."

As we see with Fatma, some of the students expressed their emotions in a cognitive way.

Altogether there was little expression of emotions. I was a little let down, and was not sure how to put my finger on the problem. I wondered whether the reason for this was that they were not accustomed to expressing feelings in supervised lessons and therefore lacked emotional vocabulary for this setting. Alternatively, I speculated, they were unaware of the importance of expressing emotions along with cognitive expression. Whatever the case, I decided to develop this important skill.

Analysis

The most important part of defining a dilemma relates to the emotions of the person in the situation. According to Statman (1991), people may experience feelings ranging from helplessness to paralysis. For students to be able to express whether in fact their emotions are those described or others, they first need emotional awareness, and then must be familiar with the different terms for describing emotions in the language and be able to use them to express themselves in accordance with their emotions. The last lesson I had taught showed me that the students lacked both these skills and therefore their descriptions of the dilemmas they had encountered tended to be lacking in the *emotional sphere*. I hope that they will hone this skill during the process of learning to cope with dilemmas.

Reflection

It was important for me to learn that, since entering the training programme, the students had not discussed values in general or values in education, apart from humanistic values which are deal with at length in the first year. These humanistic values, which they often

refer to, include differences between children, respecting the child's learning pace and style, and the issue of learning for pleasure. I agree that these values are the basic building blocks for training the type of humanistic educator that the college wishes to produce. In their third year, however, when they come face to face with a *clash of values* in the context of a dilemma, I must help them broaden their perspective. This means that, when I review their teaching practice with them, I must relate to other values as well, for example, moral values. This, I believe, will improve the standard of their analysis of their confrontation with the dilemma, and result in them choosing *general* humanistic *values* and increasing their ability to focus on a particular value from the range of values that exist. This enrichment and expansion of the student's perceptive abilities will eventually produce not only an educator who is better equipped to cope with teaching dilemmas, but, presumably, one who can apply the humanistic principles he or she has learned in a more complete fashion.

The strategy I had chosen for teaching the topic of values involved extrapolating from the broad to the specific: we started by examining values *per se* and only then undertook a narrower exploration of the clash of values in the context of a dilemma. My initial feeling was that we would spend a small amount of time looking at values in the wider sense but, when it came to it, I found that this subject was not lightly dealt with as I had originally thought. By the time I concluded this unit, it was clear to me that a broad examination of a general subject had to be a precondition for studying a specific topic.

Something else I found was that this subject produced strong emotional reactions. When teaching the unit, the lessons were spiced with arguments that were heated and coloured by a stronger emotional tone than a rational one. In future, I will endeavour to ensure a balanced classroom discussion reflecting back to the students what is happening in the discussion. Likewise, I will try to discuss universal issues, e.g. euthanasia, instead of controversial local issues that the students feel more strongly about.

Teaching Unit 3
Qualitative Research Tools for Identification of Dilemmas
Date 19.11.02

At the conclusion of my last lesson, I had asked students to identify a situation they felt was a dilemma during the two days of their weekly teaching practice.

A.   The students describe their dilemmas

I began the lesson by asking if anyone cared to share the dilemma they had met at school with the rest of the class. The examples they gave, however, had the same frames of reference as in the previous lessons. The students kept coming up with examples which simply reflected intense critique of their practice class's teacher. Their main argument was that the teacher's behaviour presented them with dilemmas. I was in a spot. On the one hand, I wanted students to vent their feelings without my being judgmental. However, on the other hand, I felt that it was not very fair to behave this way toward a teacher lesson after lesson. I deliberated for a while before choosing my response. I advised them to avoid judging others until in their shoes, and told them it was important for them to give me dilemmas which they had had to cope with, or cases where they were unsure of how to handle the situation, without focusing on their class teacher's behaviour. I felt that the students had taken in what I had said and that there was a chance they would graduate to the following stage and describe their own dilemmas.

Analysis

The purpose of bringing examples from the field was to encourage the development of competence in identifying **their own** dilemmas from their teaching practice; in other words, applying the theory they had learned to their own educational work.

The fact that the students continued to fall back on criticising the teacher's work can be explained in several ways. Firstly, they still have difficulty identifying their own professional dilemmas; this is a more complicated stage which can only be reached following completion of a lengthy process. At this point, they are unable to *connect between the definitions of a dilemma that they have learned and the dilemma situations* they meet in the field (level 3 in *identifying the dilemma*).

A second explanation is that they need time because it seems that they have difficulty coping with *ambivalence*. At this stage, when they are in the process of constructing their professional identity, they need to *succeed* and therefore it is easier to blame the regular class teacher than themselves. It is also easier for them to *relate the dilemma* that they identify and *connect it* to *the behaviour of others* than to try to cope with the dilemma themselves.

B. Tentative attempts to choose a professional dilemma to study

After my 'preaching', the students tried very hard to come up with dilemmas that they identified in their classes. They suggested topics they were interested in researching before I had raised the subject of a research project. I think they realized that eventually they would be asked to research one of the dilemmas as a final project. I decided to work with them even though I had not planned to speak to them about their investigating dilemmas yet. However, initially, the ideas they proposed were very limited. They could not be studied for long and their solutions were only good for the short term, or the number of children the study would involve in the intervention programme would be small, occasionally they submitted proposals which involved focusing on just one child.

Limor reported that in her class there was a hyperactive child, "There are multiple dilemmas concerned with how to relate to him and which teaching methods to use with him". She wanted to know whether she could write her final paper on methods of coping with one of those dilemmas. I suddenly found myself dealing with this stage prematurely and outlining the conditions for the students' selection of a dilemma to research. I explained that it would not be possible to study just one child alone.

Fatma – asked whether she could do a research study about herself. She said that her responses to class discipline problems were not balanced, "When I am tough with the class, they go quiet for a time, but then my conscience bothers me and I feel that I am not the kind of teacher I wanted to be. However, when I'm very 'soft' with them, I don't come across with any authority, especially given that I am not the class's teacher on a routine basis".

RK – "This is in fact a professional dilemma, but it does not fit the criteria I set for the dilemma topic for your research study and which I intended speaking to you about. Again, this is a question of conducting a research study which just focuses on one person."

At this point, I felt it would be more efficient to talk to each of the students individually about the classroom situations she faced and to analyse each student's suggested dilemma with her. Meanwhile, I decided that, in the next lesson, I would continue working with the students on the subject to strengthen their understanding. I decided to work in greater depth

on the topic of research tools for collecting qualitative research data, as this would help the students in identifying or formulating dilemmas.

Analysis

This activity exposed the students to a variety of dilemmas. From the examples the students gave one could discern their progress. I could tell they were starting to understand how to *define a dilemma* and even to develop their own ability to *formulate a dilemma*. They had also grasped how to *relate the dilemma* that they had selected *to their own professional behaviour*. I discovered this when they elected to present dilemmas which really concerned them and no longer tried to present examples which concerned their class's regular teacher as they had previously. However, they were still not presenting dilemmas whose scope involved the whole class; instead they were *limited in scope* (level 2), i.e. they were concerned about narrow issues not involving most of the children in the class. While it is also important to cope with dilemmas that are narrower in scope, a teacher must be able to cope with dilemmas that are very broad in scope, and that is what I wanted to train the students to do.

C.   Increasing their knowledge of qualitative research tools for data collection

I began the lesson by asking the students who or what could help them to identify or clarify a dilemma situation. They suggested observation, interviewing, or discussing classroom situations and data with the class's regular teacher (their training teacher).

The students suggested using observation and interviews since they had been taught about these tools in the first and second years of their course. At that stage, their supervisors had given them short, mainly intuitive assignments involving observation or interviewing the children. This intuitive knowledge regarding these tools is adequate for collecting preliminary data regarding a tentative feeling that a dilemma exists. However, in order to collect data at a more advanced stage, I thought that the students needed to tackle the subject on a more academic footing and then apply what they had learned to the setting of their teaching practice classroom. To this end, I provided the students with a number of references for independent reading, including 'Qualitative Research in Teaching and Learning', Tsabar Ben Yehoshua, N. (1995) and 'Cultural Interpretation', Giretz, K. (1990).

The students themselves also asked for reading material on the subject.

In the pedagogic supervision lessons, we discussed and summarized what the students had learned from their independent reading assignments. Special emphasis was placed on two tools: observation and interviews.

Reflection

As this unit progressed, I became even more strongly convinced that the task of identifying dilemmas in their teaching practice is a complicated process for students and that it takes them time to understand and apply what they have learned. The students still found it very difficult to identify situations which arose in their classes and define them as dilemmas. Two things pointed to this: the first was the inappropriate examples the students suggested, the second concerned their fears regarding the end of year paper. Regarding the second issue, the message I received from them was: 'We are finding it hard to translate what we have learned in your classes into the field situation'. Naturally, I was very concerned at their reactions, although I was also pleased with the progress that they had nevertheless made.

It seems to me that the majority of the students in the class have now reached the second level of *identifying and formulating a dilemma.*

I wondered why this was such a complicated subject, but of course still lack any definite answers. I have a number of hypotheses which are described in my analysis of the different course units. However, my main hypothesis, as I have set out several times already, is that most likely in their teaching practice the students have *a need for success* and find it hard to cope with the *ambivalence* and inconclusiveness found in a dilemma.

Despite this difficulty, I believe it deceptive to paint the students a rosy picture of reality where everything can almost always be resolved and that this ill prepares students for the teaching profession. I will therefore continue on the one hand to seek improved ways of explaining the theory to them and, on the other hand, help them to identify personal-professional dilemmas. Even if the learning process is gradual and demands patience, I believe I will achieve my goal.

During the teaching of the subject of research tools, I wondered how much emphasis to place on the academic aspect for the 'small research study' they were supposed to conduct

and how much to stress the practical side of data collection. I think I exaggerated my emphasis on the former and will change this next year and teach the subject at a level appropriate for the final/year-end project of students at the end of their third year.

Teaching Unit 4
Students choose to research a professional dilemma
Dates: 26.11.02, 3.12.02

A.   Status evaluation
For the past five lessons (each lesson of one and a half hours) I have been working hard teaching the required background theory for practical coping with dilemmas during school teaching practice. I decided to ask the students what they thought and felt with regard to the process they had undergone so far. I asked the class whether anyone was willing to share with us all which tools she felt she had acquired to help in coping with professional dilemmas and which additional tools she would like to acquire for her toolbox.

Maya – "The most important tool that I have gained is my awareness of the subject. I now look at what happens in class through different eyes. I try to analyse the kind of professional problem I have before me; whether it is a problem, conflict or dilemma. However, I would like to gain more confidence in coping with the two sides of the dilemma and not run away and only deal with one side while ignoring the other."

Ella – "As a metaphor for the process I have been through, I would prefer the idea of a cupboard. A cupboard has many shelves; each shelf contains a group of items. On one shelf, I have put the knowledge I have acquired, which is the ability to identify, define and formulate a dilemma. On the second shelf, I have placed the legitimation I received during these past lessons to ask myself questions. On the third shelf, I have arranged my realization that there are many irresolvable situations in education. However, there are still a lot more empty shelves in my cupboard that I would like to fill. I feel that I am not yet able to place in it competency in managing a dilemma; in particular, I find it hard to cope when there is a clash of values. Sometimes, I want someone else to decide for me what to do."

(Seeing Ella and I both creating analogies, the others followed suit.)

Limor – "I picture myself as a gardener in a garden. The garden is my class. At first, I only saw beautiful coloured flowers. I tended all the flowers in the same way: the same amount of water, the same fertilizer. I now realize there were some things I didn't want to see. For example, some flowers dry up because of the blazing sun, some need more water and, with some, I have to accept that they will never grow like the others, even if I lavish all the right conditions on them."

After giving this analogy, she explained that the day after studying the topic, there was a differentiation in the way she analysed classroom situations to herself, and that she had also learned to accept that there are some situations which can only result in compromise, never an ideal solution.

Another tool that assisted me in reaching a status evaluation entailed the individual meetings I had with my students. I found from these discussions that the students had advanced a stage in terms of their competence in *identifying and defining situations as dilemmas*. They testified to the fact that the improvement in their competence enabled them to decide which of the situations they had defined for themselves as classroom dilemmas in their practice class would be interesting and stimulating for them to address. Another thing I noted was that they now used the term 'dilemma' more routinely. They themselves identified various issues that they had learned in pedagogic supervision as dilemmas without me even asking them to do so. Often, I would ask them something and they would reply, "It's a dilemma".

Analysis

The students have been through a process. In the course of the three teaching units, they have acquired and internalized the theoretical information they need. They have now reached *the second level of identifying a dilemma, i.e. they are competent in defining a dilemma*. In other words, they know the three elements of the definition.

The students voiced their opinions regarding what they had learned, but not their feelings as I had requested. In all their presentations, whether articulated in words or through images, an *expression of emotion* was lacking even though it was easy to see that the emotions were there.

B. Reasons for selecting a dilemma for investigation

At this point, the students were equipped with the knowledge and motivation to begin making preliminary proposals for the dilemmas they had identified in teaching practice and were interested in investigating. I decided to guide them in the initial stages of their selection of a dilemma for study not in the whole class forum, but during consultation sessions. I conducted these sessions regarding the dilemma they planned to study either with students who had paired up for the purpose of the project or with individuals who had decided to work alone. During these sessions they described the subject of the dilemma and the classroom context which had led to their decision that what they faced was a dilemma.

I learned from these sessions that the students had two criteria for selecting which dilemma to study.

1.   Students chose dilemmas that touched on an issue they found interesting; for example, a dilemma with regard to arithmetic, a social issue or teaching methods.

2.   A student identified a situation as a dilemma if a situation concerned an issue that was meaningful/important to her.

The first of the above criteria is obvious. The second, however, I found new and exciting. I had acquired information which I then passed on to the students that a dilemma was always subjective. However, I found it very interesting to note that there was a powerful subjective and emotional element in the dilemma that made students want to study one issue and not another.

I would like to mention three examples which brought home to me the second criterion for the selection of the dilemma. The examples cited are from lessons at the college.

B   The personal-emotional aspect of the selected dilemma

Limor – (preliminary formulation of the situation she has identified).

The children in her class do not value money and have no respect for property.

Very emotionally, Limor recounted why she was interested in studying this topic. "When I was little", she said, "we weren't well off. My parents loved me a lot, but they couldn't always buy me the things I needed. Even a small thing like a pen, I guarded closely because I knew my parents couldn't afford to buy me a new one. I was thrilled with any

new thing they bought me and really appreciated it. When I came to the school where I do my teaching practice, I was in shock".

Limor then proceeded to describe the children's behaviour. "The school is located in one of the most prestigious suburbs of Tel Aviv but I was still taken aback by the behaviour and culture of the children I met. The children there have no value for property whatsoever. I'll give you some examples", she said with feeling to the rest of the class. "Their parents buy them the most expensive brand name clothes, and they often leave them in school and no one bothers to come and look for them. In addition, we have a lost property corner in the classroom and it is full of expensive writing things that children have forgotten and no one comes to claim them. The worst thing of all happened about a month ago. The teacher found 300 shekels (approximately £40); to this day, nobody has come to claim it. My dilemma is that I see educating children to care for and value their property as a fundamental value and I would like to teach them that value. On the other hand though, they may not need to have this value because they have everything and it is fruitless my trying to change them on this score."

Fatma – also raised an issue which concerned her. "In our (Arab) society, they treat men and women differently. I am the only daughter in a family of six. My whole life, I was brought up to accept different behaviours for the two sexes. For example, when the meal is over, the men go away and my mother and I clear the table. I'll give you another example, sometimes, when my brother asks for a cup of water, my mother sends me to bring it, even though he is older than I. Attending the college has revolutionized my entire way of thinking. My supervisor (a feminist) in my first year had an especially strong influence on me, and the course on gender equality. My change of thinking has affected how I act at home and also my analysis of what happens at the school where I do my practice."

She then emotionally described the behaviour of the children at school. "In our school, the children are given a hot meal at lunch time. I find it very hard to see the boys going out to play after lunch and the girls staying behind to clear up. The teacher does not encourage this to happen, it just happens as a matter of course. Both the boys and the girls collude in it. There are loads of other examples of the fact that there is no awareness of the possibility of gender equality in the school where I work. My dilemma is, am I allowed and is it possible to educate the children in my class about gender equality. On the one hand, I

passionately believe this is a crucial issue but on the other hand, this subject is not appropriate to our culture in this locality."

Analysis

I have given the above three examples to demonstrate the centrality of the subjective-emotional factor. This factor strongly affects the reasons for addressing a particular dilemma and the decisions made regarding how to address the dilemma. The description of the dilemmas the students chose to address are marked by the progress the students have made in their ability to *formulate the dilemma*. Although their *formulations* only *contained some aspects of the dilemma* (level 2), the students described the two sides of the dilemma and the difficulty of deciding what to do. However, they did not refer to the clash of values that they had learned extensively as part of the definition. This factor may be more complicated and therefore might take them a little longer to apply. At this stage, I feel that our work is starting to bear fruit.

Reflection

After three teaching unit lessons, I felt it was important for me to know what the students had absorbed out of the material we had covered. However, no less important was to examine the ability of the students to evaluate their own learning progress. It is my belief that competence in reflection is an integral part of the learning process itself and in future I intend to emphasise that.

I often try to use metaphors in class, and here I used the 'tool box' metaphor. This image allows each person to describe her own special ways of *identifying* or *formulating* dilemmas. The tools in the box can stand for approaches, ideas, resources, etc. I do not ask students to provide metaphors as I consider this my own personal way and not one to oblige them to work with. I was pleased, however, to see that the initiative came from them. They chose to describe the reality that they saw using imagery. The use of imagery led them to combine imagination with structured thought. After stating their metaphor, it was important for them to 'translate' the imagery and metaphors they gave into equivalent ideas in the real world, i.e. they related their metaphors to my opening questions. In the light of the results and my own enthusiasm, which they must have sensed, I hope that in future lessons they will continue to use images and metaphors even more. The results to which I refer relate to their ability to recognize their own progress in the ability to *identify dilemmas encountered in teaching practice and be able to define a situation as a dilemma.*

Conversely, to describe their difficulties and concerns with regard to having to fully cope with and manage dilemmas.

The student's own stories about choosing the dilemma were very special. This was also reflected in the increased interest shown by the other members of the class. Again, this brought home to me that sharing personal stories in class was useful to the students' progress in the subject in question. Verbally formulating ideas helped students to relate to and connect the dilemma identified in the teaching practice class to their professionalism and assisted in their tentative formulation of the professional dilemma. It also helped to connect cognition with emotion leading to learning that was more effective and, from my point of view, to a more interesting lesson. The students naturally did not report the personal element in a dry fashion; rather, one could tell from their voices that they were very emotionally involved in their accounts. One could read their emotions without them saying a word.

Teaching Unit 5
The Students Analyse their Chosen Professional Dilemmas
Dates: 10.12.02, 17.12.02
A.   **Description, formulation and explanation of dilemma**
By this lesson, each student had picked herself a dilemma concerning her teaching practice class which she was interested in researching. At this stage, I decided my goal was to help students to progress to the highest level of *identifying a dilemma* and I asked them to *make the connection between the definition of dilemma and the dilemma situation itself* (level 3). This needed to be conscious and not just intuitive, and had to be formulated clearly. At this stage, the *formulation* must also contain *all components of the dilemma.* To achieve this I asked the students to list the arguments for and against taking the action for each 'side' of the dilemma.

In class, I divided the class into groups. They told each other about the dilemmas they had chosen for their research. I asked them to each convince the rest of the group that this was indeed a dilemma for her. In other words, I asked them to relate to the two issues that the dilemma involved and to describe which of their values had come into conflict in the situation they described.

Ella – Described the two sides to her dilemma (whether to help children make friends, as described in unit 4) thus: "My dilemma is whether to conduct an educational intervention in my practice class. I have reasons for and against this"

Arguments for

i.   Sometimes, very young children find it hard to make friends unassisted.

ii.   The teacher might be able to tell which children would get on well together and could try to facilitate their friendship.

iii.   It is the teacher's responsibility to create a pleasant atmosphere in the class both in terms of teaching and socially.

iv.   Children who are friendly in class will probably help each other to learn.

v.   Children who have friends in the class will feel happier and be more motivated to learn.

Arguments against

i.   Children have a right to decide whom to be friendly with.

ii.   Parents, especially those of very young children, have a right to have a say in their children's friendships. Sometimes they might disagree with the teacher.

iii.   Encouraging children to make friends interferes with the processes of natural bonding.

iv.   Children may become friends to please the teacher.

She identified the conflicting values as 'the child's freedom of choice versus the teacher's responsibility for the children's welfare'.

During the lesson, I could tell that Ella was having a tough time deciding which value was higher for her.

RK – "What outcome would you be pleased with?"

Ella – "I would like to help the children to make new friends without interfering with their right to choose who they want to be friends with. I see this as a pedagogic challenge and I hope I will cope with it successfully."

Fatma – Presented the two sides to her dilemma (education for gender equality in Arab society which is characteristically patriarchal, as presented in Unit 4). She too was undecided whether to embark on an educational intervention in the first grade class where

she did her teaching practice. She set out the arguments for and against with her intimate knowledge of Arab society in mind.

Arguments for

i   It is an important subject which should be taught to all sectors of Israeli society (religious, non-religious, Jewish or Arab).

ii.   If children learn about equality when they are very young, they may internalize the values.

iii.   The children may influence their families to change traditional attitudes.

Arguments against

i.   This issue is alien to the Arab population of this neighborhood, which has a very low SES.

ii.   Without the cooperation of the children's families, it will be extremely hard to change the children's attitudes.

Fatma described the values that clashed as follows: "General equality between people, and between the sexes specifically, is very important to me. However, respect for the Arab culture of my town is also a worthy value. I feel trapped between these two values. The first is a recently adopted value while the second is a lifelong value. I still cannot place one above the other and decide that one is more important to me than the other."

RK – "How do you propose to manage the dilemma that you described?"

Fatma – "At this point, I cannot see a way to reconcile the two values. I believe that I must choose one side of the dilemma or one of the values. I don't rule out the possibility that I will start to research the matter practically, and find a way to reconcile both sides of the dilemma."

Analysis

In judging the students' arguments for and against the optional actions relating to the dilemma and their analysis of which values conflicted, I could see a distinct improvement in their ability to *identify a dilemma*. They made the connection between the definition and the situations that occurred in class (level 3). This was evident from their formulation of the two sides to the dilemma and from their deliberations on what to do, and finally, from their descriptions of the conflicting values. There was still a way to go in formulating the

dilemma before the formulation addressed all aspects of the dilemma. For now, the students are at Level 2 in *formulating the dilemma* (*formulation relates to some but not all aspects of the dilemma*). I think they will be able to formulate a dilemma in a professional manner once they have covered the theoretical background to the subject of dilemmas. However, at present, they are missing elements of the dilemma concerning the subject they have chosen.

The task of formulating arguments for and against educational intervention helped them to develop a *way of perceiving dilemmas,* at least in the first stage and possibly in the second stage. This refers to thinking that is characterised mainly by deliberation and consideration before taking an action while examining several alternative courses of action. This is preparation for planning to cope with the dilemma.

Reflection

While it is important to teach the theoretical *definition of the term* 'dilemma', this is not adequate for helping students to grasp what a dilemma is in practice. Before handling a dilemma in the professional field, the student must practice 'translating' the definition to the field situation. This is achieved by analysing occurrences during teaching practice in class at college. During this analysis, the student needs to practice finding the two sides of the dilemma and the values that are brought into collision by the situation as the first level, and to think about appropriate actions as the second level.

This is the first time that I have ever taught this subject. However, I have previously done work with students in which they bring problems that arise in teaching practice to the part of the lesson dealing with analysing classroom incidents. When I compare the two coping methods, I can identify an important difference. In the past, the students used to describe a problem and search for the solution. I often thought that what they were seeking was a technical solution. In other words, they wanted to find out as quickly as possible **what to do**. In contrast, when I taught this unit, the students spent more time thinking and deliberating. As noted earlier in the analysis section, the examination of the alternative options for and against educational intervention developed *a way of perceiving dilemmas.* This thinking process led to a postponement in the final decision as regards what action to take. I hope that the action they do take will be different to what they would have done in the past. In other words, whatever they do will be a consequence of having thought about and considered all the facets of the dilemma.

135

Teaching Unit 6

Planning to Address a Professional Dilemma

Dates: 24.12.02, 31.12.02, 7.1.03

This unit discusses three subjects it is important the students learn before they commence construction of the intervention programme associated with their dilemma.

1. The first subject concerns their independent study of the theoretical background which is required for them to familiarize themselves extensively and professionally with the concepts surrounding the notion of 'dilemma'.

2. The second subject relates to the final formulation of the dilemma following the preliminary formulation in the previous unit. This formulation is only possible once the students have learned the relevant theoretical concepts.

3. The third topic relates to the final stage before they actually tackle the dilemma. Here the students have to decide their strategy for addressing the dilemma.

A. **Studying the theoretical background relevant to the dilemma**

Once all the students had chosen the dilemma they thought it was important for them to address, it was time to examine the necessary theoretical issues to finally formulate the dilemma. The eventual aim would be to address the dilemma later, when the student had acquired a sound grasp of the professional thinking on the subject. The theoretical components that the student had to study were cultural, developmental, educational and other relevant spheres.

For example, **Maya** decided to research the question of how to cope with the pressures of the system while at the same time teaching Bible Studies experientially. She explained that it is not possible to set a time to experiential work and pressures stemming from the system are unavoidable. In order to cope with the dilemma, she studied theoretical material on the following subjects:

Teaching Bible Studies – different approaches to teaching Bible Studies, Bible Study syllabuses, the non-religious person, and the Bible.

Art as a learning tool – pedagogic importance, meeting emotional needs, promoting humanistic values.

Cognition and experiential learning – cognitive development, experiential learning.

B. Improving the clarity of the dilemma formulation

At this stage, the students had been taught all they needed to know and the preparation process to enable them to handle their dilemma was sufficient for them to produce the final formulation of their chosen dilemma.

The following are the final formulations of the five students in my representative sample in the first year of this study.

1. **Maya** – *How can I cope with pressure from the system to push the children to learn faster while using an experiential teaching approach?*
2. **Ella** – *Is it permissible and feasible to orchestrate friendships between very young children?*
3. **Limor** – *Should we try to educate children in prudent consumerism when their home and social environment exemplifies irresponsible consumerism?*
4. **Fatma** – *Is it feasible to educate children about gender equality in a patriarchal Arab society?*
5. **Lena** – *Should we try to change the children's language culture or would that conflict with their environmental norms?*

Analysis

After a lengthy process, the students have reached level 3 in terms of their competence in *formulating a dilemma*. Their formulation *contains all the components of a dilemma*. The two poles of the dilemma are clearly identifiable, with one component at one end and its opposite at the other.

In their formulation of professional elements: the concepts 'gender equality', 'language culture' and 'prudent consumerism' are **not** everyday expressions but a product of reading and learning. The clash of values can be seen from the use of phrases such as 'is it relevant'/'feasible'/'appropriate'/'permissible'/'is change appropriate'/'can it be done', etc. These questions are a product of value-laden deliberation.

Formulating the dilemma is not only important in its own right, but also encourages competence in *perceiving dilemmas*. In practice, reasoning and ability to *perceive all components of the dilemma* are an essential condition for formulation. Formulation can also help the student to *cope with ambivalence,* since the very formulation of the dilemma

involves acknowledging that a situation is very difficult to resolve or that it is *not at all clear whether it can be resolved* (level 3).

C. Formulating goals for the plan for dealing with the professional dilemma

After the students had formulated the dilemma they had chosen to address, they were ready to work on their plan of action for coping with the dilemma. The first step of this involved setting goals.

Limor – decided that the main goal of her plan was to raise the children's awareness of the idea of saving and prudent consumerism by teaching them social justice, respect for property, and appreciation of the financial well-being that they enjoyed.

Fatma – her primary goal was to raise the awareness of very young Arab children regarding the issue of gender equality.

D. Planning a strategy for dealing with the dilemma

Before going into the classroom to start dealing with the dilemma on a practical level, each student worked out a strategy for dealing with the dilemma. This was just a preliminary strategy. In their supervised classes, the students asked me challenging questions with regard to their strategy for addressing the dilemma. For example, must one remain faithful to the strategy or can one change the approach in the middle? Must the strategy take the two sides of the dilemma into account or can one choose to deal with one side only?

RK – "I anticipate you will undergo a process as you confront your dilemma, during which you and I will think about what to do together. Because I am supervising this subject for the first time I am curious to see what happens as the process evolves. The questions you are asking are the same ones I am asking. I expect that we will be able to answer some of the questions as the process develops and others only at the end."

After this conversation, during which I gave legitimation to every method of handling the dilemma, the students felt more relaxed about presenting the strategies they had chosen for handling their dilemma. The following are examples:

Ella – "In the beginning at least, I will try to have my cake and eat it. In other words, I will try to find a compromise for improving the social relationships within the class. I would

like to try to help the children who haven't got friends to make friends. The strategy will be as follows: when I need to split the class into learning groups, sometimes I will ask the children to sit in groups where they decide who to sit with (most likely their friends), at other times I will split them into groups and I will decide who they sit with. Thus, the children who know each other will get a chance to mix with children who they aren't friendly with and get to know them. This may help to improve the atmosphere in the class without impinging on the children's freedom to choose with whom to be friends."

Fatma – "Despite my realization that the job of the school is to transmit the values of one generation to a new generation (I learned this from the literature) I decided to adopt the recommendations of the Ministry of Education which state that Arab schools are lagging socially and culturally and are failing in their role of pioneering the process of change. In other words, I am attempting to focus my project on one side of the dilemma, the subject of gender equality. I would also like to explore the effect of teaching this subject on other classroom processes relating to values in Arab society.

Analysis
Differences are evident in the students' choices of *coping strategies*. Ella intends to address the *two sides of the dilemma* and cannot yet know whether she will address the dilemma on a narrow or broad scale. Whatever happens she will try to 'manage' all the various aspects of the dilemma. In contrast, Fatma decided in advance just to address *one side of the dilemma*.

E.   Planning the intervention programme
This is the final planning stage before putting the programme into effect in the school. Each student devised an intervention programme with ten teaching units. Each teaching unit would be taught a number of times depending on how many groups there were in the teaching practice class. Appropriate goals and teaching resources were worked out for each activity encompassed by the plan. The students produced a diagram displaying the planned programme, for example, in the form of a table or a flow diagram.

Reflection
There was a big difference between my one-to-one sessions with the students before they learned the theoretical background on dilemmas and our discussions afterwards. Following the independent study, the students' deliberations on the *formulation of their dilemma* and

planning their *coping strategy* related more to professional considerations than intuition. Next time I teach this, the first item on the syllabus will be the theoretical background to dilemmas. Students will be asked to read the theory shortly after choosing the subject of their dilemma.

In my individual discussions with students, they reported that reaching the more sharply focused formulation had not been a quick process,. Instead, they had formulated one side of the dilemma, which they then mulled over and looked for a word or phrase to describe its converse. This is evident in Limor's dilemma, which contains the phrases 'prudent consumerism' and 'irresponsible consumerism'.

The students' final formulation was marked by the fact that it fitted into a single sentence which *referred to all components of the dilemma*. This, I think, points to their understanding of the most important feature of a dilemma, namely, the need to decide between two positive but conflicting alternatives.

When planning the intervention programme, the students needed to coordinate what they were doing with the regular teacher of their practice class, with me, and sometimes with their specialization subject lecturer at the college if the dilemma involved an area such as reading or arithmetic. Coordination was not always straightforward, but they learned a lot from the responses of each of the professionals they consulted along the way, and the reasons they gave for approving or changing an activity.

I also learned things from the process of obtaining approval from the other professionals. More than once, I experienced the embarrassment of agreeing something with a student only to have it rejected by the class teacher. I can now see that the first step in crystallizing the dilemma subject must be to ask the practice class's regular teacher if she agrees to the implementation of the intervention in her classroom, since she is responsible for the children's learning. The next step in deciding if the student's subject is suitable is up to me. After this, the specialization subject lecturer from the college may enter the picture.

I was disappointed that the *strategy* chosen by most of the class students was to *only focus in depth on one side of the dilemma*. Very few decided to *address both sides* from the outset. I was uncertain whether this was because they were dealing with knotty issues, or because my syllabus lacked something. I decided to wait and see what happened when the

students began to apply their strategies. I thought that either the students would change their minds or that I would learn something from what they did which could help me to develop or enhance the syllabus.

Reflection on Teaching Units 1-6 from the 'Coping with Professional Dilemmas' syllabus

Reviewing the process so far, and my teaching methods for Units 1-6, I can see several turning points.

1. When it became clear that the students tended to 'blame' the practice class teacher for their difficulties in handling the children. During my years as a student supervisor with the college, students have complained to me about their practice class teacher's work. In our case, however, the intensity underlying the student's words, and the large number of students who were voicing criticism (despite working in different schools) led to me to seek an explanation. Analysis of their behaviour led me to conclude that the students were avoiding the unpleasantness of dealing with a complex educational issue, the dilemma. Understanding 'where they were coming from' allowed me to devise my own action methods for the future.

2. After the students had chosen the subject of their dilemma, it was discussed in class. I noticed that they consistently described how they felt about it emotionally before moving on to the cognitive element. Students used extremely emotional language to describe how the situation affected them emotionally and personally and only then analysed the situation with reference to the learned definition.

3. The students had to pass through all the stages I had devised before they were competent enough to develop their intervention programme. No shortcuts were possible, i.e. no one reached the intervention programme stage quickly, although of course, there were differences in their learning pace. I think the reason for this was the difficulty they had in trying to confront a complex professional situation while constructing their professional identity at the same time. This conclusion fitted in with my decision that we should teach the subject gradually, beginning in the first year and continuing through to the third year, in a limited fashion in the first two years and more extensively in the third year before entering employment.

Findings - Year 1 of Study – In College

The findings for every aspect of the approaches to coping with dilemmas (henceforth the 'categories') are described in Table 5.1.

141

Table 5.1 Analysis of Findings – In College - First Year of Study

		Ella	Limor	Lena	Fatma	Maya
A. Identifying the Dilemma	3. Making a connection between the definition of what constitutes a dilemma and the situation one is facing.	↗	↗	↗	↗	↗
	2. Defining the dilemma.					
	1. Sensing that a dilemma exists.					

		Ella	Limor	Lena	Fatma	Maya
B. Formulating the Dilemma	3. All dilemma indicators are present.	↗	↗	↗	↗	↗
	2. Some dilemma indicators.					
	1. All dilemma indicators are missing.					

		Ella	Limor	Lena	Fatma	Maya
C. Culture-Reference	3. Addressing the environment in its cultural context.	↗	↗	↗	↗	↗
	2. Relates the environment to own cultural context.					
	1. Lack of reference to cultural context.					

		Ella	Limor	Lena	Fatma	Maya
D. Relating to the Dilemma	3. Entirely linking the dilemma to own professional behaviour.	↗	↗	↗	↗	↗
	2. Partly linking the dilemma to own professional behaviour.					
	1. 'Blaming' others for the dilemma.					

142

		Ella	Limor	Lena	Fatma	Maya
E. Perceiving the Dilemma	3. Broadly perceives of all aspects of the dilemma.					
	2. Perceives some aspects of the dilemma.	↗	↗	↗	↗	↗
	1. Black and white perspective.					
F. Coping with Ambivalence	3. Student chooses intractable issues.					
	2. Student chooses to address difficult, but solvable issues.	↗	↗	↗	↗	↗
	1. Student chooses to deal with issues that promise success.					
G. Coping with Conflicting Values	3. Copes with the clash between all values involved in the dilemma	↗				
	2. Only addresses one of the values involved in the dilemma.		↗	↗	↗	↗
	1. Simplification of situation, relates to global values					
H. Expressing Emotions	3. Expresses emotions when handling dilemma					
	2. No cognitive-affective symmetry	↗	↗	↗	●	↗
	1. Student presents the dilemma ignoring the emotional dimension					
I. Choosing a Coping Strategy	3. Student fully addresses all aspects of the dilemma					
	2. Student addresses the entire dilemma but in a limited fashion	↗				
	1. Student addresses only one aspect of the dilemma		●	●	●	●

From Table 5.1 we can see that the five students progressed differently for each of the categories.

I will begin by describing the students' development in the various categories, then analyse each student's progress.

Analysis of student progress in the ten categories

A.   With Category A – **Identifying the Dilemma** – all five students advanced gradually from Level 1 to Level 3. Their progress was a prerequisite for investigating the dilemma that they later chose, since it was not possible to formulate a dilemma (Category B) or develop the other skills required for a comprehensive investigation of the dilemma without making the connection between the general definition of dilemma and the specific situation at school (Category B3).

B.   Category B – **Formulating the Dilemma** – similar in importance to Category A. Like the first step, formulation is a prerequisite for tackling the dilemma since the student cannot begin until she has clearly formulated the dilemma.

Unlike the first category, there were differences in the students' starting positions in the second category. My initial hypothesis was that once the five students had reached the highest level of the first category they would be able to formulate the dilemma at Level 2 at least. However, this was not the case. Three out of the five students did not incorporate the elements of the dilemma when trying to formulate it. Rather, they formulated it as though it were a regular problem. This meant that they were only at Level 1. Only two students incorporated some of the dilemma components (Level 2) in their formulations from the start. It is important to spend time studying each component separately, justifying how each component contributes to a situation being defined as a dilemma. Only at the end of the complete learning process were all the students able to formulate a dilemma at the standard of Level 3, i.e., formulate the dilemma addressing all its aspects.

C.   With Category C – **Culture Reference** – there were also differences in the students' starting points. From the start, Ella and Limor addressed the cultural

aspect of the dilemma, although initially, they analysed what was happening at school in the light of their personal cultural beliefs and opinions. I nevertheless defined their level as higher than that of the other students who, unlike them, expressed unequivocal opinions. I ranked them higher than the other students since the latter did not address the cultural aspect of the teaching environment in any way. Rather, they stuck to their opinions and failed to present the opinions of their work environment. On the other hand, Ella and Limor compared their own stance to the philosophy of their environment, which they rejected.

D.   Category D – **Relating to the Dilemma** – the content analysis showed that this category involved some unusual processes compared to the other categories. This confirms its dominant role in terms of the student's ability to cope with dilemmas. It took some time for students to identify dilemmas that they thought were interesting and wished to investigate. The dilemmas they initially chose were limited in scope. Indeed, within a few weeks of identifying their dilemmas, they had reverted to 'blaming' the regular teacher for creating it (Level 1). This may be interpreted in several ways as discussed in the analysis section. These explanations all relate to the students' obvious difficulty in formulating the situations as dilemmas, and their consequent need to rationalize that the difficult situation facing them was due to poor teaching by their mentor, the regular class teacher. However, all five students progressed from Level 1 to Level 3.

E.   Category E – **Perceiving the Dilemma** – none of the students reached Level 3 of perceiving the dilemma. This was apparently because the class discussions were not sufficient for them to reach the highest level (perceiving all components of the dilemma in a broad fashion). Nonetheless, I expect that when the students come to implement the plans described in the analysis section, they will reach Level 3.

F.   Category F – **Coping with Ambivalence** – as with Category E, coping with ambivalence was also too complicated for students and therefore none reached Level 3. By the end of the first year all the students had progressed from Level 1 to Level 2. This followed my request that they look for a situation that posed a dilemma for them. The students had difficulty coping with situations which can only be 'managed', but not fully resolved. There are many reasons for this, including the fact that they lack awareness that insoluble situations are part of

classroom life. However, I believe that teaching practice and encounters with insoluble situations can help them reach the highest level of coping with ambivalent situations.

G. Category G – **Coping with Conflicting Values** – when teaching this unit, I found that the starting point for all students in dealing with clashing values in a dilemma context was highly influenced by the humanistic values they had learned in their first year. When they began addressing dilemmas, they analysed every situation in terms of these humanistic values (Level 1). At the higher stage, when they had already been asked to select a dilemma, define, and formulate it, they naturally also needed to address the specific values that clashed in the dilemma. However, when it came to planning how to deal with the situation in practice, and to choosing a coping strategy, they opted only to address one value. This raises questions such as why do students who see that several values are clashing still choose to ignore some of them. I feel that they are still 'struggling' to see the situations as if they are problems. In the case of a problem, there is only one value. At any rate, their choosing one value as opposed to two indicates their difficulty in addressing what is happening. They seem to choose a value that they find easy to relate to, or one which they have already decided takes precedence over the other.

H. Category H – **Expressing Emotions** – by definition, a dilemma is a situation involving powerful, deep emotional content. Statman (1993) defines it as a powerful situation where the individual is helpless to the extent of feeling paralysed. A situation such as this invites the expression of emotions. One would assume that students would express their feelings in such complex situations. In practice, however, in terms of the students' emotional expression on the subject of dilemmas, I encountered no reference to 'emotional language', e.g., confusion, anger, frustration, etc., which would be appropriate to the situation and accurately reflect the feelings accompanying the dilemma.

My goal was to achieve symmetry between cognition and emotional expression (Level 3) since having a connection between thoughts and feelings is a prerequisite for coping with dilemmas fully and effectively.

As we can see from Table 5.1, at this juncture of coping with the dilemma, there is still a lack of symmetry between cognitive and emotional expression. In other words, there is still too much emphasis on the former. Although Fatma in particular had more difficulty than the others in expressing her emotions, I hoped that when she began to carry out her plan emotional issues would arise and balance would be achieved between the two modes of expression (Level 3).

I.   Category I – **Choosing a Coping Strategy** – the findings for this category were consistent with the students' behaviour in the other categories, e.g., coping with conflicting values. Here again, the students defined and formulated the two poles of the dilemma, but when it came to decisions regarding the coping strategy, they chose only to address one side of the dilemma. This led me to conclude that, at this point, they are unable to make the shift from the theory of coping with the dilemma learned in class to practice. As observed in the previous section, one reason for this difficulty may be that they choose to stay in the safe theoretical world and fear plunging into the professional field, particularly in its more complex aspects.

Table 5.1 shows that Ella was the only student in the group who expressed her intention of coping with the two poles of the dilemma.

Having analysed the students' progress with reference to the categories, the next section focuses on each individual student's progress. The analysis compares the similarities and differences between the students' methods of coping with dilemmas.

Findings analysis

Table 5.1 shows several interesting data regarding the students' progress. Some data indicate common achievements shared by all five students, while other data point to differences between them.

<u>Similarities</u>

Similarities were found for all students in the first four categories; however, there were even greater similarities between students in the last six categories. In the first four categories, the students managed to achieve the highest level in each category, while in the remaining categories, they still had a long way to go to reach the highest level of coping with professional dilemmas. Thus, in categories 5-10, most of the students only reached

Level 2. As noted earlier, the reason for this may be that they need practical experience in coping with dilemmas before they can reach the highest level of coping. Unlike the first four categories, which can be attained without practical work in the field, the last six categories relate to the school setting and test the students ability to take what was taught at college and apply it in practice.

Differences

The differences between the students are clearly indicated in Table 5.1.

We can see the different starting point of each student, and the progress each of them made in the various categories in the course of the year (for details see Appendix 3).

Implications *vis-à-vis* the proposed new section of the syllabus

When summarizing the first year of the study, i.e., the part I taught in college, I believe that the syllabus I had developed following many years of experience in supervising students and based on my knowledge of educational dilemmas, was appropriate to the goals I had set when planning the new syllabus. The syllabus stages corresponded to the stages I think students need to go through in order to grasp the main concept: the concept of dilemmas in general and professional dilemmas in particular.

The syllabus structure allowed the students to develop gradually, but not too rapidly. They moved forward systematically until they were able to plan how to cope with the dilemma which they themselves had identified in their teaching practice class.

Teaching the Subject in Year 2 of the Study (Y2004)

I learned a lot from teaching the syllabus in Year 1, and incorporated what I had learned in Year 2 (2004). This led to new emphases in certain sub-topics and a widening of the scope of the sub-topics, which had been too narrow in Year 1.
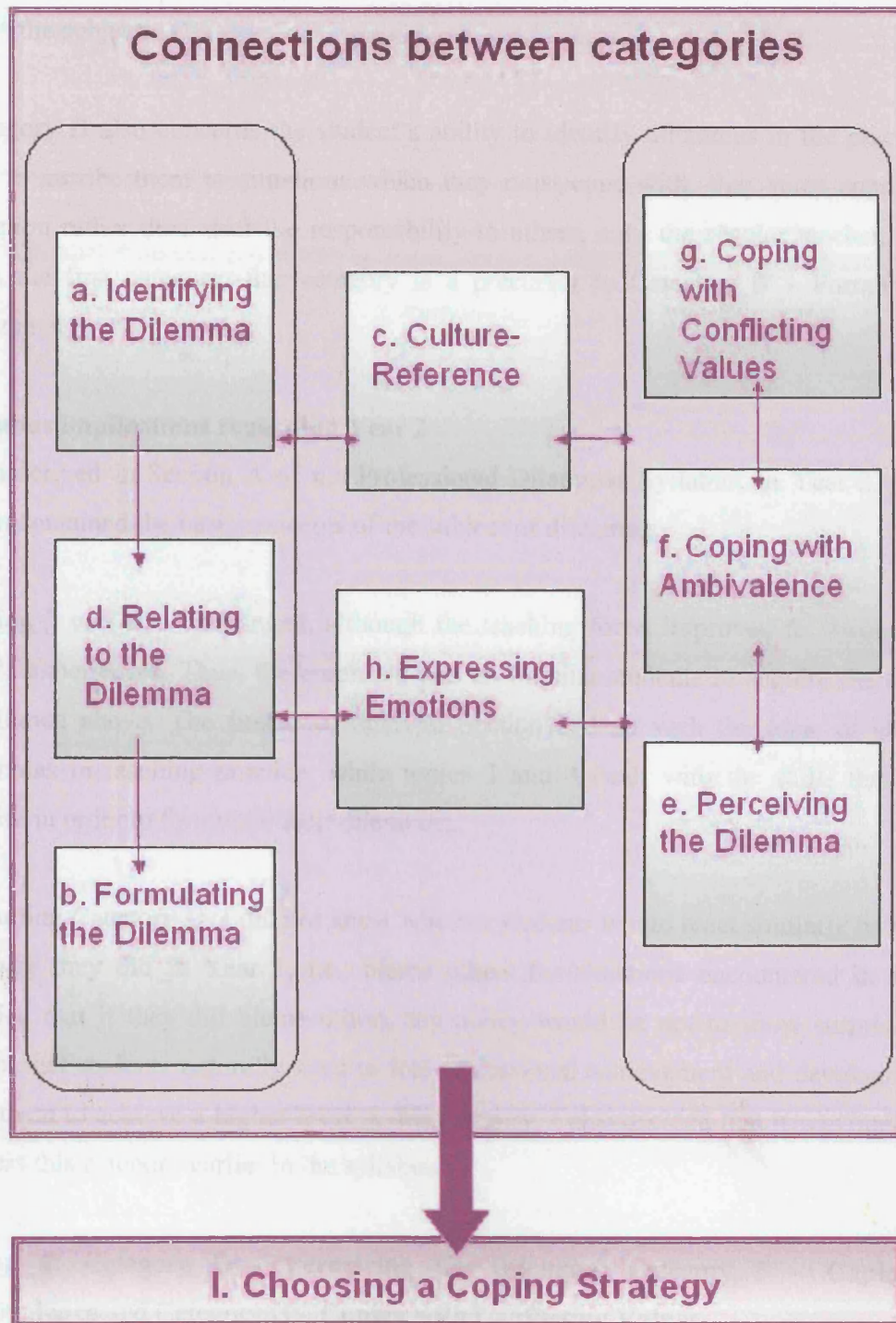
In Year 1 I discovered many things that needed changing or improving and these are described below divided into the following two sections:

1.   Connections between categories and future implications for teaching the subject.

2.   Innovations introduced in Year 2 of the study.

1.   <u>Connections between categories</u>

The categories chosen for analysing the teaching content can be divided into several groups. Figure 5.1 displays these groups and the connections between them.

Figure 5.1 Connections Between Categories – In College – First Year of Study

Connections between categories

- a. Identifying the Dilemma
- c. Culture-Reference
- g. Coping with Conflicting Values
- d. Relating to the Dilemma
- h. Expressing Emotions
- f. Coping with Ambivalence
- b. Formulating the Dilemma
- e. Perceiving the Dilemma

I. Choosing a Coping Strategy

Group 1: Category A – **Identifying the Dilemma**, Category B – **Formulating the Dilemma** and Category D – **Relating to the Dilemma**.

There is a relationship of **continuity and dependence** between the three categories. Thus, the second skill (Category B) progresses from the first, i.e., one cannot proceed to the second without mastering the first. The two skills together form the basis for continuing to learn the subject.

Category D also concerns the student's ability to identify dilemmas in the practice class and to ascribe them to situations which they must cope with: they must cope with the situation rather than shift the responsibility to others, e.g., the regular teacher. Together with the first category, this category is a precursor to Category B – Formulating the Dilemma.

Syllabus implications regarding Year 2

As described in Section A of the Professional Dilemmas Syllabus, in Year 2, Section 1 again contained the basic concepts of the subject of dilemmas.

Section 2 was also unchanged, although the teaching focus improved following the first year's experiences. Thus, the emphasis was on training students to acquire the two skills mentioned above. The first two topics in Section 2 dealt with the topic of identifying dilemmas in teaching practice, while topics 3 and 4 dealt with the skills that students require in order to formulate their dilemmas.

Regarding Category D, I did not know whether students would react similarly in Year 2 to the way they did in Year 1, i.e., blame others for situations encountered in school. I decided that if they did blame others, my policy would be not to show surprise, but to accept that students naturally need to feel professional achievement and development and help them to achieve a higher level in this category. I also decided that it was important to address this category earlier in the syllabus.

Group 2: Category E – **Perceiving the Dilemma**, Category F – **Coping with Ambivalence** and Category G – **Coping with Conflicting Values**.

The common denominator for the categories in the second group is that they all involve perceptions. This is unlike Group 1, which emphasizes practical skills. As with the Group 1 categories, in order to further students' understanding of these skills and their ability to apply the implications in school, I not only provided theoretical information, but also gave exercises and opportunities to practice identification and analysis. There is a dependent relationship between these categories. In other words, progress in one can lead to progress in the other two, and conversely, a lack of competence in one can impede progress in another. For example, regarding the category Coping with Ambivalence (F), the very definition requires an understanding of what constitutes a dilemma in all its facets (E) since a dilemma is an ambivalent situation. Thus, too, students who perceive a dilemma and are able to cope with its ambivalence will develop a capacity to cope with the conflicting values that cause the ambivalence (G).

Syllabus implications regarding Year 2

At the end of Year 1 I decided that, in Year 2, the syllabus would contain: Identifying the Dilemma, Formulating the Dilemma, Relating to the Dilemma, which would be particularly stressed in the first part of the syllabus – sections B and C. This is because these categories contribute to understanding the topics and sub-topics of these sections of the syllabus. Also, teaching Year 1 showed me the importance of stressing to students that often in education teachers face ambivalent or insoluble situations. By emphasising this, we can help students prepare for identifying and formulating ambivalent and insoluble situations in the field, allowing them to cope better and perceive all facets of the dilemmas they find. It also helps students avoid the illusion that every predicament in education can be solved, and help to avoid frustration and insecurity when facing problems at work.

Group 3: Category H – **Expressing Emotions** and Category C – **Culture Reference.**

No direct connection exists between these categories, and each therefore stands alone. However, they are nevertheless important categories which affect all topics in the syllabus. Let us examine each one separately.

Category H – **Expressing Emotions** - I dealt with the importance of emotional expression at all stages of coping with the dilemma in my analysis of this category's findings. These findings prompted me to change my method in Year 2 of the study.

Syllabus implications regarding Year 2

I encouraged students to express their feelings at the various 'stations' of the stages of coping with their dilemmas, for example, at the stage of identifying the dilemma in school, at the stage of formulating the dilemma, etc. In class, I found several ways of encouraging them to express their feelings about achievements, difficulties, excitement, crises, discoveries and new learning:

–   By giving examples from my own experiences; in class, I described my own feelings when faced with different educational issues (obviously within reason).

–   By giving positive feedback when students expressed feelings: I said how much I appreciated the openness.

–   By reflecting and mirroring verbally and in writing following my classes. Students reflected and shared thoughts and feelings on new things they learned in class. While this is the normal follow up after teaching practice, I put additional emphasis on 'emotional thinking' in my reporting sessions with students.

Category C – **Culture reference** - this category has implications regarding identifying the dilemma. Defining something as a dilemma is subjective and the definition will reflect the student's culture. Thus, there is a connection between the way the student handles the dilemma and the student's culture. It is reasonable to assume that the student brings the norms of her culture to how she addresses the dilemma. My experiences raised my awareness of the cultural factor. I believe that when a student tackles a professional dilemma, he or she should be aware of which of her opinions and behaviours relate to her own culture. She should also be aware of the culture of the school where she works and consider that culture.

Syllabus implications regarding Year 2

In Year 2, I tried to convey these new insights to the students and to help them define and handle their dilemmas while keeping their own culture and that of their pupils in mind.

Group 4: Category I – **Choosing the Coping Strategy**

As we see from Figure 5.1, the categories all lead the students to choose a strategy for coping with dilemmas. Regarding their choice, even though they formulated both sides of the dilemma (Category B), they announced that they would only tackle one (Category I). This was disappointing because I had initially believed that I would find a direct

connection between the two categories, i.e., that a high level of ability to formulate a dilemma would lead to a commensurate ability to cope with it.

Syllabus implications regarding Year 2

I learned from this, however, that in Year 2 I would need to encourage and help students in addressing both sides of the dilemma. To provide the necessary tools, I decided to provide examples of coping with both sides of a dilemma. I worked with the class, calling for suggestions for handling different dilemmas. We examined the pros and cons of the approaches suggested and methods of dealing with both sides of the dilemma.

My analysis at the end of Year 1 led to the following changes in my teaching approach in Year 2.

2. <u>Innovations introduced in Year 2 of the study</u>

A. For Year 2, I decided to provide students with more examples of professional dilemmas. This, together with classroom analysis and suggestions for coping, would help them to identify dilemmas and tackle them at school. I decided that from the beginning of the year I would analyse a dilemma in each class, and spend the first third of every lesson (about half an hour) analysing professional dilemmas. I decided to ask students to describe a dilemma encountered in teaching practice, explain why it posed a professional dilemma to them personally and which clashing values it entailed. I would ask the student to lead a class discussion allowing the class to share opinions, discuss whether this would also be a dilemma for them, substantiate their views, and suggest coping strategies. Besides broadening their knowledge, dilemma analysis would also shorten the path to identifying a dilemma

B. Another weakness in the original syllabus was that it did not require students to study the theoretical writing on strategies for coping with dilemmas. Although the literature does not say much about coping with dilemmas, there are certain items students should know which were not recommended in the original syllabus. This meant that their coping strategies were left purely to their intuition. Knowing the strategies available would help to broaden their professional knowledge and help them to choose which strategy to use themselves.

C.   Another issue which required improvement related to the various professionals who advised the students, helped them to find a subject for investigation and contributed to planning their intervention programme. For example, they reported that in many cases, after I had approved their subject, the regular teacher refused to let them investigate it in her class. Therefore, at the start of the college year, before students chose their dilemma, I met their teaching practice class teachers and provided written information on professional dilemmas – definitions and basic terminology, details of research on dilemmas, and approaches to coping with dilemmas. I ended the meeting by asking them to share stories of any professional dilemmas that they had encountered personally. These meetings were open, relaxed discussions about the subject the students were studying and how this related to the veteran teacher's own educational experiences.

After the introductory meeting, I met the regular teachers a second time during one of my regular visits to the school to observe the student's teaching practice. In this meeting, I explained the dilemma studies syllabus, the students' dilemma assignment, and my hope for the regular teacher's input as the student's professional development mentor. I also offered instruction and tutoring on helping and guiding the student as she chose her dilemmas and tried to synchronize expectations with the regular teachers. I wanted this to be a two-way process. I did not want to be the only one making requests. I wanted the regular teachers to say what they expected of the students: how they wanted them to work with their classes, how the students' work would benefit the children, and, in general, what they thought about working with the students and me, and what they thought about the students' research of the professional dilemma in particular.

I also changed the order in which the students met the professionals relating to investigating their dilemma. The new order was: first, the student spoke to the regular teacher, after that or at the same time, they discussed their idea with me for counselling. This differed from Year 1 when I told students they required my approval first and gave the regular teacher the last word. My main reason for changing the order was that the teaching practice class is the responsibility of the regular teacher. Having her agreement regarding the pertinence of the subject also increased the teacher's willingness to assist the student. Of course, where appropriate, I tried to convince the regular teacher that the dilemma topic was appropriate and important, although ultimately she had the last say. The idea was to involve the teacher in the student's work from the data gathering stage through to the conclusion of the student's intervention.

The college faculty specialist in the field relating to the student's dilemma only entered the picture after the regular teacher and I had agreed the subject. The college specialist helped by broadening the student's knowledge regarding the subject of her dilemma and assisting in constructing activities based on professional disciplinary knowledge.

Part B - From Theory to Practice – In the School

The purpose of the second part of the study unit is to implement the activities planned by the students for tackling their chosen dilemma. This is followed by the students' evaluation of the process they have undergone.

In this section, the findings relating to the implementation of the students' intervention programmes are presented and analysed. The programmes were carried out in the teaching practice classes in the schools where the five students representing the research population practised their teaching.

The data in this section were collected using four tools:

- My observation of the activities carried out by the students on the dilemma subject.
- Interviews that I conducted with the students chosen to represent the research population.
- Students' end of year papers
- Formal and informal conversations at college and in the school with the sampled students.

As with Part A – In College, a large quantity of data was gathered. It is naturally impossible to present it all and therefore a small representative sample is provided. Also, comments regarding the documenting of the process which appear in Part A (see p. 106) are applicable to this section.

The practical work described below was undertaken by the sample students between January 2003 and June 2003.

Reference to data analysis categories

The following list is a reminder of the categories used for analysis of the data gathered when the subject was taught on campus:

A.   Identifying the Dilemma

B.   Formulating the Dilemma

C.   Cultural Reference

D.   Relating to the Dilemma

E.   Perceiving the Dilemma

F.   Coping with Ambivalence

G.   Coping with Conflicting Values

H.   Expressing Emotions

I.   Choosing the Coping Strategy

For the three sub-categories for each of the main categories, which are ranked from the lowest (Level 1) to the highest (Level 3), see pp. 62-67.

For our work in school it was necessary to revise the categories. The first two categories used in college were no longer relevant; similarly, two new categories had to be added. Below is a revised list showing the categories used in school:

A.   Culture Reference

B.   Relating to the Dilemma

C.   Perceiving the Dilemma

D   Coping with Ambivalence

E.   Coping with Conflicting Values

F.   Expressing Emotions

G.   Critical Thinking

H.   Practical Dilemma Management.

The two categories no longer relevant are *Identifying the Dilemma* and *Formulating the Dilemma*. These categories were very dominant when the subject was studied in college. The students I taught spent a long time learning and applying these two skills, but now that they have found and formulated the dilemmas they wish to investigate, they are ready for the task of actually managing the dilemma. For this reason, these categories will not be

addressed in this chapter. Regarding a third category, *Choosing a Coping Strategy,* this section deals with the continuation of this category. In Part A, students chose a strategy for coping with a dilemma. This section examines their practical ability to manage a dilemma and the new category is called *Practical Dilemma Management.* As with the other categories, this one also contains three levels:

Level 1 - managing the issue at one end of the dilemma and ignoring the issue at the other.

Level 2 – when the student relates to the two ends of the dilemma asymmetrically, i.e., pays considerable attention to the subject at one end and less attention to the subject at the other end of the dilemma.

Level 3 – the third and highest level is when the dilemma issue is taught while appropriately addressing the issues at both ends of the dilemma.

After observing the students conducting the activities related to this study and reading their reflections after the activities, a new category emerged – *Critical Thinking.* I realized that this way of thinking helps students to cope with the dilemmas at different levels. Critical thinking involves a wide range of skills and talents, such as cognitive flexibility or objective and careful analysis of the evidence relating to dealing with a particular issue. Again, this category has three levels.

Level 1 -at the lowest level, students do not demonstrate any critical thinking skills.

Level 2 - at the intermediate level there is an identifiable ability to utilize critical thinking when coping with the dilemma.

Level 3 - at the highest level of critical thinking there is a significant contribution to the student's handling of the dilemma.

Data Analysis for Part B

Identification of secondary dilemmas

From the start of the students' efforts to cope with their dilemmas and from their work with the children, I observed a number of behaviours that were characteristic of all five students. Firstly, they all sharpened the dilemmas they had formulated. They sought and found additional expressions of their dilemma in the children's behaviour, which helped them to sharpen their focus. Secondly, they reported that, in the course of their work, they came across other dilemmas that were related to the original dilemma they had found. These

were in fact sub-dilemmas or branches of the main dilemma which stimulated the students to think and talk about them and wonder how to deal with them.

The following are some of these new dilemmas. The examples were chosen from the students' final projects and following my discussions with them.

Ella

Ella underwent several stages. The first stage was that she formulated a dilemma that she identified in class. The second stage was that she decided to study the dilemma in depth and read large amounts of bibliographic material. Once she had broadened her knowledge, she formulated additional dilemmas.

Her initial dilemma formulated was **How can we help the children who have not got friends to make friends without interfering with their peers' right to choose their own friends?** In her final paper, she explained: "The aim of my intervention was to encourage friendships between children, especially children who had no friends in the class. I saw my role as helping them adjust to new children, although I believe one should not interfere with the children's right to chose their friends based on personal chemistry and should not pressure them to befriend those they are not interested in".

After formulating this dilemma, Ella read material on the subject of children's friendships. She learned several things from her reading: firstly, that there is a connection between children's development and their ability to make friends. In fact, the developmental stage of very young children does not allow them to understand what real friendship is. Another thing she learned was that despite this, even at preschool age, a friend is a source of emotional support, especially in the transition from preschool to primary school. The two conclusions seemed contradictory and led to a **secondary dilemma** for Ella, directly related to the primary dilemma and naturally stemming from it. The dilemma was: **What is a suitable way of helping the children to make friends – one that is appropriate to the children's developmental stage – without "sabotaging" their free choice?**

When I discussed this with Ella, I asked her what she intended to do with the new information she had learned regarding childhood development. She replied that it was important to be aware of this angle and that she wanted to be able to identify factors

relating to early childhood development if they appeared when she was working on her dilemma. When she identified them, she added, she would decide how to respond.

Analysis

In my opinion, identifying additional dilemmas related to the primary dilemma indicates an improvement in ability to *cope with ambivalence*. Ella has now reached the third level. She is no longer anxious about facing this kind of situation, but rather wishes to analyse all aspects of it. It is indeed clear that Ella had specifically chosen ambiguous situations and had not been drawn into them unwillingly. Moreover, it is evident that her *perception of the dilemma* is broader than before. It meets the highest level criteria (Level 3). That this is a high level is indicated by the fact that Ella has found a new element directly connected to the dilemma, which she has decided to address; she is not simply satisfied with what she had initially identified. In addition to these two characteristics, I think there is also an expression here of *critical thinking*. This form of thinking caused her to add important additional data to the existing data she had. She was able to expand her ideas to embrace other ideas, which had a greater chance of being effective.

Limor

Limor decided that the subject of her dilemma was: **Should we try to educate children in prudent consumerism when their home and social environment exemplifies irresponsible consumerism?** She subsequently identified two more dilemmas that were directly connected to her principal dilemma. The first of these was: **How could one teach very young children about saving and budgeting without making them anxious and tense about the unknown?** Another question that occurred to her was: **Would educating them about prudent consumerism lead to a power struggle between the children's home education and the education she wished to offer?**

In our discussions, Limor explained that when she observed the children in her class closely, she discovered just how widespread this behaviour was, i.e., the lack of respect for belongings. She had therefore decided that it was important to teach the children prudent consumerism. She thought that teaching them this would help them to value property, develop an awareness of saving money, teach them respect for property, and possibly inculcate new values. On the other hand, however, she knew that the children were not brought up to be careful, which led to a fresh dilemma: **Whether it was a good idea to expose the children to unfamiliar ideas at a very young age.** She hoped she would find

answers and resolve the dilemma by reading on the subject of prudent consumerism, but found nothing applicable to very young children and the type of background she was dealing with. She therefore decided to develop her own intervention programme and at every stage address the main dilemma bearing the three additional dilemmas in mind. In other words, she would examine the effect of the intervention on the children's behaviour and on how the parents responded to her efforts.

Analysis

The two categories referred to in the data analysis for Ella apply here too. Limor also 'gave herself' two more *ambiguous* situations to deal with by formulating her two sub-categories. She can now see more issues than those she perceived initially and has a wider *perception* of the dilemma. Her *critical thinking* caused her to formulate her secondary dilemmas, and these will help her when examining the context of her present and future data and help her to analyse the data while carefully considering all relevant factors. Based on the appropriate context, this judgment will naturally be more logical and appropriate. In her formulation of the second sub-dilemma, there is a clear attempt to address the children's *culture* (Level 3) rather than just teach them what she thinks is right regardless of their background. Since Limor is only just starting to address her dilemma, we will later examine whether, in practice, she does consider the children's cultural background.

Intervention Programme Focus

After expanding their initial dilemmas and identifying additional, associated dilemmas, the students proceeded to draw up the main goals of their interventions.

Lena

When Lena formulated her dilemma – **How could one educate with regard to gender equality in a patriarchal Arab society?** – she planned activities where the primary goal was to try to educate pre-school age Arab children regarding gender equality. To achieve this she formulated six intervention goals:

- Encouraging boys and girls to cooperate with each other in play with gender stereotypical roles, for example, cooking or dice games.
- Actively involving parents in reaching the primary goal.
- Changing children's gender related behaviour.
- Stressing equality in the careers of both men and women.
- Reinforcing the idea of equality in men and women who have senior roles.

• Discussing the equal rights and duties of both parents.

When explaining her reasons for choosing these goals, she quoted Abu Bakar (1998) who wrote:

> "Anyone observing the education of Israeli Arab children will observe tremendous efforts to adopt a modern life style. This is both conscious and selective. At the same time there are mechanisms which thwart educational efforts and the road to gender equality in Arab society is still long."

She reported that, as an Arab woman, she saw it as her mission to help in reaching the important goal of reducing the gap between Jews and Arabs in terms of equality between men and women.

Analysis

Examination of Lena's intervention goals show that the actual *management of the dilemma* is not symmetrical in terms of the two ends of the dilemma, but focuses mainly on one and hardly at all on the second. The subject that she formulated at the second end is reflected in her desire to involve the children's parents in her intervention. Lena sees the parents as "representatives of the patriarchal society" which lies at one end of the dilemma. Because of her method of coping with the dilemma, mainly with the subject at one end of it, Lena mainly chose to address *one value*, namely the importance of teaching Arab children about gender equality. In my discussions with her, she explained that, since she had rejected her society's gender related behaviour, she found it hard to relate to these values in addition to the new ones that she presented to the children. The method of coping Lena used was appropriate to Level 2 of the *Cultural Reference* category. In other words, she was trying to present her culture to the children while disparaging their culture. The data analysis led me to conclude that Lena was also at the second level in terms of dealing with ambivalence. She taught the subject in a way that she felt was relatively 'safe' and not too difficult. Her *perception of the dilemma* was also Level 2 since it only encompassed some of the elements of the dilemma and not all of them comprehensively.

In-depth study of the children's behaviour with reference to the dilemma

Having identified their primary dilemma and discovered certain secondary dilemmas, the students began to explore the literature on their topic and carried out two exploratory activities to test/practise the activities of their intervention programmes. Naturally, in the course of their teaching practice, they started paying more attention to classroom situations

relating to their subject of investigation. It was evident that they were very interested and focused on investigating and studying the behaviour of the children in their subject. Some of this study was unplanned, at other times it was planned and supplemented what they had already learned. One of the main tools students used for deliberate study was focused observation on the children's behaviour.

Fatma

Conducted observations of her class when the children worked in groups. Each group of children was given a different task by the teacher. Fatma made detailed notes of what she saw and heard. She provided me with a description of her observation and her interpretation of what she had seen to give me an idea of the type of verbal communication common in her class and for me to advise her on how to proceed with her intervention (after she had already conducted a number of the activities). The following is an excerpt from her observation.

The children were not sitting despite being told to sit. Some were wandering around the classroom others were standing, talking near their friends' desks. Two girls were playing and dancing. The classroom was very noisy. Children were laughing and talking very loudly. It was hard to hear anything.

A   You idiot, don't tell her!

B.   You know, you are a real moron!

C.   Shut your mouth, that's not true!

D.   That game wasn't fair, you cheated!

E.   Shut your mouth you moron, or I'll hit you!

The teacher tried to introduce a new reading topic.

F. (Yells) Teacher, why didn't they give us books?

Teacher – Some children have not paid for them yet.

Fatma described what this observation taught her. She wrote: "This class is a very special class. Relatively, it is different from the previous classes I have taught. The children are very noisy; they do not seem focused although they are constantly busy. The relationship between the children does not seem good because they speak terribly to each other. Their

style of communication is confrontational, abusive and lacking respect". She added: "I was surprised to see that the teacher continued writing on the board but did not react much to the noise. I then realized that she just wanted to occupy the children with writing to reduce the noise level".

Fatma was critical about the lack of communication between the children, particularly their verbal abusiveness.

In analysing her observation she repeated her opinion that the children were imitating patterns of communication witnessed at home (the first time was when she formulated the dilemma at college). For this reason, she was doubtful about succeeding to any great extent in changing a deeply rooted style of behaviour. She said that even if she did succeed, the children's new behaviour would not have continuity in their homes, and if this were so, her success would be very limited. However, she really wanted to address the problem, hoping to find some way to really change the children's behaviour and influence them deeply. She asked me how I thought she could best achieve her goals, taking the children's background into account.

Analysis

She adhered to her formulation of the dilemma, which involved the two ends of the dilemma. Fatma was aware of the two subjects at either end. In referring to the children's home backgrounds, she was in fact presenting the values found at each end of the dilemma. From her analysis, it was clear that she was still seeking a way of coping with the dilemma and was not sure that she would be able to.

My reflection

The analysis of my students' behaviour in coping with their dilemmas reveals that the most important skills cover several category groups. The first group of categories comprises *coping with ambivalence, coping with conflicting values* and *perceiving the dilemma.* These categories were also involved in the in college stage of learning about the subject. At that stage, I decided which level each student had reached, based on what she said and how she expressed her ideas in my pedagogic supervision classes.

Now, when analysing the new findings, I could address each student's level for each category based on actual performance in the classroom. The analysis pointed to differences

between them. I realized that because of their practical work, some had advanced to the highest level, while others needed more experience in order to improve. Since they had only just begun the practical side of the work, and since their planned activities still lay ahead, I realized that the picture was not final and that changes would emerge. In other words, it was not yet possible for me to estimate each student's ability to tackle the dilemma. I realized that some students would improve, while for others a gap would open up between their past and present progress. I also realized that working with the children would be intensive and intellectually demanding, and would require decisions both inside and outside the classroom together with a practical capacity to cope with changes.

I had already noted the need for the abovementioned skills in the analysis of the data obtained in college, but I felt it again more urgently. These skills are actually milestones for the next group of categories, which concern the practical skills for coping with dilemmas and a high level of critical thought. Each student requires this type of thinking to analyse the various situations and reach appropriate decisions. So far, the five students appear to have different levels in these two categories. Later, when they implement their intervention plans, I will examine the development of each student's ability to manage her dilemma. I will also monitor the relationship between the level of critical thinking as reflected in their work and the level of actual dilemma management practice.

The third group of categories are: *Relating to the culture* and *Expressing emotions*. Both of these categories are pertinent in a minor way in this section, although the latter is less pertinent than the former. I consider that the reason for this is the students' lack of awareness that they need to express emotions. Whatever the reason, this is something I will have to work on with the students next year.

After the students had conducted several activities to test their interventions, they improved and sharpened their intervention goals and continued with their intervention. The programmes consisted of 10-12 units of teaching. Each unit had both class activities and activities with smaller groups. The aim of the activities was to tackle "problematic" situations that the students had identified and defined as dilemmas. At the end of each activity, the students had to reflect on what had happened.

I learned a lot about the way they coped with their dilemmas from my observations of the activities and from reading their written reflections on the activities. I will present and

analyse two activities for three of the students as an illustration of the rest of the activities they conducted.

Analysis of students' intervention activities

Maya

Maya's second activity was called *Dreams of Pharaoh's Servants in the Prison* (her dilemma was how to teach the Bible experientially and also meet the Ministry of Education's demands for academic achievement). This activity had several goals:

- To teach the Bible text, and interpret it from the child's perspective using the child's terms not just the teacher's.
- To encourage the children to offer interpretations after reading the text.
- To express feelings and opinions regarding the story.

The entire class was involved in the activity, which is summarized below:

- Maya reminded the children what they had learned in the previous lesson.
- Afterward, the children reread the story.
- Different children interpreted the text. They extracted different elements from the story which related to the dreams. Maya wrote these on the board.
- The children tried to anticipate what would happen next in the following chapter of the story.
- The children summarized the chapter and Maya wrote the summary on the board.

The activity took a whole lesson and in the following lesson, the children were given creative assignments using different materials based on their work on the chapter. The assignments were pinned on the board along with the text describing the story of the dreams.

The creative assignment

Each child chose one or more of the dreams and drew it on cardboard or paper using the material prepared. The children split into groups and each group used different materials. When working, many of the children returned to the text of the dreams. Different types of work emerged: some used a single type of material, others used a variety; some focused on one dream, others on more than one.

<u>Maya's reflection</u>

This is what Maya wrote in her reflection on the activities: "In this lesson, I used the same method as the regular teacher, but with two differences: the first was that I avoided interpreting the text for the children, allowing them instead to interpret it independently. The other difference was the creative work, which I introduced after we studied the text. If I compare this lesson to other lessons that I taught on biblical stories, I find that in the previous two, I invested a lot of effort, mainly in the discussion following the story. However, despite my efforts, the children were not interested in the discussion and I lost them. I felt they had not absorbed the material.

This contrasts with the last lesson, when I asked the children to express what they had learned creatively. They really came to grips with the material by themselves and provided their own interpretations. It seems they made an effort to understand what the text said. Another explanation of the difference in lessons is that the discussion format is inappropriate for very young children. At this developmental stage, children learn by using tangible materials such as the artistic tools I provided. However, discussion can also be experiential, at least in allowing children to voice their feelings. Nevertheless, it seems that it is still too intellectual or not sufficiently experiential and therefore cannot stimulate the children's interest enough for them to inquire into the material".

Maya's last activity was titled *The Story of Joseph*. Its goal was to summarize the stories involving Joseph in a comic style. This involved listing the sequences of events in the story of Joseph using details supplied by the children. Afterwards the children were asked to choose either a story about Joseph or the entire sequence of stories written up and draw them in comic style.

<u>Maya's reflection</u>

This is what Maya wrote in her reflection: "The children cooperated nicely. They were interested in what they were doing and the outcome was appealing and attractive. Their work reflected their personal interpretation of the Bible story. The genre (comics) let them relate to the original text through a familiar language. Most, if not all, of the children had never written a story in comic strip style. The comic strip has numerous advantages, which were all evident in the children's work. The style is almost like a film or drama in that it combines visuals and text. It is also useful for teaching the concept of sequence. It helps to develop the ability to filter information and perceive areas of primary and secondary focus.

I was pleased at having helped the children. I think that for the first time they enjoyed what they were learning and had a chance to express themselves. However, when I considered using this approach in the school for other subjects, I realized that an up-down change would be needed in how teaching is perceived: from the teacher in the field to the Ministry of Education, which dictates the requirements for academic achievement and constructs the curriculum. A lone teacher wishing to put this approach into practice, or even a single school, might meet criticism from the Ministry of Education since this type of teaching cannot be measured using the measurements demanded.

Analysis

Having seen both lessons, we find that while Maya has identified and formulated the dilemma and identified the conflicting values, she has chosen to focus on just one aspect of the dilemma, namely, teaching Bible Studies creatively using a different approach to the one used by the class's regular teacher. I consider this a very low level of *practical dilemma management* (Level 1). Moreover, at the end of her paper, she justifies her choice of this strategy by *blaming others* (Category D), for example, the Ministry of Education, thus rationalising her choice instead of tackling the dilemma.

Limor

Limor also planned and carried out activities designed to tackle her dilemma "Should we try to educate children in prudent consumerism when their home and social environment exemplifies irresponsible consumerism?"

Her first activity dealt with saving. Her aim was to introduce the children to saving and its benefits and have them organize a piggy bank. First, Limor worked on the activity with a group of children. She read them a story titled *Saving...* by Iris Melamed. The story is about a child who decided to save his pocket money. Limor asked the children what they thought 'saving' meant. They discussed the advantages and disadvantages of saving pocket money. The children learned additional terms related to the subject, for example, smart consumerism, etc. At the end of the activity, the children made piggy banks from plastic cartons and other materials.

<u>Limor's reflection</u>

This is what Limor wrote in her reflection: "I taught this activity twice, to two different groups. Different things happened in each group. With the first group, after I finished the story, I asked why the mother in the story did not buy what the child wanted. The children offered all kinds of suggestions: the child had many similar toys at home, or the mother was in a hurry and did not have time. It never occurred to any of them that the mother could not afford the toy or that it was too expensive. The children's answers showed how remote they were from reality and that my intervention could help them develop social consciousness.

With the second group, I expected to hear similar things but was surprised at the children's responses. I assumed that the children's answers would reflect their parents' ideas and I found that the children in the second group were aware of the cost of items and even talked about purchasing considerations. I felt I had wronged them by assuming they could be so dogmatically defined as profligate spenders. I discovered that in this class too, not everything is black and white and that here too, we can see in the children's answers different shades of the population. In fact, the children I thought were highly representative of the population were the ones who talked about how much things cost and not wasting money. The differences between the children helped me to see another side of their parents' attitudes on the subject. Although the children had fun making the piggy banks, I could see that much more work was needed to give them a thorough understand of savings."

After teaching this subject, Limor taught a summarizing activity. The purpose of this was to summarize the topic of prudent consumerism and revise the basic concepts they had learned. The activity was planned after discussion with the children.

One child suggested presenting the subject they had learned to the parallel class. Because most of the children supported this idea, it was agreed. The class was divided into four groups. Each group presented the main points of the subject to the parallel class, explaining the steps they had taken to reach their insights. The children talked about the new concepts they had learned, the activities they liked best, what they had produced, and the classroom corner.

Limor wrote in her reflection: "I was very excited when each group chose to present a different subject. One group chose to research two similar products, another group talked about the stories I had told them when I taught the subject, a third group talked about the piggy banks. With hindsight, I think this was the most significant activity the children experienced in my intervention. From my standpoint, the way the children prepared what they were going to tell the other class, their presentation of the material and their answers to the other children's questions allowed me to assess how well my class had internalized the material. I was pleased to see how enthusiastic and eager the children were to tell their peers what they had learned."

Analysis

Limor is at Level 2 of *dilemma management*. Although she relates to both facets of the dilemma, one facet is nevertheless very dominant; the dominant facet concerns teaching the subject of prudent consumerism. Regarding the second facet, Limor addressed differences in the children's knowledge and background (most evident in the first activity described above). Later, she modified the activities she taught taking these differences into account. Through her management of the dilemma, she confronted her *conflicting values*, though not in great depth. She spent most of the time dealing with the value most important for her, namely respect for property.

Limor *expressed emotions* (Level 2) regarding her work. She discussed her feelings and hardships and demonstrated *critical thinking*, seen in her ability to think differently as she progressed to when she first started out. This is especially marked in her reflection on the first activity; as soon as she discovered new data, she analysed and addressed them in teaching the subject.

Lena

The fifth activity conducted by Lena, whose dilemma concerned gender equality education in a patriarchal Arab society, was called *Daddy Reads to Me As Well*. The activity involved two goals: first to change the pattern of thinking in Arab society (Lena's society) that only mothers read children stories, not fathers. The second goal was to inform parents that their children were being taught about gender equality.

Lena asked the children to choose books from the class library and take them home. They were also given a questionnaire for their father to complete after reading them a story.

Lena's reflection

Lena wrote, "The activity tried to involve the father. This, however, did not pan out as expected and I plan to repeat the exercise. The children were worried about taking the books home because they did not think their fathers would read to them – even though I sent a letter home asking their fathers to read to them. Moreover, only a few parents completed the questionnaire. The children reported that some of their parents had not completed it despite being reminded by the children. In class, I talked to the children about how they felt when their father read to them. A few children took part in this discussion and said it was a positive and special experience. However, I learned a lot from this difficult exercise. Firstly, I learned that there is a chance of changing the children's attitudes, although I cannot be sure of influencing their parents. My programme will take this extreme scenario of no parental cooperation into account".

Lena's sixth intervention activity was *Daddy Also Deserves a Present*. Its aim was to try to change the children's attitudes and encourage them to treat their parents equally, for example, give them equal respect.

To achieve this, Lena read the children a story called *Iman and Mother's Day*. She asked why there was only a Mothers' day and why fathers did not have a special day. She asked them describe their behaviour towards their parents and whether they saw a connection between each parent's role and how they are treated. After the discussion, Lena asked the children to write a sequel to the story. They rewrote the story substituting 'father' for 'mother' throughout. The story ended with the little girl wishing to buy her father a present.

Lena's reflection

Lena wrote: "The activity went according to plan. It focused on respecting parents. I tried to steer the discussion to the conclusion that both parents should be given the same amount of respect. As expected, many children thought there were differences in the way they should treat their parents. Some children said their mother deserved a present more than their father because she did the most housework. I wanted them to see things from a different perspective. The fact that the activity involved them in something that I could see

they enjoyed, in a way helped to change their attitudes and at least made them think and maybe challenged their usual beliefs.

Analysis

Both Lena's activities show that Lena's *management of the dilemma* addressed both facets. She taught the children about gender equality while not ignoring their home education. When teaching the subject, she occasionally encountered difficulties, as seen in the first activity. However, from the second activity, we see that she came up with other ideas for achieving her goals. We also see that she *coped with conflicting values*. From the way Lena tackled the dilemma, it seems she wanted, and was prepared, to tackle *ambiguous situations*. There is also evidence of *critical thinking*; she displayed honesty, cognitive flexibility and willingness to build on experience.

My reflection

I was very pleased to note the enthusiasm with which my students planned and executed the activities for the subjects they had chosen. Beyond the dilemma they had chosen to tackle, it was clear that after researching their subject well they had applied themselves to planning their teaching unit equipped with information and the motivation to work with the children and try to bring about an improvement in their chosen subject. I have served as a pedagogic instructor for many years and in the past, third year students had planned and researched teaching subjects. Never before had I experienced the feeling of satisfaction that I had this year. I felt that this year the subject was not trivial or simplistic or repeating the same old things that students had worked on many times in the past. The topics this time were unusual, non-routine, and importantly, stemmed from the real needs of the children. The students' work on dilemmas was longer than past projects and their standard of reflection was also higher. They shared their difficulties more, deliberated more, and drew more meaningful conclusions than students in the past.

From the analysis of the students' activities, I could already see different ways in which they tackled their dilemmas emerging. These differences were reflected in the different levels in the various categories. During her intervention programme, Ella was coping at the highest level, while Fatma, although working very well with the children, did not address the two facets of the dilemma. Regarding the other students, I monitored their work in order to form a clear-cut opinion. At the same time, I suggested that the students come and

speak to me again if they needed to make alterations in their programmes in light of the activities already undertaken.

Modifications to intervention programmes following activities

Three of the five students studied made new discoveries in the course of their work. These led to changes in their intervention programmes. The changes affected the way these students perceived the dilemma in general, and in particular influenced the planning and implementation of the remainder of the programme. The following describes the changes made by two of the students.

Ella

Began her programme systematically, following her original plan. As she progressed, she asked questions and tackled the primary and secondary dilemmas that concerned her. Part of the way through the intervention (after five activities), and after reflecting on her achievements to date, she decided to make several changes to her plan. The reason for this was that she realized that the activities had not produced the desired result, namely helping children with difficulties socializing to make friends without infringing on their liberty to choose their own friends. Her first change was to encourage the children to get together outside the school setting by meeting in each other's houses to work on school assignments on the dilemma issue. This involved:

- Agreeing the time and place for the children to meet.
- Producing a task sheet for the children who worked at home.
- Asking the children to prepare written and verbal reports on their work in each other's homes, focusing on their experiences of working together and the new friends they had made through their assignments.

Another modification to her original plan aimed to find a compromise solution to her dilemma; this involved shuffling the children's work groups to form new groups based on different sets of criteria. For example, she formed two groups, one of children who wanted to make new friends but had not, the other of children who were best friends and enjoyed playing together and shared emotional closeness. This was after administering a questionnaire to the children which showed her that some children had no major problems socializing, but were not always successful in making friends with the children they wanted to be friends with.

Analysis

The changes Ella made very clearly showed her high level of competence in *managing the dilemma*. She was alert and responsive to new situations that arose, drew conclusions and made appropriate decisions. She also showed resourcefulness and willingness to confront difficulties. These all point to a high level of competence in *critical thinking* and to an ability to learn from this type of thinking. We see that she did not give up when faced with new and *ambiguous situations*. Moreover, the above description clearly shows that Ella is aware of which part of the activity is a response to which of the *conflicting values*.

Limor

Limor also reported a change in the course of her intervention programme. When she began working with the children, she thought that since all had extremely wealthy homes, they would display uniformity in their attitude to spending and particularly their attitude to prudent consumerism. When working on her programme she became aware of differences in the way the children thought about material consumption and understood that they had different attitudes towards money, saving and spending decisions. This was reinforced further following interviews with some of the children and during one activity in which she asked the children about decisions when they went to the supermarket alone and with their parents. Some said that there was no rule dictating their purchasing decisions – they bought what they saw. However, there were also children who did examine price tags and think about whether a purchase was necessary.

In her final paper, Limor wrote: "I expected to find heterogeneous behaviour but was quite surprised at the differences between them. After collecting my data I thought none of the children were aware of concepts such as saving or cost considerations. I thought this would all be news for them. Then I discovered that there is no such thing as homogeneity. The class may share common characteristics, but there are also different levels and expressions of whichever quality in different children". This discovery influenced the remainder of Limor's programme. She planned activities on different levels of understanding the concepts, taking into account the different levels of knowledge in the children.

Analysis

Limor's development process indicates that she tackled both facets of the dilemma. She 'listened' to the new discoveries she made regarding the two facets. In the paragraph

above, her discovery concerned the facet of the irresponsible nature of the children's home culture. However, during most of her work, she in fact addressed the second facet. Thus, her approach to the two facets was not symmetrical and she preferred tackling the facet of the need to teach prudent consumerism. Limor's *dilemma management* shows that she did try to tackle the *conflicting values* of the dilemma, as we see from the paragraph above, while stressing one value and focusing less on the second (Level 2). The content analysis indicates her capacity for *critical thinking*. She demonstrated cognitive flexibility and an ability to take new information into account, e.g., the information described in the paragraph above.

Finding the 'solution to the dilemma'

At the conclusion of their intervention, it was clear how much each student had attempted to implement their original strategies; the following three descriptions illustrate this.

Ella

From the planning stage, Ella wished to tackle both facets of the dilemma – and this is what she did. In both the planning and implementation of the intervention, we see how she shifted from tackling one facet of the dilemma to tackling the other. In our discussions during her interviews, and from reading her final paper, it was clear how she swung from one value – the teacher's responsibility for the children's welfare – to the second value – the right of the individual to choose, even when that individual is a child. This oscillation between values is voiced in Ella's written reflection following each activity. In some reflections, including the one quoted in this section (regarding the changes in the intervention programme), Ella described they way she changed her programme because she also wanted to address the second facet of the dilemma and not only address one side of it.

Analysis

Ella's solution for her dilemma involved compromise. She *managed the dilemma* on a high level. A dilemma, unlike a problem, cannot be solved (according to some theories). Therefore, she aspired to cope with the problematic situation she had identified in her classroom in the best possible way.

Maya

At the planning stage, Maya showed a very high level in her formulation of a dilemma with two facets, her identification of important secondary dilemmas and her perception of the conflicting values. However, throughout the intervention, she only addressed one facet of the dilemma. She planned teaching activities for teaching the Bible experientially. She studied the contribution of this teaching method to the children and compared it to the regular teacher's method. However, I found little treatment of the second facet of the dilemma, which queries whether teachers can strive for high academic results while using an experiential approach to teaching that rejects time constraints. Throughout her programme, she did not address the academic achievement side of the equation, and only referred to this part in her conclusions. In her conclusions, Maya stated that the dilemma could be resolved if the Ministry of Education's priorities were altered. She thought that without a comprehensive change in the national education system, no effective solution to her dilemma would be possible.

Analysis

Maya's solution is to bury her head in the sand – perhaps this is because she cannot decide how to deal with the challenge and this is the easiest way out, or perhaps she has difficulty coping with *ambiguous* situations despite having initially formulated them at a very high level. There could also be another reason I am unaware of.

Fatma

Fatma failed to address the second facet of the dilemma in her intervention. For example, in her reflection she only discussed the children's progress in one facet of the dilemma; in other words, she analysed her progress in one facet, namely improving the children's style of verbal communication, but failed to address the second facet – the children's home environment and its impact on her intervention.

Analysis

Fatma's *dilemma management* strategy was to partially *ignore* it. She was very dedicated to teaching her chosen subject, but ignored its impact, if any, on the children's social and home environment. Her chosen dilemma may have been too complex for a student to handle, causing her to ignore the part that was too difficult.

Student evaluations of their interventions

After completing their intervention programmes, the students were required to evaluate the process they had experienced from the stage of planning how to tackle the dilemma to the stage of implementing the plan. The evaluation focused on three areas:

- The children's progress following the intervention programmes.
- The role of the professional literature in coping with the dilemma.
- Self-evaluation of their level of handling the dilemma.

I will now review two students' analyses of the three areas of evaluation.

Maya

A.   Evaluation of pupil achievements

Maya identified several goals regarding planning and implementing her intervention on teaching Bible Studies experientially. Some of her goals were fully realized; others could not be assessed from the programme. For example, one goal was for the children to understand the content of the biblical text. Maya reported that when she taught the Bible stories, the children clearly understood the story without her mediation. She also found that the children interpreted the text independently, emphasising the subjects that interested them. What pleased her most was that the children tried out different forms of creative expression and learned how to work with them.

What Maya was unable to determine was whether the children saw Biblical texts more positively following the intervention; this was because the intervention ended at the end of the school year and she could not assess the results. Maya also wanted the children to initiate new ways of tackling the Biblical text using tools appropriate to them. The success of this attempt could not be assessed either for the same reason as above. However, from the initiatives the children took in her lessons, Maya saw that they now related to the Biblical text in a different way to the way she had originally planned.

B.   Contribution of professional literature

Maya read two bibliographic items with the aim of enriching her knowledge on the dilemma topic. One item she read discussed the humanistic approach to education; the second item that she studied was the Bible Studies curriculum published by the Ministry of Education. The first bibliographic item provided the starting point for her intervention programme, inspiring her to teach the Bible in a way that integrated the children's

emotional, personal and cognitive development. The literature discussed that a well-rounded person, both emotionally and in terms of personality, will be more open to learning effectively, and that experiential learning that is meaningful to the learner assists learning. After learning more about the humanistic approach, she could see the discrepancy between this approach and the usual method used with her class.

Reading the Bible Studies curriculum showed her that the learner must be nurtured in a multifaceted way, in other words, the child must be seen as a complete person with desires, feelings, and individual propensities. The Ministry of Education direction for teaching dovetailed with the humanistic approach and together they provided the building blocks for her intervention activities.

C.   Self-evaluation

Maya rated herself highly for the way she tackled the dilemma. However, this was for the dilemma providing the impetus for planning and implementing a different kind of syllabus, involving a more interesting and varied way of teaching the Bible. The identification and formulation of the dilemma and researching the professional literature led her to conduct a programme that enriched the children through a non-routine learning experience. However, Maya's self-assessment did not relate to her professional development in terms of her ability to cope practically with dilemmas.

Analysis

Maya's evaluation focused almost exclusively on *one facet of the dilemma* and almost completely ignored the other. Thus, all her efforts and ideas went into teaching the Bible in a creative and interesting way, and she did not spend time or effort teaching the required syllabus or covering the necessary subject matter in a set amount of time (which relates to the second facet of the dilemma). As noted, she rationalized that this was because of the present policy of the Ministry of Education. Still, analysis of her work shows that she benefited from identifying and formulating the dilemma in her teaching practice class (her handling of the dilemma only went this far). These skills therefore encouraged her to *think critically* as described in the analyses above. She also learned that teaching can involve *ambiguous* situations for which there are no unequivocal answers.

Fatma

A.   Evaluation of pupil achievement

Throughout her intervention, Fatma tried to improve the style of communication in her class, especially the children's verbal communication. In the end, she felt that the class's verbal communication had improved. However, she did not believe this improvement was meaningful since it was confined mainly to the lessons when she taught the children – in their remaining classes the children reverted to their usual behaviour. Fatma saw a more significant improvement in the children's social and academic interactions after learning communication and articulation skills. As a result of this learning, an improvement was observed in the children's reciprocal relations – they tended to cooperate with one another more than formerly, both in the classroom and in their social meetings.

B.   Contribution of professional literature

Once Fatma realised that the children in her class had problems with verbal communication, she wanted to find out about communication skills that she could teach them. In other words, she looked for a way to break down the broad scope of her originally intended intervention programme, **Improving verbal communication skills,** into practically applicable segments which could be taught to the children. The information she needed to do this she found through reference to a variety of sources. She then formulated the communication skills she had chosen to teach the children.

C.   Self-evaluation

Fatma wrote the following in her final paper: "I am generally self-critical, but the writing and reflective thinking that accompanied the different parts of the intervention allowed me to achieve a far more frank and thorough level of criticism than my intuitive self-criticism permitted. This was a positive experience and enabled me to grow and develop. There were many parts of the intervention that I found 'threatening', particularly knowing that each decision I took was very dependent on me and my interpretation. For the first time in my three years at college, I felt that I was the one deciding how to plan and execute the subject and that I was the one responsible, not the teacher, for teaching the subject to the children. Often, when I recorded my reflections following an activity, I empathised with the children who were facing change or choice. I could understand how difficult change is for someone who isn't used to it".

Analysis

Fatma praised the children's progress following her intervention. She also praised the literature for contributing to all stages of her work, i.e., the formulation, planning and implementation stages. In evaluating the dilemma, she placed considerable emphasis on the reflection process accompanying the intervention. However, her evaluation does not relate specifically to the *dilemma management* process. This is not surprising, especially since her emphasis was entirely on coping with one facet of the dilemma, as indicated by the fact that her intervention ignored the second facet, which was apparently too complicated for her to deal with.

My summarizing reflection

My analysis of the students' activities and their evaluations of these activities reveal that the students attained different levels of *dilemma management*. Two levels of coping emerged, with Ella, of course, representing the highest level. She tackled both facets of the dilemma and the conflict of values in the widest fashion that a student could handle. After Ella came **Lena** and **Limor**, who also tried to address the dilemma in its widest sense. However, they apparently had difficulty dealing with the dilemma in its broadest sense and chose to invest most of their effort in just one facet. Thus, in their intervention, they paid less attention to the second facet of the dilemma, despite having formulated it themselves when studying the subject on campus.

Maya and **Fatma**, whose work exhibited similarities as well as differences, represent the two extreme cases of failure to tackle the dilemma. They both taught their subjects in an interesting and in-depth fashion. Neither, however, addressed the second facet of their dilemma. They progressed from one activity to another based on their conclusions and reflections, but without referring to the issues they had addressed in college in their initial planning. Both students handled the dilemma this way. Where they differed was at the point at which they stopped addressing the second facet of the dilemma. Fatma dropped the second facet sooner while Maya did so at a later stage.

When Maya first began tackling the dilemma she was at a very high level. She was good at identifying and formulating the dilemma, pinpointing the values causing emotional conflict and finding interesting secondary dilemmas stemming from the primary dilemma. She showed a high level of critical thinking and I believed she would show a particularly high level of dilemma management, since she was very able cognitively, having been accepted

to the track for outstanding students. She began ignoring the second facet of the dilemma when putting her classroom activities into effect. She devoted a lot of energy to teaching the Bible but did not consider how her approach might be executed in a regular class.

However, she clearly knew she was ignoring the second facet. She told me at the end of the process that, in view of the prevailing conditions within the education system, it was impossible to address both facets of the dilemma. I had mixed feelings on hearing this. On the one hand, her attempt at justification showed her awareness that she had disregarded one aspect of the dilemma. On the other hand, I was disappointed that her strategy involved blaming outside parties (Category D). I saw this as a regressive step back to the initial stage of learning about dilemmas on campus. The interesting thing was that, unlike the other students, on campus Maya had straightaway identified the dilemma and not chosen to blame others for it. Now, because she had experienced difficulties, she had adopted this tactic.

Fatma, on the other hand, stopped trying to tackle the dilemma in any depth earlier than Maya. After formulating her dilemma, she planned an intervention that addressed only one facet of the dilemma. As the group supervisor, I needed to understand why she had tackled her dilemma so superficially; an in-depth analysis of her behaviour would help me understand her motives and improve my teaching programme in future. Once I had gained this understanding, I would have a complete picture of how the students tackle professional dilemmas in their teaching practice.
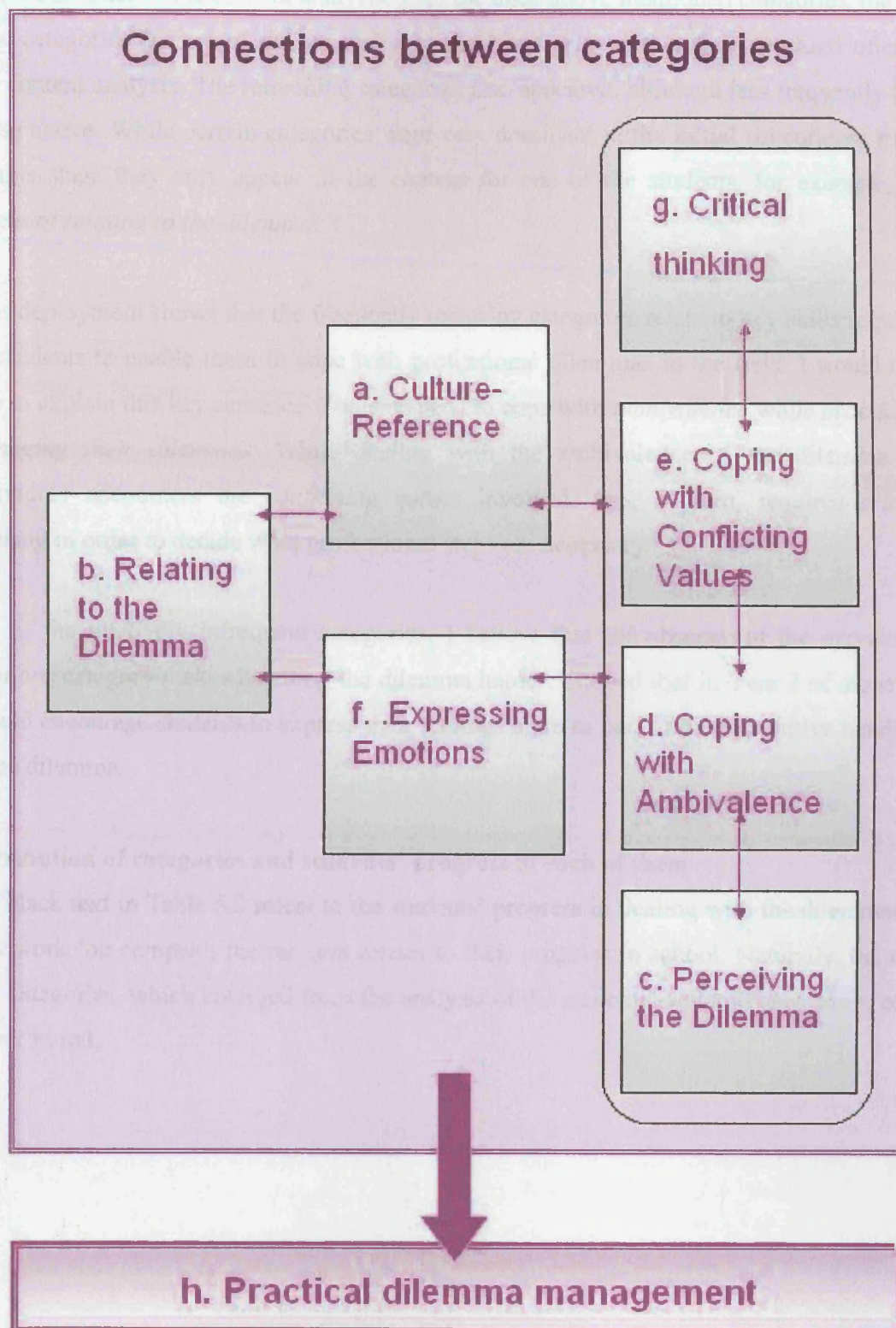
Findings - Year 1 of Study – In School

Distribution of categories in the content analysis of the students' teaching practice

Most of the categories found in the content analysis for the 'in college' stage of the *dilemma management* syllabus also apply to the analysis of the 'in-school' stage. The two exceptions are the categories noted at the beginning of this section, namely, *identifying a dilemma situation* and *formulating the dilemma*. These categories are not relevant to this section (the explanation for this is given at the beginning of this section). Furthermore, two new categories were identified that are relevant to the *dilemma management* stage. These are *practical dilemma management* and *critical thinking* (explanations for these categories and their sub-categories also appear at the beginning of this section).

Reciprocal relationships were found between the categories of *critical thinking, coping with ambivalence, dealing with conflicting values* and *perceiving the dilemma* with each of these categories affecting the other. The three remaining categories were not linked. Each stood alone, although they did affect each of the other categories. This impact depended on the student's personality and the situation she faced. Altogether, the categories are concerned with the skills that led the student to manage the dilemma she identified in her teaching practice class.

Figure 5.2 presents the connections between the categories described.

Figure 5.2 Connections Between Categories – In School – First Year of Study

Connections between categories

- g. Critical thinking
- a. Culture-Reference
- b. Relating to the Dilemma
- e. Coping with Conflicting Values
- f. .Expressing Emotions
- d. Coping with Ambivalence
- c. Perceiving the Dilemma

h. Practical dilemma management

Frequency of appearance of categories in the content analysis

Three categories of the in college stage: *coping with ambivalence*, *perceiving the dilemma* and *dealing with conflicting values* occurred very frequently. In other words, they appeared

182

numerous times in the content analysis. Like the three above mentioned categories, the two new categories (*practical dilemma management and critical thinking*) appeared often in the content analysis. The remaining categories also appeared, although less frequently than those above. While certain categories were very dominant in the initial (in college) stage, in this stage they only appear in the content for one of the students, for example, the category *relating to the dilemma.*

This deployment shows that the frequently recurring categories relate to key skills required by students to enable them to cope with professional dilemmas in the field. I would now like to explain this key sentence. Students need to cope with *ambivalence* while *practically managing their dilemmas.* While dealing with the ambivalence of the dilemma the individual encounters the *conflicting values* involved, this, in turn, requires *critical thinking* in order to decide what professional steps are necessary.

Out of the relatively infrequent categories, I believe that the absence of the *expressing emotions* category makes handling the dilemma harder. I hoped that in Year 2 of the study I could encourage students to express their feelings more as part of their cognitive handling of the dilemma.

Distribution of categories and students' progress in each of them
The black text in Table 5.2 refers to the students' progress in dealing with the dilemmas in their work 'on campus'; the red text relates to their progress in school. Naturally, the two new categories, which emerged from the analysis of the students' school-based work, only appear in red.

Table 5.2: Distribution of Categories and Students' Progress in Each of Them – First Year of Study

		Ella	Limor	Lena	Fatma	Maya
A. Culture-Reference	3. Addressing the environment in its cultural context.					
	2. Relates the environment to own cultural context.					
	1. Lack of reference to cultural context.					
B. Relating to the Dilemma	3. Entirely linking the dilemma to own professional behaviour.					
	2. Partly linking the dilemma to own professional behaviour.					
	1. 'Blaming' others for the dilemma.					
C. Perceiving the Dilemma	3. Broadly perceives of all aspects of the dilemma.					
	2. Perceives some aspects of the dilemma.					
	1. Black and white perspective.					
D. Coping with Ambivalence	3. Student chooses intractable issues.					
	2. Student chooses to address difficult, but solvable issues.					
	1. Student chooses to deal with issues that promise success.					

184

		Ella	Limor	Lena	Fatma	Maya
E. Coping with Conflicting Values	3. Copes with the clash between all values involved in the dilemma.					
	2. Only addresses one of the values involved in the dilemma.					
	1. Simplification of situation, relates to global values.					
F. Expressing Emotions	3. Expresses emotions when handling dilemma.					
	2. No cognitive-affective symmetry.					
	1. Student presents the dilemma ignoring the emotional dimension.					
G. Critical Thinking	3. highly effective critical thinking.					
	2. Some critical thinking.					
	1. Absence of critical thinking					
H. Practical Dilemma Management	3. Addressing both issues of the dilemma.					
	2. Managing the facets asymmetrically.					
	1. Managing one facet and ignoring the other.					

When we compare the results for the two parts of the study, we see that overall, teaching practice greatly helped the students and enhanced their ability to manage a dilemma in practice. Note, however, that some students only improved in some categories, while in one case the standard of work dropped. For example, Maya progressed in certain categories while Fatma regressed in some. Some findings were expected or satisfactory, while others were interesting and unexpected. The following are examples of both types of findings.

The very high appraisals received by Ella across all categories, especially in the *dilemma management* category, were definitely expected. The level of Ella's dilemma management was very high – from the college-based learning stage to the conclusion of her intervention programme. This is expressed throughout the content analysis of her teaching practice. Fatma's poor appraisal for *managing the dilemma in practice* was also expected. This was because Fatma did badly in other categories, which influenced the actual management of the dilemma. The findings relating to Maya's handling of the dilemma were unexpected, however. Maya received the highest appraisals in three categories: *coping with ambivalence, perceiving the dilemma* and *critical thinking*. However, for the category of *managing the dilemma in practice*, her performance only reached the lowest level.

Another noteworthy finding relates to the progress made by Limor. When she first started managing her dilemma, Limor made good progress, reaching Level 2 in this category and reaching as high as Level 3 in the two categories *coping with ambivalence* and *perceiving the dilemma*. At one point, I therefore thought she would also reach Level 3 in the *practical dilemma management* category. However, Limor then regressed from the highest level, which she had attained, to Level 2.

A more detailed description of each student's progress is supplied in Appendix 4.

My explanations for the findings

I wondered what prevented four of the five students from reaching the highest level of coping with their dilemmas and found two explanations. The first explanation was that two of the students had failed to tackle both aspects of the dilemma and two had only partially tackled the dilemma **because one of the facets of the dilemma was too complex for college-level students to handle.** One facet was easier to cope with, the students were

required to plan and teach a syllabus which, although apparently difficult and calling for a range of teaching skills, was not entirely new to them being simply a step higher than the assignments they had received in the past. The second facet of their dilemma contained tasks that were too complicated, and therefore hard to cope with. Thus, for example, Maya's intervention required her to closely examine the regular teacher's work, i.e., the teacher's teaching time allocation and her work priorities. I believe that in their third year of training, it is important for students generally, and for Maya as an outstanding student in particular, to address these subjects, but it seems that this was too complex and inappropriate for students still at college.

In dealing with the second facet of her dilemma, Fatma had to address the children's culture as it manifested itself in highly dysfunctional communication, vulgarity and essentially violent forms of expression, which the children had learned from home and on the streets. Fatma should have showed understanding of their behaviour, especially since she was from the same neighbourhood, while trying to help them change. However, despite this being an important task for teachers to deal with, it was apparently too complicated for Fatma even though she herself had chosen to deal with it and was very keen to do so.

Another explanation is that at the college-based learning stage the **students were not asked to clarify their expectations regarding the outcome of their efforts to address both facets of the dilemma**, particularly the distinction between the two facets in terms of the expected results. The students' college-based studies stressed identification of the dilemma in the practice class, the formulation of the dilemma and devising a relevant intervention programme. Indeed, on campus, they performed well in these tasks. However, because this was my first time teaching the subject, I found it hard to establish my own expectations of their achievements and also to instruct them on clarifying their own expectations. I had hoped that the activities they conducted would address the dilemma broadly and would allow me to feel they had done their best to cope with the dilemma.

Another finding of the study was the discrepancy between the students' stated desire to address the dual aspects of the dilemma and the activities they conducted in their practice class. There was a parallel between these differences and my appraisal of each student. In **Ella's** case, there was complete fit between her statement of intention and her performance. In the cases of **Limor** and **Lena**, there was an intermediate fit, in other words, they achieved a small part of what they said they would do, while in the cases of

Fatma and **Maya**, there was a significant discrepancy between their statements of intent and their actual performance.

My explanation for this gap relates to my previous hypothesis, namely that they had **chosen subjects too difficult for them**. The students' failure to find a practical way of handling the dual facets of the dilemma led them to disregard their initial statements, their own formulation of the dilemma and even their comprehensive analysis which had pointed to their ability to cope with ambivalence, perceive the dilemma, and devise a feasible plan of action for them personally.

Planning the new teaching unit: implications of students' achievements

Evaluating the students' performances raised the question of how to improve the teaching syllabus for the second year of this study and thus the students' dilemma management capabilities. My speculations regarding the failure of some students to achieve high standards of dilemma management led me to plan changes in the proposed syllabus.

In Year 1 of the study, the students were allowed to tackle whatever issues they liked. In other words, whatever interested them, a subject that aroused inner conflict, prompting them to examine it, and, of course, a subject that both students and class teachers thought would benefit the children. The subjects they chose were indeed dilemmas that their class teacher also faced in the course of her work. The subjects were interesting and varied and the discussions surrounding them enriched the level of discussion in class at college. However, after Year 1 of the study, it became apparent that some of these subjects were inappropriate for the students, and more appropriate for the regular teacher. Indeed, for Year 2 of the study I realised that I needed to examine the students' proposed subjects very thoroughly. The aim of this, after considering the complexity of the dilemma, was to decide whether a student could manage both facets of the dilemma and how well she could cope with it. Only after I had confirmed a dilemma suitable for a student would she begin planning her intervention.

The other change in the teaching programme for Year 2 of the study involved adding an element to the syllabus topics: teaching students to assess which results in their intervention were achievable and which were not. This stage in constructing the intervention plan was absent from Year 1 of the study. In Year 1, they began working without thinking about what they wished to accomplish by the end of the process. The new

component that I intended to teach required them to address the two facets of the dilemma and establish a logical connection between the poles of the dilemma, the activities they developed and their desired results. I hoped that, following this change in the programme, their school-based performances would directly continue from their college-based studies without a lacuna between the two as occurred with the four students (to varying degrees).

The role of reflection in tackling the dilemma

After each classroom activity conducted by the students, they were required to summarize the activity and present a reflective analysis of what they had done. Differences were found in the students' ability to carry out this analysis. It was these differences that in turn affected the level at which the different students tackled their dilemmas.

I will now analyse each student's level of reflection and the relationship between this and the standard of dilemma management that each student reached.

Ella

The description of Ella's classroom activities reports Ella's reflection on the process she experienced. One would describe her reflection as critical. Her capacity for critical reflection had several expressions. When recapping on her activities, she analysed the difficulties she faced when tackling the dilemma: "I thought I would be able to help the children make friends. Now, I doubt whether this could be achieved with very young children even with my intervention". Her analysis points to profound deliberation on the issues at either pole of the dilemma and reflects doubts concerning earlier decisions she had made.

Also, in her reflection, she analysed her discoveries during the intervention, for example, "...children prefer friends who are animals, robots, imaginary creatures who don't exist in real life". Her strategy for tackling the dilemma was subsequently modified following her new insights.

The reflection process was a significant component of her work, and produced decisions regarding the future *management of her dilemma*; for example, it resulted in the decision to modify her intervention strategy.

Ella's capacity for critical reflection during teaching and especially following her lessons

enabled her to achieve a high level in the management of her dilemma compared to other students. An important part of her reflective process was her ability to reach conclusions and take the subsequent necessary steps demanded. Without this, she would have found it hard, in my opinion, to reach such high levels of competence in her practice.

Maya

Like, Ella, Maya was also capable of critical reflection. This was evident in her:

- Reconstruction, analysis and processing of events.
- Capacity to learn from her new teaching experiences, for example, the comic strip.
- Ability to extrapolate for the future following her experiences.

Unlike Ella, however, Maya used her high quality reflective abilities to teach her new syllabus to her class – but without linking it to the dilemma. Thus, her reflection concerned the practical issues arising from her activities. While her reflection was effective, detailed and on a high level, as noted above, it had nothing to do with the two facets of the dilemma, and only addressed one of the facets. It is important to note that before beginning the practical aspect of the work, Maya had actually addressed the dilemma: she had *identified a dilemma* which she had found in her practice class, *formulated* it and discovered secondary dilemmas – testifying to *high cognitive ability*. The change occurred at the planning and implementation stage. At that point, she began to focus entirely on her programme, and consequently her reflection was exclusively oriented toward insights into the classroom activities.

Lena

Lena's reflection in her final paper shows how reflection helped her to analyse the results of her activities, reach conclusions, and adapt her next activity to those conclusions. However, we see no evidence of critical reflection in her analysis of the activities or in her scant references to the dilemma. Reflection in her case served her need for confidence and validation of what she had done. Its purpose was not to improve her learning with a view to tackling the dilemma and the *conflicting values*. While the reflection offered a broad analysis of the positive outcomes and failed activities, there was a lack of deliberation, questioning and what little linkage there was to the dilemma was inadequate in content.

Fatma

Fatma's reflection mainly reviewed the successes and mentioned a few difficulties. Like

Lena, she also seems to have needed positive reinforcement for what she was doing and thus, her reflection contained many expressions of self-affirmation. There was a lack of *critical reference* to her activities or linkage between her reflective analysis and the processes involved in tackling the dilemma that she had *identified* and *formulated.* Her data was only concerned with coping with the intervention activities she had developed.

Her understanding of the role of reflection differed from mine: she particularly stressed the role of reflection in her professional development. She strongly stressed that the reflective reading and writing accompanying the different chapters of her final paper had helped her attain a "frank and thorough level of criticism". In other words, although she failed to address *both facets of her dilemma*, her reflective thinking was indeed helpful as a tool for teaching the specific subject she set out to teach, namely, improving the pupils' behaviour.

Limor

Limor's reflection addressed both poles of the dilemma. However, most of the analysis focused on one pole – the one dealing with the implementation of her intervention programme. When things arose during the activities that related to the second facet of the dilemma she related to this as well and drew conclusions regarding the activities. However, she mostly referred to just one facet. She analysed the activities relating to the one facet and later decided which of activities she would return to because they worked well and contributed to the children and which she found difficult and wished to alter.

Implications of the process of reflecting on the curriculum

Naturally, my ideas for improving the curriculum I wished to teach in 2004 were based on conclusions regarding the quality of the reflection and its contribution to the students' dilemma management in Year 1 of the study. I wanted to keep certain parts of their reflective process and introduce new ones.

The parts of the syllabus that I decided to keep and to continue teaching in the same way as before were the reflective skills that they learned in the first and second years of their course. These skills provided a firm foundation which enabled the students to conduct appropriate reflective analyses. Among the skills is the ability to reconstruct and analyse classroom activities;students reviewed the correspondence between their preplanning and actual performance of the activity, relating to successes and failures. These abilities are important when implementing an intervention programme of any kind in any subject that

they study. Nevertheless, while these skills were indeed observed at different levels in the five students, I believe that the frequency of their use and the standard of the reflection need improvement.

The following describes the new skills necessary for tackling dilemmas. I wanted to raise the standard of the analysis the students carried out after the activities they conducted in Year 1 of the study. In other words, I wanted them to be able to carry out critical analysis. Their analysis in Year 1 was very concrete and mainly concerned the quality of the activities they conducted. However, it lacked adequate reference to issues beyond the specific activity.

After reflecting on what was lacking in the students' reflections for Year 1, I realised the following:

- The students failed to identify adequately the moral and ethical implications of the classroom activities. Thus, conclusions were lacking regarding the management of the class as a whole, the social structure of the class or the education system. I hoped they would present the implications of the activities – not just reflections about them.

- The students did not sufficiently see teaching as a 'problematic' undertaking. I realised that they did not understand clearly that teaching does not necessarily provide clear-cut, official rules for action. I saw that they had not internalised the difficulty in predicting the results of activities; because an activity is appropriate and produces good results in one session there is no guarantee that it will do so in another. In other words, many of the students see teaching as a set of goals for which they must find the appropriate means. While this is a good approach for problem solving, if someone approaches a dilemma with this belief, they will find it hard to manage the dilemma.

- I also found a scarcity of reflection on the students' beliefs and values. As noted, most of the students' reflections involved reconstructing classroom occurrences and learning from classroom practice. However, to tackle a dilemma and explore the conflicting values that it poses the student, examination is required during and after teaching practice with regard to the conflicting values and how they relate to the classroom activity taught.

- Student reflections did not adequately express the discovery of new relationships and possibilities for future consideration. Such analysis could help students manage the dilemma more professionally the next time they tackled a dilemma.

Summary of findings for year 1 of the study

These conclusions concern the parts of the dilemma syllabus that I decided to retain in Year 2 of the study and the intended changes in the syllabus.

A. <u>Retained aspects of the syllabus</u>

- I decided to retain the overall structure of the syllabus as it was in the first year of the study. There were several reasons for this. As described earlier, one part of the syllabus involved preparation in college while the other related to the element conducted in the school. This meant that the students' practical work was backed up by theoretical knowledge based on the literature on the subject and a kind of 'support group' at college that met weekly to discuss problems and difficulties. I reached the conclusion that the college preparation was the key to successfully managing dilemmas. In other words, I felt that the difficulties encountered in the field were due to inadequate or lack of preparation of the subject in college. I therefore decided to retain the general structure and only make corrections, additions, and improvements in the contents of the syllabus covered in college.

- Another decision I made was to retain the order of the topics covered by the syllabus, i.e., the skills of identifying and formulating the dilemma would be taught at the beginning followed by the other topics covered in the first year of the study. The instruction would naturally incorporate the corrections, improvements and additions stemming from the conclusions drawn from the first year of the study.

B. <u>Revised syllabus elements</u>

- I decided to increase the students' exposure to the dilemmas teachers face and the dilemmas encountered by fellow students.

- I felt that the students were not adequately expressing what they were experiencing emotionally and I decided to do more work on this area.

- I decided to ensure closer cooperation between the student, the regular teacher of the training class, the college specialist consulted in the dilemma subject and myself. In addition, I would help the students to coordinate between these individuals.

- I would add a new subject to the syllabus: Strategies for Coping with Dilemmas.

- I would help students in choosing their dilemma and deciding whether it was appropriate for them to manage in their classroom.

- I would supervise and assist the student when planning how to tackle the dilemma and help her to predict the results she wishes to achieve and identify what cannot be achieved.

- Improve and encourage students' reflective capabilities by teaching them to reflect on their values and beliefs and express new alternatives for managing the dilemma or parts of it.

- Emphasise critical thinking from the campus stage to when the student actually tackles the dilemma in school.

- Increase supervision focusing on the student's practice school and understand that students can have difficulty transferring and applying what they learn in college.

CHAPTER SIX

Second Action Step

Introduction

This chapter describes and analyses the second research cycle. Its structure is identical to the first research cycle.

The first part describes the lessons conducted in college about coping with dilemmas. After being described, the findings of this part will be analysed. The second part of the chapter deals with the students' actual coping with dilemmas in school.

The syllabus taught in college and later implemented by the students, under my supervision in school, was based on conclusions I drew from the first research cycle described in Chapter 5.

Firstly, I will introduce the five students representing the research subjects.

Details of the five students representing the research population in the second year

In the second research cycle I again taught a group of student teachers who were in their third year of studies. The group consisted of 22 students learning the subject of coping with professional dilemmas. At first the subject was studied theoretically in college and was later implemented by each student in the school where she practiced teaching a first or second grade class. Five of these students were chosen to represent the subjects of my study.

Rina

23-year-old Rina comes from a traditional religious home. She attended religious elementary school and high school. This fact was very noticeable in the pedagogic instruction classes. She contributed with sayings from the Bible and insisted on religious input to the Jewish festivals and holidays we celebrated in class. She has a very strong personality and asked lots of question, often raising subjects which the class then discussed. She voiced her uncertainties very frankly, offering plenty of detail so that her listeners could understand. She is highly articulate both in speech and writing and has high reflective capabilities which connected with her desire to ask questions and lead. Her practice class teacher relies on her a great deal; frequently allowing her to conduct lessons while the teacher helps any children with problems.

Tali

Tali is 23; one very noticeable fact about her is the warm way she communicates with the children. She is extremely good-natured, smiles a lot, and is therefore very well liked by all of her college classmates. She seems particularly sensitive toward the children she teaches and their difficulties. Her practice class teacher thinks very highly of these abilities since the school where she practices has a very diverse population where the children come from especially difficult socio-economic backgrounds. There are a large number of new immigrant children from Russia, as well as Ethiopian immigrant children and Israeli-born children. Many of the children in her class come from very severely disadvantaged homes. The children live with large numbers of relatives, e.g., grandfather and grandmother, and cousins. There is often no food at home and the children receive their mid-morning meal from the school. Tali often talks to her college classmates about how to help children to concentrate in school when they are worried about the financial situation at home.

Miriam

Miriam is 30, and one of the two oldest students in the class. She explains that she chose teaching because of educational ideals and after much deliberation. She is part of the college's "Excellence Track". The students in this track attend classes with the other students, but their grade average was in the highest ten percent of the college intake. Miriam, indeed, stands out in class for her exceptional mental abilities, her ideas and for the standard of her classroom contribution. She has very definite ideas on a range of issues, especially concerning education, which often lead to heated class discussion. She often refers to an educational vision and supreme educational ideals. In teaching practice, she is highly involved in everything that goes on in class, never hesitating to express and stand by her opinions to the class teacher. She is very disappointed if she senses that the educational principles she believes in are not met by the school. Miriam is very hard working. The activities she prepares for the children show a lot of thought, planning and investment, and above all an attempt to attain the goals she believes in.

Or

She is the second of the two oldest students (like Miriam she is 30). She also chose to enter teaching after trying other professions. From our conversations, and from the classroom discussions, she appears very keen to finish her studies and practice teaching. She is one of the quietest students in the class. She does not take part much in class, preferring to listen.

However, if she does choose to give her opinion, it is clear that she has carefully considered and weighed what she says. She chooses to raise broader issues relating to the teacher's work rather than more minor issues. She is very pleasant with the children she teaches, which calms them and elicits their cooperation. The activities she prepares for the children indicate a desire to apply the theory learned in college and each time go a stage further in her own professional development.

Yona

Yona is 24; unlike Miriam and Or, Yona does not take her college studies in her stride. She has particular difficulties expressing herself in writing when she is required to submit academic papers. Despite this, she does her best to succeed. Regarding her school work, she tries very hard to complete the tasks I set her, but has privately voiced fears on more than one occasion that, as a teacher, she might not be able control the children. However, her pleasant and warm personality wins children's hearts and they enjoy working with her. Her practice class has four hyperactive children. Yona takes special interest in them and tries to work with them individually whenever she has the time in class and during breaks.

Year 2 of the Study
Part A – In College

Below is a description of the teaching units in the improved syllabus that I taught my class in college. These are compared to the units taught in the previous year in the first research cycle. The students' responses and an analysis of the data according to the categories previously introduced will be presented in the course of the description.

Teaching Unit 1
Learning About Dilemmas – First Steps
Date: 28.10.03, 4.11.03, 11.11.03, 18.11.03.

A.   The difference between problems, conflicts, and dilemmas

This is one of the sections I decided to retain in the form in which I taught it in Year 1 of the study. I felt that it did the job and that after I taught it, students could tell the difference between the three terms. I thought I would more or less repeat this tried and tested lesson, but a different dynamic arose between the students and myself. Thus, the lesson progressed differently from the previous year.

I presented the definition of the term 'dilemma'.

Rina – "We learned this term last year in our pedagogy lessons."

Me – "How did it arise?"

Or – "When we analysed things that had happened in playschool, our pedagogic instructor referred to it and explained when something is classed as a dilemma."

Me – "Did you discuss the difference between a professional problem and a professional dilemma?"

Rina – "Yes, we know the difference. A problem can be solved completely and a dilemma is when it is very hard to know what to do."

Me – Can anyone give an example of a dilemma from their kindergarten teaching experience last year?

The students felt fine about this request and many of them gave examples.

Miriam – "In kindergarten last year, the children used to draw every morning. There was one child who never wanted to draw and my dilemma was should we force him to."

Yona – "I had a different dilemma, and that was whether it was a good idea to bring television into the kindergarten to entertain the children or whether the teacher should ensure that the children only watched educational programmes."

Or – "I have experienced the same dilemma since I began studying education. My dilemma concerns what we can do to prevent children generally from being rejected socially and to prevent special needs children (attending mainstream classes) in particular from being socially rejected."

Analysis

Unlike last year's students, these students had already reached Level 3 in terms of their ability to *identify a dilemma*. They were able to make the connection between defining the dilemma and the situation in their teaching practice. All the situations they described were indeed situations without an unequivocal solution. Their ability to *formulate a dilemma* was not on a low level either, but had reached the intermediate stage (Level 2). Their formulation of the dilemma contained some of the characteristics of the dilemmas they had presented, even though they could not verbalize that this concerned the two poles of the dilemma, they could see that two irreconcilable situations were involved.

B.   Further clarification of the term 'dilemma'

When I discovered that the students had learned how to identify and formulate a dilemma in the previous year (albeit in an informal way), I decided to work with them on gaining a deeper understanding of what constitutes a dilemma. To achieve this, I asked them to recall different dilemmas they had dealt with when teaching kindergarten and to talk about one of them.

Or – "There was a boy in the kindergarten where I practiced who never spoke. He just refused to speak. He never spoke to the kindergarten teacher or to any of the other children. The dilemma concerned the question of what the kindergarten teacher could do in a case where a child chooses to be mute."

Me – "We know that a professional dilemma is a situation in which the teacher has difficulty deciding what to do because there are advantages and disadvantages to whatever option she takes. Let us look at the alternatives concerned with each side of the dilemma."

Miriam – "The teacher could opt to do nothing and just let the child be silent if that is what he wants. Or she could keep nagging at the child, trying to encourage him to join in with the rest."

Me – "What Miriam has described are the two sides of the dilemma, in which each side has its advantages. Both sides have equal weight. In other words, no side is any better than the other. Let us consider the steps involved in each side and examine the advantages of taking each particular course of action."

Yona – "I think that allowing the child to be silent signals acceptance of the child. In such a climate, he might eventually join in like everyone else."

Tali – "On the other hand, if you keep on at him to speak it shows that you care and it will avoid a situation of the rest of the children ignoring the silent child."

Me – "Just as there are advantages to each action at each pole of the dilemma, there are also disadvantages. Can you think what the disadvantages of each action might be?"

Rina – "We mentioned the advantage of talking to the child and reminding him that we would like him to join in, but this of course has disadvantages too. The child will get embarrassed if the teacher keeps calling on him if he doesn't want to, or can't, join in. We also said there is an advantage to allowing the child to do what he wants and stay quiet, but on the other hand the child might end up being ignored and his problem not solved."

Me – "We have seen that a dilemma is a situation with at least two possible actions. There are pros and cons of equal weight to both actions and it is very difficult/impossible to choose between them.

C.   Analysing dilemmas

To practice what I had taught and expose the students to a wide variety of dilemmas, I told them to split into groups of five and assigned the following task:

- Each member of the group described a dilemma;
- The group then chose one of the dilemmas described to analyse. The analysis involved presenting the two poles of the dilemma and the alternative actions for each pole;
- They then had to analyse the advantages and disadvantages of each of the actions for each of the poles.

The group work went well and the students gave examples of dilemmas encountered at the kindergarten/school. Each group then chose the most interesting dilemma for analysis. The following is an example of one of these dilemmas and its analysis.

They formulated the dilemma thus: "Is it possible to encourage children to involve another child and if so how can this be done?" (For example, in a game of football when a child's friends consistently choose not to play with him.)

Rina – "At one end of the dilemma is the teacher's desire to help the child not to be socially isolated, but at the end is the teacher's professional need to let children manage alone, especially socially."

Or – "I would express it slightly differently. I think that on the one hand there is the professional need to help with social issues, especially extreme ones like being socially rejected, and on the other hand there is the fear that the teacher will harm a child's social situation by interfering."

After the students had discussed how to formulate the dilemma narrative that one of the students had presented, they then debated the pros and cons of the options for each side of the dilemma.

Analysis

The students' responses to my questions showed that they had reached Level 2 of *perceiving the dilemma*, i.e., the subject was not foreign to them and when they identified a situation they could define it as a dilemma.

200

Miriam suggested one action option and described its pros and cons. She said: "In my opinion, the teacher should ask the group to involve the rejected child in their game of football. The advantage is that the child will be delighted at being asked to join in. The downside is that because he is not very good at football, the group will only be worse to him and that will simply increase his frustration".

Tali suggested coming up with a new game for the group of children, so that the rejected child could join in with the teacher mediating and intervening. The advantage would be that the child would not be 'joining' the game, but would be part of the group from the start. However, the disadvantage would be that stopping the football game might interfere with the children's freedom to play. The group may be disappointed and again reject the child.

Thus, the students also proposed other ways of handling the matter, giving the advantages and disadvantages of each method.

Analysis

This activity again reflects the fact that the students were at Level 3 of the category *identifying a dilemma,* since it requires them to make the connection between *defining the dilemma*, i.e., identifying its opposing issues, and connecting the two conflicting issues to a specific dilemma. The subsequent analysis of the alternative courses of action and presentation of the advantages and disadvantages of each was intended to prepare them for facing actual dilemmas in real life.

D.   Values – the basis underlying the dilemma

Although the students had acquired some basic background on the subject of professional dilemmas, they had not yet learned about the relationship between dilemmas and values in any of their courses. Now, having clarified the term and linked it to real life situations, the ground was prepared for learning about clashing values and dilemmas. Firstly, I decided, to do the same as last year, but with slight modification, and talk about values in general before moving on to discuss the role of values specifically in the context of the professional dilemma.

Brainstorming

I asked the students to throw out words or terms associated with values. These are their suggestions:

Miriam – "values are beliefs, what we are taught as we grow up".

Yona – "values guide me, I operate according to them".

Tali – "values are culture dependent".

Or – "restraint".

Rina – "world view".

Learning about values

I asked them: what values can you name? The students named different values: justice, honesty, etc. They also asked interesting questions about values.

Or – "I'm trying to decide whether privacy is a value?"

Yona (responding to her) – "I think that is a subjective decision, such as respecting older people, which is a higher value, although I am not sure everyone shares it."

Tali – "Part of our behaviour is a product of social norms and not values, or it reflects a deliberate decision on the individual's part."

When we had finished discussing different aspects of the subject of values, the students noticed that the values written on the board could be sorted into groups. They suggested titles for the groups, e.g., democratic values, national values, moral values and socio-cultural values. They found that some of the values belonged in several groups. They also found that the term 'value' shared similarities with other concepts such as principles, law and norms. This led us to wonder whether a particular name is a value or maybe a law; for example, only monogamous marriage is permitted under Israeli law (unlike in some countries of the world). Is this a value or a law?

Yona – "This is clearly a religious value which has been adopted as the law of the country."

Connecting values and dilemmas

At this point I felt that, having discussed values in general, it was time to link this to the question of professional dilemmas. I asked them if when they learned the subject the previous year, they had talked about values and dilemmas. They responded negatively. I

explained that if we analyse dilemmas we would find that all dilemmas involve a clash of values. To clarify this, I asked them for examples of professional dilemmas. They gave examples of 'minor' dilemmas encountered in teaching practice and together we examined the values in them that were at odds.

Afterwards, I analysed several examples of professional dilemmas of my own. I tried to analyse with them the values that clashed in each of the dilemmas. The analysis was not straightforward and, more than once, emotions ran high just like the last time I taught the topic. For example, I told them of my own personal dilemma when teaching very young children the Bible. I recalled how I had often faced dilemmas. For example, when telling children the story of the (almost) sacrifice of Isaac, that my dilemma was how could I tell the children the story convincingly when I myself was shocked that God had asked Abraham to sacrifice his only son. I told my students that this was not the only Bible story I found difficult to teach. Another tough one was the story of Rebecca convincing Jacob to disguise himself as Esau so that their father, Isaac, would bless Jacob instead of his brother. How I had struggled with explaining the children the story of Rebecca's trickery in a sympathetic way.

There were numerous reactions to my account, some quite radical.Some of the students were religious and disagreed that there was a dilemma. Others thought this a very complex dilemma. They were also concerned about how they would teach these subjects next year once qualified.

Rina – "In non-religious schools, it is important to teach that God's actions are for the best and that ultimately His will leads to important and positive actions and events."
Or – "Even in non-religious schools one must tell the story in a religious way, in other words that God is omnipotent and that we cannot question what He does."

Other students in the class empathized with my story. They said that when they studied the Bible in school it had raised many difficult questions in their minds. They thought they would find it hard to teach these topics.

Analysis

Here we see Level 2 of the *Culture reference* category coming into play. Some students were unable to free themselves of their own cultural biases and show empathy to another, in this case, secular culture.

Relationship between values and personal dilemmas

Following the above, I felt that perhaps I had moved too rapidly to addressing professional dilemmas, and that an interim stage was lacking which would help students relate to the subject and gain a better understanding of how values are an essential and inherent part of all professional dilemmas. Therefore, to achieve this, I asked students for examples of **personal** dilemmas, thinking that it would be easier for them to relate to personal rather than professional dilemmas.

Or – "I routinely face an extremely difficult dilemma. I work as the shift supervisor in charge of waitresses in a restaurant. The boss wants me to keep an eye on them, tell them off and even decide who should be fired. On the one hand, I want to please the boss, but on the other hand, I work there as a waitress as well and the other girls are my friends and I find it very awkward."

Me – "Which values are in conflict here?"

Or thought for a moment and answered hesitatingly – "loyalty to the job versus loyalty to my friends the waitresses; in fact, loyalty to the boss versus loyalty to my friends."

Me – "Have you found a way of dealing with the dilemma?"

Or – "It's a problem I face daily, I still work there and hope to find the golden mean."

Analysis – The fact that the students had already learned about dilemmas made it much easier to teach them the topic of clashing values. Most were at least at Level 2 in the category *Coping with conflicting values*. Everyone who presented their own personal dilemma was indeed struggling with a clash of values relating to the dilemma and eventually was able to identify some of those values.

Getting students to relate personal dilemmas and exploring which values were in conflict prepared the way for discussing clashing values in the context of professional dilemmas.

Conflicting values and the professional dilemma

Firstly, I asked the students, based on their intuition, which values they imagined teachers most often encountered in their professional dilemmas. After much deliberation, they

concluded that the main clashes of values in professional dilemmas concerned fairness, equality, justice, responsibility and loyalty.

I then assigned the task of describing professional dilemmas and deciding which values conflicted in each dilemma.

Yona – "In the first grade class I teach, there is a little boy whose mother is terminally ill at home with cancer. The child behaves very violently at school, which was not characteristic of him before. He also refuses to study and while the other children are studying he wanders about the corridors, throwing things around and disturbing the other classes who are trying to study. Once he slammed the classroom door and hurt my finger."

Yona formulated the dilemma thus: "I cannot handle him with the firmness that I would normally use with other children if they behaved that way, because I know that he is suffering because of his mother. On the other hand, I cannot just ignore what he does. He might hurt a child or me. What concerns me is how a teacher should behave in cases involving temper outbursts in children who are out of control."

Me – "Let us explore which of your values are in conflict and thus creating the dilemma."
Yona – "On the one hand, I feel compassion and empathy towards this boy. On the other hand, there are several values. The first relates to equality; I feel I should treat everyone the same and not allow one child to get away with aggressive behaviour. Another value is responsibility; I am responsible for the children's welfare."
Me – "It is very hard to cope with a dilemma of this nature because the fact that this child's mother is gravely ill greatly interferes with your decisions as an educator. I want all the students in the class to help Yona by thinking of the different options available and the implications of each one."
Or – "I think that if the child has a tantrum, he should be taken somewhere else by an adult, for example to the headmistress's office or to the school guidance counsellor. I realise that this has positive and negative implications. The positive side is ensuring the safety of the others, in reality I know though that there mostly isn't an adult around and leaving the rest of the children in the class alone may lead to panic and an even greater commotion."
Tali – "The child may calm down if the teacher hugs him and takes him somewhere quiet and speaks to him quietly and soothingly. The advantage is that a hug will cause the child

with the tantrum to control his behaviour while restricting his movement. The disadvantage is that hugging him and speaking nicely are rewards for good behaviour and might give the wrong impression."

Miriam – "I wonder whether in a case like this, the other children shouldn't be involved. The case could be presented to the whole class, which could offer solutions. The advantage is that the children will be involved and will understand that this kind of behaviour is unacceptable. The disadvantage is that talking about this behaviour with the whole class would really embarrass the child since he has indeed done something he should be ashamed of."

Yona – "I can see there are different ways of coping with it but also that there is no ideal solution since this is a dilemma. I think that next time it happens, I will try the 'hug' approach."

Analysis

Yona did very well in identifying the conflicting values in the dilemma she described. She also advanced from the level she was at. She found more than one value at one end of the dilemma. For her, these values clashed with the values at the other side. This proved that she had reached Level 3 of the category *Coping with conflicting values*. It was clear that the other students could *perceive the dilemma* at Level 2 at least. They understood its complexity, and could see alternatives for dealing with it along with their advantages and disadvantages. The data shows that the students could *cope with ambivalence* at least at Level 2. Their description of the advantages and disadvantages of each solution to the dilemma in fact showed their understanding that this was not a black and white situation with easy answers, and that there was no perfect solution.

Reflection

This year, I had a structured plan based on my conclusions from the previous year. Instead, I was pleased to see that I had to change my plans to accommodate what the students had already been taught about professional dilemmas. This was because they told me that their instructor in the previous year had taught this subject. When I discussed this with her, I learned that my staff meeting reports concerning my research had influenced one of the instructors who had decided that she would also teach this subject. She admitted having no real knowledge of the subject and that what she had taught was based on her own educational experience.

The students showed that their work on dilemmas the previous year had provided a basis in the skills of *identifying and formulating a dilemma*. Also, the idea of presenting dilemmas from teaching practice was not foreign to them. Despite the fact that they had dealt with dilemmas last year, they said they had not dealt with values/clashing values and dilemmas at all. I thus began teaching this topic from scratch in the second year. Teaching them about values and dilemmas, I discovered that the two skills (*dilemma identification* and *dilemma formulation*) were incomplete and that I was encountering some of the difficulties I had met last year. I decided that in the next units, I would try to improve the students' capabilities in the two skills: *dilemma identification* and *dilemma formulation*.

When teaching Unit 1, I wanted to expose students to a wide variety of dilemmas. I decided do the same when teaching the next units. I thought that such exposure would help to familiarize students with issues that can arise in schools. It would also help when they faced dilemmas in future, since it is easier to cope with the familiar.

Based on what I had learned from teaching the previous year, I introduced assignments which required students to examine the options available on each side of the dilemma and identify any positive and negative implications. I hoped this practice would limit the gap between planning and implementation that I encountered last year. Being able to assess and predict the consequences of any action can help students when planning their intervention programme. I also decided to assign this exercise earlier and use it early in teaching the subject, because it is important and requires a lot of practice.

Teaching Unit 2
Expressing Emotions When Dealing With Dilemmas
Date: 25.11.03, 2.12.03.

Background to teaching the unit
When I taught the units last year, I noticed that the way students handled their dilemmas was marked by the emotionally objective way in which they observed what they were doing. Very often, I found a lack of emotional relating. Emotional input is a key part of coping with dilemmas. The moment a student admits their feelings, and can name them, she can direct her reactions and start coping in a controlled way. She can then tell whether her emotions tend to one side of the dilemma or if she relates emotionally, e.g., empathically, to the other side as well. I therefore decided that this year, as I research the

subject for a second time, I would talk to the students at an early stage in the course about the importance of expressing their emotions and developing their awareness of them both generally and specifically when dealing with dilemmas.

A.   Emotional awareness

I started the lesson by drawing a list on the board, with the help of the students, of every emotion that we could think of. In no time, the board was covered with the names of emotions; the students were surprised at how many. They also noticed that there were more negative emotions than positive ones. I asked them what the connection was between awareness and expressing emotions, and coping with dilemmas.

Rina – "I think that we convey our emotions to children before our thoughts. In other words, we communicate what we feel towards them more readily. If there is an argument between two sides and we sympathise with one side, the other side feels it and so it is important for us to be aware of our feelings and how we express them."

Or – "If we are aware of our emotions then we can control them with our reasoning."

Miriam – "I want to give an example of this. I have now become aware that whenever I am threatened I become aggressive, which allows me to control my aggression a bit."

<u>Connecting theory and practice</u>

To link this theoretical discussion to what happens in the classroom, I asked students to present a dilemma they had faced in the previous year in kindergarten teaching or this year in school.

Miriam - "I would like to share a dilemma which has occurred in different disguises in our class; I still think about it a lot. It relates to the question of the role of the teacher with regard to children who do not fit in socially in the class. The child I am talking about looks unhappy most of the time, he is all alone in the breaks and prefers staying in the classroom. Yesterday, at break time, I asked why he did not join the children playing cards. His eyes filled up and he said, "None of them want to play with me". My dilemma is: how can I help him to integrate socially without interfering with the social relationships that occur naturally in class?"

Me – "What did you feel when you saw the little boy alone during playtime?"

Miriam – "It really hurt and saddened me to see it. This is my most difficult and painful dilemma. I think that being rejected socially could really 'wound' the child and that if it

isn't addressed, the wound will stay open and be with this person throughout his life, into adulthood as well. I know this from my own personal experience, and I believe that this situation might cause the child loss of confidence and low self-esteem."

Me – "From your tone of voice I can see that you are extremely angry with children who reject another child. Why do you think children act like this?"

Miriam – "It looks to me like children are mean by nature. If they sense weakness in another, they mistreat him."

Me – "Despite your anger, you should try to feel the other side, that is the other children's side, which might make you more effective in helping the child who was rejected."

Miriam – "It is perfectly clear here who is having a hard time. I want to help him, not the other children who belong to a large group and are stronger."

Me – "I am glad that you sympathise with the weaker party, it shows what a sensitive person you are, however, I still think you should look at the whole picture, in other words, try to empathise with the other children as well."

Analysis

Miriam's feelings reflect her desire to label the children 'bad guys' and 'good guys'. In fact, this shows a *perception of the dilemma in black and white terms* (Level 1). Miriam's way of expressing her emotions corresponds to how she *perceives the dilemma*. Even though this way shows a lot of empathy for the weaker child, it lacks feelings for the other side. She still cannot appreciate the entire picture and therefore displays anger toward one side of the problem. I learned from this that in terms of *expressing emotions*, she is at Level 1. Even though she has *expressed emotions*, as I asked her to do, her emotions are very one sided. It may be that her one-sided perception of the dilemma was caused by her difficulty in handling the *ambivalence of the dilemma*. She had problems coping with a situation with no unequivocal answer (Level 1).

I continued arguing with Miriam until we were interrupted by Or, who said, "This recalls an unpleasant experience I had when I was in school". Emotionally, she shared a very personal experience with us.

Or – "I watched a group of children playing in the break. Six-year-old Miri asked Rachel if she could join in her game. Rachel answered, 'You can't because you don't speak properly, you talk like a baby' (she made babbling noises). My dilemma was: what should

a teacher do to prevent children with a handicap from getting hurt, or at least limit how much they are hurt without putting too much focus on the child with the difficulty."

Me – "What did you feel towards the child with the impairment when you saw her rejected?"

Or – "I felt sorry, and I was also surprised because she did not react to their mockery, even though I believe she felt hurt."

Me – "And what about the children who mistreated her"

Or – "I had mixed feelings. Partly of course, I was angry that they were mean to her, and partly I understood because I realized that that is what children are like, they sometimes laugh at people who are strange or different."

Me – "If you had to do something regarding this dilemma which side would you empathise with?"

Or – "Naturally, with the little girl whose feelings were hurt."

Me– "In the light of our discussion last lesson, and thinking about the example that you gave, can you think of a way to handle the dilemma while relating emotionally to both sides, in other words, can you feel empathy toward the group of children and the disabled child and from that point determine what practical steps to take? Naturally, there are situations in which the teacher must favour one side. For example, a situation in which one child behaves very violently toward another child is totally unacceptable. In such cases, the teacher must of course adopt a very firm stance and should not show empathy or understanding to the violent child. However, in most cases, in education there is no unequivocal response. The goal is therefore to teach students to avoid jumping to conclusions and to suspend their reaction to occurrences that arise until they have conducted a critical evaluation of the situation and their reaction to it. This evaluation must show sensitivity to both sides involved in the dilemma."

Or – "I would like the group's help with that."

The students suggested different things. They told Or:
-    Adults can also be impatient with people who are different in our society;
-    It is necessary to work with children on how to relate to people who are different;
-    How about talking openly to the whole class about the little girl's problem and have them explain what problems they experience if they play with her, e.g., they said that her slow speech slows the game down, and therefore suggest how they can involve her when they play.

Analysis

My suggestion of showing empathy to both sides involved in the dilemma was just to give them an idea, to indicate how they should handle the two elements involved in a dilemma. I decided to work on this area in each lesson until the students could apply it. As in the earlier case of Miriam, Or also identified with the child with the speech impairment. However, after discussing and explaining Miriam's case, i.e., that it is important to deal with both sides of the dilemma, Or had a slightly better understanding of why we should try to empathise with badly behaved children. However, on an *emotional* level she <u>still</u> found it hard to relinquish her previous stance and continued to lean more to one side of the dilemma than the other. In other words, she was still at Level 1. We see also that even though she *formulated* all aspects of the dilemma (Level 3), her *perception of the dilemma* was still at *Level 1* because she regarded the dilemma as a black and white issue, which was also evident in her declaration of how she thought the *dilemma should be handled*. Her questions showed that she wanted to handle one side of the dilemma only (Level 1). This may have been caused by her difficulties with coping with ambivalence, i.e., situations where there is no unequivocal answer to a situation (Level 1).

Each time we analysed a dilemma, I felt an improvement in the students' awareness of their emotions and their ability to express their emotions for both sides of the dilemma. However, I felt that a lot more practice with my supervision and guidance were still needed in this area and asked for more student examples of dilemmas.

Reflection

My reflections addressed the following four areas:

• **Incorporating this unit into the new curriculum**

Over the years that I have supervised students in the various subjects taught at college, I have found that while they are very good at cognitive analysis, they lack emotional input. As I noted in my analysis of the first year of the study, I believe that the students can handle dilemmas more fully and effectively if they are in touch with the feelings aroused by the dilemma. When I first taught this unit, I tried to guide them to recognize the emotions they experience when facing a dilemma. The simpler method that they adopted before we began studying this subject was to go with the dominant emotion and act accordingly. However, I am trying to teach the students that it is more professional to handle the dilemma and deal with the different, often conflicting emotions, to acknowledge them. Of course, this technique is different from a technical and mechanical sort of

teaching, which often leads to decisions that fail to consider the situation as an entirety. I believe that this curriculum, which I have now taught for the second time, is closer to the type of curriculum that I think students need to study – in contrast to the original curriculum for the kindergarten track, which failed to address what I feel are important themes.

• Difficulties with teaching the subject

When teaching this unit I realized that I had set myself a task that was difficult to accomplish for me as an instructor of trainee teachers. There are several reasons for this: firstly, that once again I found that the students often sought dogmatic solutions and consequently preferred to focus on one particular emotion. The second reason is that, both in the first and second years, the college where I work teaches a humanistic approach to education. Consequently, students learn to empathise with those who are different or struggling in some way. During my classes, and from students' accounts of their dilemmas, I have found that this has become an automatic philosophy for students. On the one hand, I was pleased with their empathy for those who are weaker, but on the other hand, I felt that there was still a lot of work for me to do. I realised that I needed to help them to broaden their outlook and see the complex educational picture from a broader perspective.

• Function of personal stories

In the three dilemma analyses I heard in the lesson, I tried to begin teaching the students a new way to express their emotions regarding dilemmas. In other words, to teach them to relate emotionally to the people involved in each side of the dilemma. While teaching the unit, I sensed an improvement from one student to the next.

Miriam was the first to describe her dilemma. She showed a dominant emotion which related to only one side of the dilemma. My guidance and teaching, and most of all, Or's personal story, changed how the subsequent students reported their professional dilemmas. This year, similar to last year, I admit that the most dramatic change in the way students related to the subject I was teaching was due chiefly to a personal student account, which was told with great feeling. Following this account, they began to sense that they had to change how they usually related emotionally.

Tali, who described her dilemma after Miriam, was aware that her account needed to relate emotionally to both sides of the dilemma. She also had the confidence to say how difficult she found this.

Rina, the fourth student to share her dilemma, could already express her desire to change the way she handled dilemmas emotionally.

- **Looking ahead**

Teaching this unit was just the first step in teaching the complicated issue of emotionally handling professional dilemmas. From now on, I will ask students to begin every lesson by presenting and analysing a dilemma. I hope this practice will help me to teach students to become teachers who can deal with all aspects of their professional dilemmas, both emotionally and cognitively.

Teaching Unit 3
In-depth Analysis of Dilemmas
Date: 9.12.03, 16.12.03, 23.12.03

One of the conclusions I reached in the first year of the study was that students should be exposed to a wide variety of professional dilemmas. To this end, this year I introduced the custom of asking the students in turn to open the lesson with a dilemma presentation. They could present any dilemma they liked, from kindergarten (where they had done their teaching practice the previous year), or the school where they were currently conducting their teaching practice, on condition that they explained why they saw this as a dilemma (using the definition).

Apart from this helping to familiarize them with a wide diversity of dilemmas, I also wanted to improve the students' ability to analyse a dilemma so that in future they would be able to do this comfortably in their teaching practice. I therefore decided to analyse the dilemmas with the students during the class discussion using the following criteria:
- Which values clashed in the dilemma presented?
- Which emotions did the student experience as a result of the dilemma?
- What alternative actions could she take in handling the dilemma?
- What were the advantages and disadvantages of each option?

I hoped that the analyses of the dilemmas in each lesson would teach students as much as possible about coping with professional dilemmas. I also felt that this year they would be able to narrow the gap between college preparation and reality in the field. This gap, evident last year, showed me that the practice the students had was not specific enough, which is what this unit now seeks to improve.

The following is an example of the dilemmas presented in class.

Yona's dilemma

Yona – "The dilemma I encountered when teaching my first grade teaching practice class can be defined as follows: What can I say to a child who asks questions about death without making him afraid of death?

The story is that the grandmother of one of the children in my class used to take care of him after school. One day the grandmother fell ill and was hospitalised for a long time. The child was sent to a child minder after school. Now the child cannot stop talking about death. She says that she does not want to die and is going to hide so 'they' won't be able to see her. She also talks about God a lot."

Me – "Describe the dilemma in more concrete terms."

Yona – "I think she should be given information about death and I would like to do that by talking to her or by reading a story, but I am concerned that I will just make matters worse and that she will develop an even bigger problem. On the other hand, she might become more afraid if I stay quiet."

Me – "I would like us to explore which values come into conflict when you weigh up your alternative courses of action."

Yona – "Actually, both sides of the dilemma involve the same value for me, namely responsibility for the child's well being (in this case her mental state). If I react the wrong way to one side of the dilemma, I may hurt the child; on the other hand, I might hurt her if I react wrongly to the other side of the dilemma. I cannot really say which is the higher value is for."

Me – "What do you feel when you think about the different ways you could address the dilemma?"

Yona – "Most of all I feel scared, scared of doing the wrong thing, of being destructive. However, I also feel there is a possibility of helping a child in distress. I would not want

my fears to incapacitate me because I am afraid that that would spoil my enthusiasm about being a teacher."

Me – "What ideas did you have regarding what to do?"

Yona – "I thought of several things. Firstly, I considered talking directly to the child about death hoping she would ask questions, which I would then be able to answer."

Me (to the class) – "What are the advantages and disadvantages of this?"

Yona – "The advantage is that I would be able to give her information about death. Maybe knowing would make her less afraid. The explanations would be appropriate to her age and understanding."

Another student – "I think that this is also a disadvantage. Maybe knowing about death would frighten her even more because death is not easy to understand at any age."

Or – "I don't think you should be talking to very young children about death. If the teacher shows the child caring and warmth, maybe the child's fear will subside and she will feel safe."

Another student – "Maybe the child should be encouraged to express her feelings in front of the class. She can tell the other children that her grandmother is ill and maybe they will share similar fears."

Me – "Of course this also has good points and bad points."

Another student – "The advantage is that the child will feel that she is not alone, maybe that others feel like her. The disadvantage is that we do not know how the discussion will go; it may make her even more afraid. In addition, verbal expression may not be the child's strong point; maybe she will not be able to express her fears in front of the class."

Rina – "Perhaps you could help her to express herself non-verbally, by, say, drawing or play, puppets, etc."

Yona – "From my knowledge of this child, I think that would be most appropriate."

Me – "I think we have heard quite a few suggestions for what to do and their advantages and disadvantages. We cannot know the best solution for the child and we cannot be sure that there is an ideal solution because that is what a dilemma is about. However, considering all these solutions, if you were the class teacher, what would you do?"

Yona – "I would show the child empathy and say yes, death is scary. I would also encourage her to express her fears through non-verbal means. I would answer any questions regarding death in a matter of fact way, showing her warmth and trying to soothe her. I hope that this would calm her a bit. Anyway, after this conversation I feel more confident about trying to cope with it."

Analysis

Evidently, from the way Yona described her dilemma, she is at a high level in terms of her ability to *define and formulate a dilemma*. She presented the two aspects of the dilemma and identified the *conflicting values*. Her very ability to verbalise her emotions helped to portray the dilemma very well and generated the discussion and suggestions for how to handle it. The other students helped Yona *perceive the dilemma* more broadly. With my guidance and help, Yona addressed the dilemma using a high level of skills, which I hope will be useful to her if she faces a dilemma alone, without group support.

Reflection.

Last year, due to my own inexperience in teaching this new subject, and because the subject was also new for the students, I felt that we did not sufficiently practice examining dilemmas and their facets. I therefore decided to improve this next time around. To this end, each lesson I had another student describe a dilemma, which was then analysed with the whole class. This:

- broadened their repertoire of familiar dilemmas;
- helped them to cope with ambiguous situations;
- sharing a situation which is very hard to handle alone helped ease the strain of handling it alone;
- the classroom dilemma sessions provided a framework for discussing dilemmas. Thus, each student underwent similar experiences where they were required to define the dilemma, identify the values which clashed in it and the feelings that arose, and finally suggest practical ways for coping with the dilemma. Since a dilemma is a situation which mostly cannot be fully resolved, the advantages and disadvantages of all suggestions for handling it were explored.
- asking the students to describe their dilemma verbally, in front of the whole class, helped them to deal with the dilemma, since they needed to organise and offer their own suggestions for solving it.

Despite all the advantages, I often think how difficult it is for students to deal with situations that make them feel that they might fail professionally and not produce a positive outcome, no matter what they do. I think that, although they will inevitably find it difficult in the short term, in the long term their familiarity with coping with dilemmas will be useful professionally and help them in meeting the challenge of considering and seeking coping strategies.

Teaching Unit 4

How to Use Qualitative Research Tools

Date: 30.12.03, 16.1.04.

So far, I had built up the knowledge the students required to understand dilemmas, i.e., identifying them in their teaching practice, expressing them (formulation), analysing the values whose clash led to the dilemma and the emotions experienced by the teacher facing it. Now, it was time to go a step further in preparing students to tackle their chosen dilemmas in the field. To do this, they needed to acquire the tools for gathering preliminary data on their identified dilemma. They already knew the basics of this, having studied it in their first and second years. To begin with, therefore, I revised what they had learned before asking them to read on the subject and thus broaden their knowledge and connect this information to their chosen dilemma.

I taught the topic very similarly to last year. I will briefly reiterate the steps the students underwent in class:

- Revision of the material learned in previous years.
- Independent reading and study assignments, particularly regarding observation and interviewing. These tools supplemented the knowledge they had already acquired. We discussed the matter of objectivity and the difficulty of interviewing young children, which had also been raised last year.
- We reviewed different types of interviews and observations, stressing the advantages and disadvantages of each.

In view of last year's conclusions, this year I placed more emphasis on the **applied** use of qualitative research tools in their schools, and less on theoretical information. Thus, I asked them to practice observation, interviewing and drawing conclusions. The following is an example of one of these assignments:

I asked the students to each select one child from their class, to learn about the child, and present a profile of the child to the class. The profile included observations of the child, indicating the time of day the child was observed and the different learning situations involved, e.g., playing in a group, playing alone, or playing with one other child. The student was also required to interview the teacher about the child and interview the actual

child. If necessary, the student interviewed the school counsellor and other staff. The student then presented the profile of the child to the class. She stressed her methods of observation and interviewing and described what she had learned from each. I hoped this practice and others similar to it would help the students learn how to gather information about the dilemma they had identified. I also told them that the information could be collected by other means, e.g., by examining the children's work or by talking to the children both formally and informally.

Preparing regular teaching practice class teachers regarding professional dilemmas

The first year of the study revealed the difficulty students had in juggling my requirements as their instructor, the wishes of their teaching practice teacher, and their plans for their final paper. Wishing to help the students and recognizing the need to involve the regular teachers in what the students were doing with their classes, I decided in the second year of the study that I would spend some of my visit to the teaching practice school, whose main purpose was observing the students, in preparing the regular teacher. To this end, I met with all of the regular teaching practice class teachers of each school (six schools) to discuss and inform them about the subject.

In the initial meeting, I presented the students work plan and told them that the students would eventually select a dilemma that they had found in their practice class, study it and devise an intervention programme aimed at addressing it. The teachers were intrigued with this and asked me to explain and provide more specific information and explanations on the difference between dilemmas and regular problems. I promised that next time they would receive details and information in response to their questions.

The second session involved a brief but focused learning session. We discussed the differences between problem, conflict and dilemma, with emphasis on the properties of a dilemma and especially the importance of the clash of values that it involved. I explained that a dilemma is personal and individual and therefore students will be required to identify for themselves a situation that constitutes a dilemma for them personally. At the end of the session, I handed out articles for the teachers to read. I naturally asked them to tell me of any dilemmas in their professional work which they had found difficult to cope with.

The third session was practical. The teachers indicated that what they had learned from the meetings was new and interesting. They then shared their thoughts on the subject, some of which are listed below:

- I have obviously experienced dilemmas in the past, but could not put the right name to them.

- After the sessions, I became more aware of the different categories of issues I have to cope with.

- I am a highly experienced teacher. In the past, when I first started out, I often experienced dilemmas, but now I am more professional, and it is harder for me to think of any dilemma that I have.

- It is hard for me to say whether I have any dilemmas, but I will gladly discuss the subject with students if they come up with dilemmas. Having given it more thought, the social aspect of classroom life does worry me a lot. Sometimes, the children are mean to new immigrants in the class, especially the Ethiopian children, and I have trouble dealing with that. I have trouble deciding which approach to take in dealing with it.

- I am bothered by two dilemmas: one relates to introducing Israeli culture to the new immigrants in my class, who have a rich culture of their own. The other is that I wonder how I can encourage the children to write freely when the workbooks they use are highly structured in the way they teach writing.

- I heard that students last year in this school studied the dilemma of how to teach wise consumerism in children from affluent homes, i.e., profligate consumerism. This is a dilemma I would not want to address because I am sure that, no matter how hard I tried to educate the children, their parents' behaviour would spoil it and I do not pretend I want to educate the parents.

After this, I asked the teachers present to cooperate with the students and help them to analyse their dilemma once they had identified it. I explained that, although the students were meant to choose for themselves the dilemma that they wished to deal with, the teachers should also be involved in the choice by guiding the students. In other words, that they could say whether they thought that the subject the student chose was appropriate for investigation in their class, and whether it was sufficiently broad to build an intervention plan around. If they agreed on the subject I asked the teachers if they would offer the students the benefit of their experience in planning an intervention programme suitable for

the population of children. The teachers agreed to this request saying that they were pleased at being prepared for the students' teaching practice.

Reflection

I was better pleased than last year with the way I taught the use of qualitative research tools for gathering data on dilemmas. The practice the students gained after we studied observations and interviewing was effective without being coercive and helped motivate them. This was because they chose the child they wanted to study and planned the observations and interviews themselves. Their presentation to the rest of the class reflected their enthusiasm about having studied the child's personality inside out. Their presentations stressed what they had learned from their observations and interviews. My impression was that the knowledge and experience gained would be useful to them in gathering data and researching their chosen dilemma and in the course of their teaching practice.

I was very impressed with the regular teachers' enthusiasm for what I told them about dilemmas. One of the teachers said, "I have learned a lot from these talks. Until now, I felt like I was being used for the students to practice teaching. Now I feel more involved and I have learned a whole new subject".

Teaching Unit 5
Identifying Dilemmas
Date: 13.1.04, 20.1.04.

In the lesson, I asked students to suggest ideas for dilemmas they wished to tackle. In contrast to last year, this year I decided to thoroughly examine the subjects they chose. The emphasis was on deciding whether the subjects were appropriate for teacher training students to investigate.

Similar to the last time I taught this unit, the students once again seemed interested in investigating extreme cases, for example, if a child had particularly unusual behaviour. I explained to them that they would be required to choose a broad dilemma spanning several issues. The shift from discussing small dilemmas in the classroom to addressing one major dilemma covering several areas was gradual and spanned several lessons. Until they chose their final dilemma, the students brought examples of dilemmas meeting the conditions I

set. I either discussed the proposed dilemma with the student individually or with both the student and her teaching practice class teacher.

The following are the dilemmas chosen for their projects by the sample students:

Rina: *Is it appropriate to address moral issues arising in bible stories with young children, and if so, what approach should we use?*

Tali: *How can we educate children to accept those who are different without hurting the feelings of children who are 'different'?*

Miriam: *How should we teach science to very young children (which is time consuming) and also fulfil our obligations in other subjects?*

Yona: *How can we teach children with different abilities without spoiling the social climate and producing unhealthy competition?*

Or: *Is it fair to divide our teaching time equally between learners of different abilities in response to student variance?*

The differences between the various topics are evident. While the subjects chosen by Rina, Tali and Or concern specific, defined subjects, the other two issues are broader and involve general class management. Despite my fears that perhaps the subjects were too broad, I nevertheless agreed for the students to go ahead and investigate them. I gave Yona permission because she was highly motivated to tackle this subject. I believed that because she was an outstanding student with high cognitive skills she could cope with the dilemma. I agreed to the dilemma Miriam chose because she was very keen on the subject and her teaching practice teacher said that it was very important from the class's point of view for her to address this issue. The teacher promised to stay involved and support Miriam's intervention programme.

Analysis

The *formulation of the dilemmas* showed that most of the students had reached Level 3 in this category. The students' formulation encompassed all *aspects of the dilemma.* We see that the students chose ambivalent subjects rather ones that necessarily had solutions (Level 3). Thus, the subjects they chose were subjects without an *unequivocal solution* or perhaps with no solution at all.

<u>Explaining the choice of dilemma</u>

Very similarly to the first year of the study, the students this year had strong emotional reasons for choosing a situation, defining it as a dilemma and opting to tackle it. Each student explained her reasons for the choice of her dilemma in highly emotional terms. For example, it was no coincidence that **Rina** chose to concentrate on the Bible, since she comes from a religious background herself and studied Torah for many years in religious schools. Now that she has experienced teaching the Bible in a secular school, and has become more secular herself, she has begun asking questions about how to teach 'difficult' biblical narrative.

<u>Values in the chosen dilemma</u>

Each student was required to identify the values that clashed in her chosen dilemma. The following are examples of these values:

Yona explained in my first interview with her (in answer to question 3, see Appendix 5) that in the dilemma she wished to investigate, there were two values that clashed. One was an important value, namely 'difference', and concerned her meeting the different needs and abilities in the class, while the second was equality. It was important for her to establish a climate of equality between the children, with a view to preventing competition, which would spoil the social climate of the class.

Rina – found a number of conflicting values in her dilemma. She explained thus: one part of the dilemma concerns the importance of remaining **faithful** to the text and the children's right to know and learn the original Bible text without editorialising. This point relates to the teacher's integrity to tell the story as it is without interpretation. The other part of the dilemma concerns the teacher's **responsibility** and her understanding that young children can only grasp abstract notions like morality and justice in a limited way.

Analysis

Both the above examples demonstrate that the students had addressed the *values at both ends of the dilemma* (Level 3), and not just one of the values as they might have done. Similarly, they identified and defined the clash between these values.

<u>How the students handled ambivalence in their dilemma</u>

After the students had identified and defined the dilemma, we began discussing how to tackle the dilemma in the classroom. Because a dilemma has no single clear answer, each student needed to suggest various alternatives and arguments for and against each action. Rina's ideas were as follows:

Firstly, she explained that for her, the content of certain Bible stories raise numerous dilemmas (for example, the story of God asking Abraham to sacrifice Isaac) and she is unsure how to tackle them.

She explained that her reasons 'for' teaching Bible stories were:

- The ideas in the Bible are still relevant today and provide a basis for interesting classroom discussion;
- It is important to adhere to the authenticity of the story;
- The Bible is part of our Jewish culture.

The negative aspects of teaching Bible stories were:

- Some stories are too difficult for young children too understand, for example, the (almost) sacrifice of Isaac;
- Many commentaries exist on the Bible. How should the teacher know which ones are appropriate for the children?

Analysis

This activity, which the students conducted before tackling the dilemma in school, had several goals. The main aim was to help them *perceive all aspects of the dilemma* they had chosen (Level 3). In other words, to understand the main elements that made this situation a dilemma. Moreover, the task helped them to cope with the ambivalence *of the dilemma* they had picked. In other words, they could see that there was no unequivocal solution to the dilemma, or perhaps no good solution at all (Level 3). The very choice of the subject and expressing it as a dilemma is an advanced stage in dealing with ambivalence. The analysis was the stage bridging the preparation for tackling the dilemma and the actual implementation in class.

Student study of the professional literature addressing the dilemma issue

After they had selected and analysed the subject for their dilemma, I required the students to study up on the issue involved in the dilemma. In other words, they had to read relevant

and current professional data to gain a comprehensive understanding of their chosen dilemma topic. The aim of this was to help them develop their professional intervention programme for coping with the dilemma practically.

For some subjects, the relevant literature was clear, for example, **Rina's** Bible topic. However, in other cases, the students needed help deciding what they should read about; for example, **Or's** subject which concerned teacher time management. When I interviewed her, she said that she had started work on the dilemma without reading the theoretical background and that was not good. She said she felt this was missing from her intervention and that most of what she did in the intervention was based on her own ideas.

Choosing a strategy for handling the dilemma

From my experience the previous year, I decided that it would be better to teach them several coping strategies and let them to decide which was most appropriate for their dilemma. (In Year 1, I only touched on the subject of coping strategies). Before actually tackling the dilemma, I also wanted them to predict the outcome of their intervention. My aim was that this more intensive process would encourage more students to really try to confront the dilemma. In other words, to tackle both sides of the dilemma at the same time, unlike the previous year, when they chose in advance only to tackle one side of it.

I began by describing a 'minor', but very common dilemma, often encountered by students teaching very young children. Students often report that children frequently ask if they can go to the toilet. It is difficult for students to know what to do because if they let one child out, the rest all ask to go and the lesson is spoiled. If they do not allow them to leave there is the risk of someone being unable to hold out. I asked the students to consider the strategies for tackling this dilemma.

Miriam – "I do not think you have a choice. These are very young children, so you must let them go because maybe they really cannot hold it in."
Me – "Maybe you are right, but this only addresses one part of the dilemma since we have not solved the question of spoiling the lesson. Also, know that medically speaking, six-year old children can last without going to the toilet for an hour. Maybe this does not solve the dilemma, because nevertheless, in some cases the children, because they are young, may not be able to hold on."

Rina – "My class's teacher does not allow them to leave. She orders the children to go to the toilet in the break. True, if she sees a child wriggling on the seat or complaining of tummy ache, she will allow them to go."

Me (addressing the class) – "What do you think? Is this what you would call 'managing the dilemma', handling both parts of the dilemma?"

Or – "It feels like a compromise. The teacher does not allow the children to go to the toilet, but she is also flexible and sensitive to their feelings."

Tali – "Superficially, it seems like a good solution, but my teacher tried the same thing and the result was that many children have learned that if they wriggle on their seats, the teacher will let them go to the toilet. What happens now is that many children leave in the middle of the lesson, but do not always go to the toilet. We occasionally find them wandering around in the yard."

Me – "As you see it is not easy, handling dilemmas, even if they are not very complex. However, a strategy was presented that one would call a **compromise**. This teacher used a compromise between extreme solutions, a compromise between the values brought into conflict in the dilemma. There was no unequivocal solution, but an idea for managing the dilemma; this ameliorates the dilemma. The teacher does not officially agree that the children may go to the toilet in the middle of the lesson, but she allows the children room to communicate their needs, and lets them leave if required."

At this point I tried to focus on the students' reaction, and asked: "What strategy will you use to handle the dilemma that you have chosen and what results do you predict?"

Rina – "I considered the two parts of the dilemma carefully. However, I decided to **choose one side of the dilemma**. In other words, for the children and I to address the moral issues that arise in the Bible and for me to raise the questions for discussion, even if the children don't. I predict that by the end of my intervention, the children will have improved their thinking and moral reasoning skills and their discussion skills, all of which they currently do not have."

Me – "I want to return to your reasons against raising moral issues with young children and ask whether the children will understand the subject and whether it might frighten them unnecessarily."

Rina – "Because I have formulated both sides of the dilemma and weighed the positive and negative outcomes that might stem from the intervention, I am aware of the possibility

you suggest and, if it arises, I may decide to change my technique for handling the dilemma."

Tali – "Regarding my dilemma, I think there is no choice but to address **both aspects of the dilemma at the same time** because I want to help the children in my class who are different but without dwelling on them. In order to address both aspects of the dilemma at the same time, I will first work with the children on the subject of difference without mentioning any children in the class who are different (for example, because of their skin colour). I plan to use stories and poetry which talk about children who are different in the same ways as the children in our class, for example, stories about Ethiopian children, children who had immigrated to Israel from Russia, children living in shelters for battered women, etc. I hope to raise the understanding of their condition and stop the insults they suffer so that they feel no different to the rest of the class."

Analysis

The difference between the two students is clear: Rina is at Level 2 of the category *choosing a coping strategy*, i.e., she was aware of all aspects of the dilemma, but to a limited degree, leading to her decision to tackle only one side of the dilemma. On the other hand, Tali had a deeper grasp of the dilemma and so chose a *strategy for dealing with both parts of the dilemma at the same time* (Level 3).

Planning the intervention

The final stage of preparing the students to tackle their dilemma in practice involved the intervention programme they were required to plan. The programme was very similar in structure to that required from the students in Year 1 of the study, comprising 10-15 teaching units, which involved a variety of teaching contexts, group learning, full class, and a variety of teaching tools. The intervention consisted of:

- Conducting the programme in their practice class.
- Presenting the intervention findings in writing: analysing the intervention results in light of the theory, analysing the successes and difficulties encountered during the intervention, discussing the implications and recommendations of the intervention, and evaluating and reflecting on the intervention process as a whole.
- Oral presentation of the highlights of the intervention to the college class.

Reflection

I was very impressed with the dilemmas that the students wished to study. I thought that they were interesting, challenging and typical of a teacher's work, and would therefore help students to develop their professionalism in preparation for becoming teachers. Moreover, they related to genuine classroom problems, and in many cases were selected with the help of the regular teachers, who were closely involved in the decision process.

Here again, I saw how powerful a dilemma is when it touches on a personal issue for the individual. For example, it was interesting to see how Rina, who comes from a religious background and works in a secular school, wished to tackle dilemmas relating to the Bible; and Tali, who in class showed such sensitivity toward the children with special difficulties, chose a dilemma that addressed differences between children in her class. In both cases, the students were very affected by their topics.

Reflection on teaching units 1-5

A comparison of the teaching of the students in Year 1 and Year 2 of the study, revealed the following differences:

1. In Year 2, it took less time to move from the stage of formulating the dilemma to the stage of constructing the intervention programme.

2. Less individual sessions were required with the students to help them choose their dilemma, and they needed less guidance in relation to the theory they read as background to their dilemma. I think this was mainly due to the basic work they had done on the subject the previous year, even though this was not taught in a structured way. The second reason concerns the experience I had gained from the first year of teaching this subject. The fact that I had already covered the course once, from start to finish, was a tremendous help.

3. The students did well in many of the categories, e.g., in identifying and formulating the dilemma, and coping with ambivalence. I was satisfied, because I had achieved my goals. I hoped that the professional preparation I had given the students would reduce the gap, which had arisen in the first year, between their declared intentions at the preparatory stage and what actually occurred in the field.

4. In my opinion, the most important change in Year 2 was the dramatic increase in the number of students who stated that they wished to manage the dilemma and who did not opt, in advance, to just tackle one aspect of it. There were two reasons for the difference this year; firstly, the message I communicated in class that it was important

to recognise the two sides of the dilemma and that both sides can be dealt with, and secondly, the students received additional tools for tackling both sides of the dilemma. Thus, the large number of dilemma cases discussed and analysed in class, gave them the confidence that it was indeed feasible to cope with their dilemmas.

Unfortunately, a few students, including Rina, still said that they would only tackle one side of the dilemma. I found it hard to accept that, despite all my efforts, some students remained at this level. However, I took comfort in the thought that most had understood what I wanted and I still had hopes that actually working on the dilemma in the classroom would raise these students' level. When I finished teaching the five units, I was very curious to see whether the majority of the students would cope with the dilemma in school as they intended.
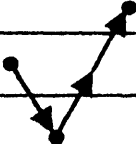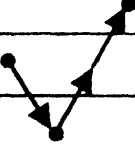
5. They learned to observe their practice class and to ask questions. They learned to be more critical of what they saw in class and to believe that they could do something to improve matters. In the end, they learned the 'language of dilemmas', namely they learned that dilemmas are comprised of conflicting elements and values which require the teacher to consider carefully what to do.

Findings – Year 2 of the Study – In College

The following is an analysis of the students' achievements in handling dilemmas and the students' achievements in learning the subject on campus in Year 2 (see Table 6.1). (Appendix 5 elaborates on the analysis of the five sample students' achievements focusing on the categories.)

Table 6.1: Analysis of Findings – In College – Second Year of Study

		Rina	Or	Miriam	Yona	Tali
A. Identifying the Dilemma	3. Making a connection between the definition of what constitutes a dilemma and the situation one is facing.	●	●	●	●	●
	2. Defining the dilemma.					
	1. Sensing that a dilemma exists.					

		Rina	Or	Miriam	Yona	Tali
B. Formulating the Dilemma	3. All dilemma indicators are present.	↗			↗	↗
	2. Some dilemma indicators.		●	●		
	1. All dilemma indicators are missing.					

		Rina	Or	Miriam	Yona	Tali
C. Culture-Reference	3. Addressing the environment in its cultural context.					
	2. Relates the environment to own cultural context.	●	●	—	—	—
	1. Lack of reference to cultural context.					

		Rina	Or	Miriam	Yona	Tali
D. Perceiving the Dilemma	3. Broadly perceives of all aspects of the dilemma.					
	2. Perceives some aspects of the dilemma.	●	●	↘	●	↘
	1. Black and white perspective.					

		Rina	Or	Miriam	Yona	Tali
E. Coping with Ambivalence	3. Student chooses intractable issues.					
	2. Student chooses to address difficult, but solvable issues.					
	1. Student chooses to deal with issues that promise success.					

		Rina	Or	Miriam	Yona	Tali
F. Coping with Conflicting Values	3. Copes with the clash between all values involved in the dilemma		●	●		●
	2. Only addresses one of the values involved in the dilemma.					
	1. Simplification of situation, relates to global values					

		Rina	Or	Miriam	Yona	Tali
G. Expressing Emotions	3. Expresses emotions when handling dilemma					
	2. No cognitive-affective symmetry					
	1. Student presents the dilemma ignoring the emotional dimension		●	●		

		Rina	Or	Miriam	Yona	Tali
H. Choosing a Coping Strategy	3. Student fully addresses all aspects of the dilemma		●	●	●	●
	2. Student addresses the entire dilemma but in a limited fashion	●				
	1. Student addresses only one aspect of the dilemma					

While the above analysis focuses on the **categories** (described in detail in Appendix 5) the following analyses the findings in terms of the **process** that each of the students underwent.

Important findings about the progress the students made

The details below illustrate the progress of the five students sampled and the areas of variance in their progress.

- Generally, there was a fair degree of similarity in the students' progress, with no drastic differences apart from two categories, the *cultural* aspect of the dilemma and *choosing the coping strategy* for the dilemma at the end of the on-campus course. The former was only relevant to Or and Rina who both came from religious backgrounds and who both had difficulty maintaining an objective cultural stance. Regarding the second category, a significant difference was evident compared with Year 1. In Year 2, four out of the five students decided in advance that they would tackle both sides of the dilemma, and only Rina, despite all she had been taught in class, chose to approach the dilemma asymmetrically, i.e., to mostly emphasise one side of the dilemma.

- Compared to Year 1 of the study, Year 2 was marked by drastic changes in student progress. In other words, I initially thought that some students had reached a high level but they then demonstrated that they were at a lower level. This happened with Miriam and Tali's perceptions of their dilemma and with Rina and Tali's handling of ambivalence. However, both Rina and Tali managed to improve their level in the latter category when we practiced handling dilemmas.

- The category in which students reached the lowest levels, despite the considerable work on the subject, was handling the emotional side of coping with dilemmas. Or and Miriam had not managed to move beyond Level 1 by the end of the course. Rina and Tali, who also started at Level 1, progressed to Level 2 after great effort, and only Yona reached Level 3. Apparently the students found it very difficult to express their emotions this year because they had not been previously prepared to do so in the early years of training.

- There were several differences in the students' progress: Yona reached the highest level in all categories except for D. In contrast, Tali also attained high

levels, but had difficulty perceiving the dilemma at a high level and during her intervention still tended to see it in black and white. The other three students made more or less similar progress, i.e., they did well in some categories and poor to middling in others.

This finding was especially interesting since it showed that there was not necessarily a relationship between the student's general academic performance and her progress in coping with professional dilemmas which did not require academic writing skills or previous academic knowledge, but instead required motivation, sensitivity, understanding and reasoning. Yona, who was not one of the strongest students in the class, handled her dilemma the best. In contrast, Miriam, considered a good academic student, did not do well in this subject.

Implications of findings for the new curriculum topic

Through teaching the subject of coping with professional dilemmas for two years, I learned a great deal about the optimum curriculum for teaching student teachers who will be encountering professional dilemmas in their school/preschool work. My insights concern two main issues; the first issue is the main subjects we need to teach college students in order to prepare them for the classroom, the second is the categories relating to the perceptual skills and abilities the student needs for each stage of learning the subject.

Below I present an outline for teacher trainers wishing to adopt this syllabus. It shows the subject headings and the order of teaching each subject.

Syllabus section A

Helping students to gain knowledge and understanding of the main subject concepts

Subject	Skill Required (Category Reference)
Understanding the terms 'problem', 'conflict', 'dilemma'	–
Identifying dilemmas in teaching practice	Identifying the dilemma Perceiving the dilemma
Formulating dilemmas faced in teaching practice	Identifying the dilemma Formulating the dilemma Perceiving the dilemma

Identifying the conflicting values of the dilemma	Identifying the dilemma
	Formulating the dilemma
	Perceiving the dilemma
	Coping with conflicting values
Discussions and decisions regarding strategies for coping with the dilemma	Identifying the dilemma
	Formulating the dilemma
	Perceiving the dilemma
	Coping with ambivalence
	Coping with conflicting values
	Expressing emotions

Syllabus Section B

Practicing the skills learned

Section B of the syllabus involves the practice and in-depth analysis of professional dilemmas based on the above stages. All skill categories are used apart from the category 'Choosing a Coping Strategy'.

Syllabus Section C:

Handling the dilemma in the classroom

Subject	Skill Required (Category Reference)
Qualitative Research Tools	–
Choosing a dilemma met in teaching practice	Identifying the dilemma
	Formulating the dilemma
	Perceiving the dilemma
Choosing a strategy for coping with the dilemma	All categories
Planning an intervention programme for coping with the dilemma in the classroom	All categories

As the outline shows, the earlier stages of coping with dilemmas call for very few skills. However, the deeper one delves into the dilemma with a view to tackling it in the classroom, the more perceptual skills and abilities (represented by the categories) are needed. For example, to identify a dilemma in her teaching practice class, the student

mostly needs the skills of being able to *identify a dilemma* and *perceive the dilemma,* although she does not have to be particularly competent at it. On the other hand, when planning an intervention programme, the student will be addressing the dilemma in teaching practice and will require skills from all the categories. Thus, she needs to - *identify the dilemma* and then:

- *formulate* both sides of the dilemma so that she can decide which steps to take to cope with these sides.

- When constructing an intervention, a student must be able to cope with the *ambivalence* of the situation, i.e., plan activities that address difficult or insoluble issues.

- This aspect of the dilemma involves a *clash between* the personal *values* held by the student (otherwise, the situation does not constitute a dilemma).

- The clash of values prompts the individual to seek a solution, or at least 'manage' the situation even though insoluble.

- This requires developing activities in line with her *coping strategy,* which was chosen from several alternatives for tackling the dilemma. Strategy selection incorporates all above categories and:

- requires the student's awareness of her feelings toward the parties involved. This awareness will help her to decide which side of the dilemma she feels greater empathy towards. Occasionally,

- the *culture* the student is from, or her personal, culture related beliefs would affect her choice of coping strategy.

The number of topics taught in each syllabus section does not indicate the time required to teach that section. Section B, which is wholly devoted to intensive practice in handling dilemmas, may require more college teaching time than Sections A and C.

Further insights into the syllabus

Two years of college-based teaching has provided me with sufficient insight to be able offer recommendations to teacher trainers wishing to teach the subject.

There were both similarities and differences in the college-based teaching for both years of the study. The next section of the analysis is concerned with the points of similarity between the two years.

- Almost all the students were interested in tackling issues that they could solve. At this point in their training, as they struggled to develop their professionalism, what they wanted was a '**solid structure to lean on**', some hard and fast rules that spelled out what they should and should not do in teaching.

Actually, I faced a dilemma in asking them to look for situations that posed dilemmas for them, since I knew that this thwarted their desire to find clear-cut rules and harmony in their chosen profession. This desire was no doubt responsible for their difficulty with *ambivalence*, and *perceiving all aspects of the dilemma*, which remained throughout the course. It was most evident in their desire for quick, clear solutions to their dilemmas – even after formulating both sides of the dilemma, identifying the values that clashed for them, and discovering that no easy solution existed.

- During the two years that I taught dilemmas, I regularly observed the **strong emotions** that they provoked in students. Dilemmas, whose very nature involves controversy, often stimulated discussion and fierce argument in class. Some students thought you should behave one way while others thought you should do the reverse. Due to the lack of equivocal answers, students tried to convince one another of their arguments. Moreover, the cultural heterogeneity of all Israeli classes also characterised my classes, greatly affecting the climate. Many of the arguments concerned values. At such times, it was exceedingly difficult to restore order and calm to the proceedings. Everyone thought the dilemma should be addressed their way, a way in fact based on their own cultural norms and values.

- Even though these were third year students, they were nevertheless **preoccupied with less complex dilemmas** such as whether children should be allowed to go to the toilet in the middle of class, whether a child who is reluctant to speak in a group setting should be encouraged to speak or her silence respected. To lead students to the point where they were willing to explore classroom dilemmas involving general class management issues required several months of practicing 'minor' dilemmas. This practice was important in another way: the dilemmas they raised troubled them greatly and our dilemma classes were the only place where they could legitimately raise and try to address them.

- In both Year 1 and Year 2, I found that sharing **personal issues** and **issues relating to their own teaching experience** helped students to understand the knotty issues and shortened the teaching process. In other words, it was easier for me to explain professional concepts and issues, and for them to understand them, after a student had given an example from her own experience. Occasionally this was experience from before college. At other times it concerned their teaching studies. In both cases, the experience invariably produced drastic change and a better understanding of what I wished to teach.

- I realised that students cannot be taught about coping with professional dilemmas in the same way as their other subjects. With dilemmas, the student **experienced a process**. Their progress was relatively slow and practice was necessary at every step of the learning. There were differences in the individual students' progress. When I asked them to choose a coping strategy for their dilemma, some were ready to tackle both parts of the dilemma together, while others could only handle one part. Apparently, the latter had not received sufficient college preparation to attain the high level.

Despite the similarities between Years 1 and 2, there were also differences. Some of these differences are described below:

- As noted before, sample students in both years had difficulty *coping with ambivalence* and *perceiving the dilemma*. There were also variances in the nature of these difficulties. In Year 1, the students were clearly trying to 'blame' other people for their dilemmas, the regular teacher being the main scapegoat. They regularly maintained that if only the regular teacher had conducted matters differently, there would be no dilemma. In the second year, on the other hand, the students came to me at a higher level, although they still did not know much about the subject I was teaching. This group seemed to experience different difficulties from the Year 1 group in terms of *coping with ambivalence*. They clung to one side of the dilemma and tried to justify their wish to address one aspect alone. Sometimes, they could only show emotion and empathy for the side of the dilemma they wished to address. Intensive study and practice were needed to teach them that it is important to address both sides of the dilemma in parallel where this is feasible.

- As noted, there was cultural heterogeneity within the sample of students in both Year 1 and Year 2. In Year 1 however, there was far greater heterogeneity within the group as a quarter were Arab students, one was a new immigrant from Russia and several came from traditional or religious homes. Naturally, this social mix had a powerful impact on our class discussion. Significant differences were evident between the cultural values expressed and, since many of the dilemmas involved social issues, students often argued and disagreed. While these situations were sometimes difficult, they nevertheless contributed to the understanding of dilemmas by teaching students about dilemmas and subjectivity. It proved to them that what might be a dilemma for one person is not for the next. They also came to appreciate the great differences between people's values.

- The degree of **involvement of the regular teachers** in the two years of the study also differed significantly. In Year 2, the teachers were far more involved, from the stage where the student chose her dilemma to the end of the intervention. The regular teacher's involvement very positively affected the level at which the student tackled the dilemma. All stages of coping with the dilemma were pleasanter and the students showed more confidence. They felt they were not facing the 'battle' alone and there was someone to talk to. The regular teacher made them feel that she really welcomed their efforts with her class. Being the first time I had taught the subject, in Year 1 I did not realise how important it was to involve the regular teacher as I was intently focused on preparing the students. I took it for granted that the regular teacher would be involved in the students' work, when in fact, the teachers required far more involvement in the student's work.

- There were **differences** between **the college-based teaching** in Year 2 and Year 1. Looking back on Year 2, I was more satisfied with the process and results. In Year 2, although I did not spend much time teaching the subject – 25 minutes of a 90-minute lesson – I did teach it consistently, every week, throughout the year. This contrasted with Year 1, when I taught the subject throughout the year, but not every week, and when I taught it, I taught if for an entire lesson. The approach of teaching in 'small doses' consistently every week in which the class presented and analysed different dilemmas on a weekly basis helped students to absorb the subject and learn it at their own pace. Moreover, it helped to avoid staleness, ensuring the

freshness and challenge of the subject learned. In contrast, in Year 1, I felt that the students were being taught too quickly and too intensively.

- There were differences between the students' **dilemma topics** in Year 1 and Year 2. These differences were due to the fact that I myself was learning how to teach the subject. Year 1 was the first time I had taught dilemmas and sometimes I permitted students to tackle issues which, with hindsight, were more appropriate for experienced teachers and in fact proved excessively complex for someone at student level. By Year 2, however, I had learned how to guide students in selecting topics. I realised that the issues should not be too simple (otherwise they would be more of a problem than a dilemma), and nor should they be too complex and frustrate the students when their interventions produced scanty results.

Part B - From Theory to Practice – In The School

This section describes and analyses the students' intervention programmes in the second year of the study. The interventions took place in the teaching practice classes of the five students chosen to represent the research population in the second cycle. The concluding section of the chapter examines the students' reports of the reflective process they experienced and their evaluation of the process they underwent.

Similar to the first cycle of the study, in the second cycle, the following four tools were used to gather the data:
- My observations of the students work on the subject of their chosen dilemma.
- Interviews with students.
- The final papers written by students documenting how they tackled the dilemma.
- Formal and informal discussions with students in college and at their practice school.

All comments appearing in Chapter 5 relating to cycle 1 also apply to the data for Year 2.

The practical part of the course (i.e., the intervention) took place between January and June 2004. The data analysis was carried out using the categories applied in the analysis in cycle 1 of the study in the part conducted in the practice school.

Let us now turn to a discussion of two of the dilemmas listed earlier in this chapter (p. 221).

Clarifying the conflicting values of the dilemma

Or

When Or began her intervention activities, she was able to focus on the dilemma more pertinently. In her final project paper, she wrote: "The subject of this paper is the dilemma: **Does dividing teaching time between children enable the teacher to respond equitably to differences in learning pace?**" When I interviewed her, she explained that this dilemma concerned a clash between two values, the value of equality and the value of respecting differences in others. On the one hand, everyone has the same natural rights and hence the children all have the right to equal teaching time from the teacher and equal conditions to enable them to maximize their potential. On the other hand, people vary in terms of abilities, background, preferences, needs and learning styles. Differences between pupils calls for variation in resource allocation, teaching style and teaching time, depending on the child.

When we discussed this point, Or indicated that she felt her dilemma involved two conflicting requirements which could not both be met at the same time. Choosing one particular approach would infringe on the opposing value so that the dilemma could not be fully solved. Ultimately, though, one approach needed to be chosen to be able to tackle and manage the dilemma.

Analysis

From Or's description of the issues she felt were involved on either side of the dilemma, we can see she has a broad *perception* of the dilemma (Level 3). She *perceived* all aspects of the dilemma. She had clear intentions to undertake a comprehensive examination of how to *address the two clashing values* (the value of equality and the value of respecting diversity) concurrently (Level 3). Neither does the *ambivalent* situation she describes deter her, although it is complex. In Or's case, though, her *critical thinking* is marked by tremendous uncertainty (Level 2). Every dilemma has two facets, and the way she *managed her dilemma* reflected her desire to reach a decision as to which side of the dilemma was more important to her, and to orient her intervention accordingly. Of course, this is not the highest level in terms of handling the conflict of values.

Tali

Tali described her dilemma as follows: **How can we teach children to be tolerant and accepting of children in their class who are different without hurting the 'different' children's feelings?**

After Tali drew up her intervention programme, she realised that she had included discussions referring specifically to the physical appearance of children in the class. Her argument went thus, "On the one hand, I cannot limit the children's freedom of expression. On the other hand, though, they might hurt or disrespect a classmate by referring to their appearance, for example". In other words, for Tali, the most important value was not insulting the dignity of the children in her class who were different. She explained that she wanted the 'different' children (e.g., Ethiopian background children) not to feel disadvantaged or rejected. She wanted the atmosphere in her class to be one of cooperation and respect (this was the value she had in mind), and to achieve this she wanted everyone in the class to discuss the matter of relating to differences in others in society in general and specifically relating to differences in others in the class. However, doing this could provoke the situation she said she feared. She formulated two pairs of values which clashed for her: one pair involved creating an atmosphere of **respect** for those who are different while avoiding violating their **privacy**. The second pair of values concerned **freedom of expression** for all children, but again, without showing **disrespect** to the children who are different. These are actually the same values, with slightly different nuances.

Analysis

Like Or, Tali also *perceived* the dilemma broadly. She expressed all the problematic aspects of the dilemma she had formulated: in other words, her desire to avoid hurting the children who were "different" versus allowing everyone to express their feelings, thoughts and opinions, even regarding the "different" children. She expressed the *clashing values* well (Level 3). The situation she describes is *ambiguous*. In other words, one cannot say for certain what the best thing to do is, and what would cost the lowest price, in terms of consequences. This notwithstanding she was undeterred from formulating and showing interest in tackling this dilemma (Level 3). She stated her intention of *managing the dilemma in practice* (Level 3), and of coping concurrently with both aspects of it, i.e., discussing the negative way some children treat those who are different while avoiding

humiliating and drawing attention to the very children who are different. That Tali thought so intensely about how best to tackle her dilemma shows *critical thinking*, at least to a Level 2 degree.

Pre-intervention class assessment

Before the students conducted their interventions, they studied the dilemma they had identified in depth. This involved evaluating the class before commencement. Several tools were used for this, including observation and interviews with children or the regular teacher if necessary. Two examples are given below:

Yona

The subject of Yona's dilemma was: **How can we teach children with different abilities without spoiling the social climate and producing unhealthy competition?**

Yona held observations and realised that while there were significant differences between the children in terms of learning pace, the current teaching method was mostly frontal and failed to suitably meet the children's needs. Yona saw that frontal teaching tended to lose some of the children along the way. In other words, the needs of the less able children were not being met adequately. She also saw that when the teacher taught new material she addressed the middle range children in the class, so that the more advanced children were bored and what she taught was insufficient for the less advanced children. She noted that the teacher tended to praise the more advanced children in the class and that this caused a negatively competitive classroom climate.

This is how Yona expressed her opinions and feelings following her assessment:
"I think that if some children get more attention than others, the less able will absorb this and be affected by it in future. For this reason, I believe that one of the teacher's roles is to help children feel that she sees them all as equals and pays them all equal attention in class. I also think that each child's needs should be met. Children learn in different ways and at different rates, and the teacher should know all their abilities and if possible adapt her teaching methods to their needs."

Analysis

From Yona's assessment, we can see that she has defined the *conflicting values* (equality of opportunity versus responding to diversity) and intended to *manage the dilemma in*

241

practice, addressing both values at the same time. Her formulation of the dilemma indicates that she *perceived* both sides of the dilemma, i.e., she believed it was important to respond appropriately to each child's needs while addressing the diversity in children's abilities (Level 3). Her *critical thinking* is evident from the very fact that she questions the regular teacher's approach and wants to explore other alternatives (Level 2). Although she sees from her evaluation that the situation is *ambivalent*, she nevertheless wishes to tackle it.

Miriam

"When teaching this class, I noticed that science is taught in a way that contradicts the spirit of the subject, i.e., the children are taught using the frontal teaching approach and a workbook. This created a dilemma. I wondered if children could absorb unfamiliar, complex phenomena without the experience of investigation and discovery. How can children be deprived of experiencing the simplest possible experiments? The other side is that I understand the teacher's difficulties. I saw how much material must be covered, both by the teacher and the children. This is because of the school principal's demands that the children (38 in the class) reach high achievement in reading and arithmetic. There is no time left for the teacher to organize the children in groups for research and discovery lessons or experiential learning about nature. I formulated my dilemma thus: **How should we teach science to very young children (which is time consuming) and also fulfil our obligations in other subjects?**

Analysis

Miriam's evaluation and the formulation of her dilemma point to her *critical thinking* abilities. She sets aside her conformance with class norms seeking a different solution for managing the class. She *perceives* the dilemma broadly, i.e., both sides of the dilemma (Level 3). Her questions indicate how *ambivalent* she found this situation. However, she still formulated a dilemma that she intended to tackle.

Examples of intervention work
Yona

Some of Yona's intervention activities were for homogenous groups based on the children's level of ability while other activities were for heterogeneous groups. The aim was to allow equal space to every child and at the same time allow each child to express him or herself. As a reminder, Yona's dilemma was: **How can we teach children with**

different abilities without spoiling the social climate and producing unhealthy competition?

The following is one of the activities Yona conducted in her class:

The activity was called "Cover page and heading for a story" and was planned for a heterogeneous group.

Activity goals:

To practice story writing;

To teach the children to speculate and predict events after hearing a story;

To make all the children in the class feel good and that they are all capable

- Yona showed the children a number of empty book jackets – a different one each time;
- The children looked at the pictures on the covers and at the name of the story;
- She asked the children to speculate about the content of the story;
- Each child chose one of the book covers and wrote a story inspired by it.

Yona's reflection

"This activity involved the children in mutual enrichment in a heterogeneous group. The activity allowed children who are considered less able in terms of their rate of progress to contribute to children who are considered stronger pupils in regular class activities and vice versa. I was pleased that one of the weaker children spoke well in the group. I felt that I had allowed him an opportunity to express himself and contribute to the other children. The differences between the children's levels were not apparent in the discussion; however, the differences did emerge very clearly at the story writing stage. At first, the least able child had not wanted to write a story, but when I sat with him and helped him, he agreed and wrote a short story. I expect that his objection can be ascribed to negative past experiences relating to writing."

Analysis

In the activity described above, we find a genuine effort by Yona to *manage both aspects of the dilemma in practice*. Both the aspect which says that we should nurture each child's ability individually and the aspect which says that we should maintain a pleasant, non-competitive climate in class and also help the weaker pupils to cooperate with the stronger

children in learning (Level 3). We see here an attempt to translate the *clashing values* formulated by Yona when she began tackling this dilemma. We see how she constructed activities, which would, at the same time, meet the value of respecting children's differences and the need to be fair and create a pleasant atmosphere for all the children in the class (Level 3).

Tali

The title of Tali's activity was "Emotions". Her goal was to expose the children to a variety of different emotions. She also decided to encourage the children to discuss their feelings, especially those relating to social issues in general and in particular those involving children in the class who are "different".

- Tali wrote several emotions on the board, e.g., anger, happiness, jealousy. Then she showed pictures and asked the children to add the emotions they saw in the pictures to the list;
- She read the children the poem "I am cross with Mummy" and asked them if they had ever felt so angry with anybody. The children gave examples of when they had quarrelled with children from the class and some children said they did not like two of the Ethiopian children;
- Tali asked if they knew how to calm themselves when they felt angry. They suggested different ways to do this;
- Finally, Tali told the children a story from her own life, that she had quarrelled with her friend and how had she made up with her friend.

<u>Tali's reflection</u>

"I think that the activity on the subject of emotions was extremely important for the children because knowing the range of emotions will help them to understand their own and "different" children's feelings better. During the group activities, the children indeed expressed feelings of anger toward other children in the class."

Very emotionally, Tali's description went on: "As a teacher, I tried to refine those emotions. For me, the hardest thing was seeing how they humiliated the Ethiopian children in the class. Although I was aware that this went on before this activity, hearing it said outright brought home to me that achieving my goal would not be easy. I still hope that the ten teaching units I have left will change this behaviour in the class".

244

Analysis

Like Yona, Tali tried to *manage both aspects of the dilemma*. On the one hand, she encouraged the children to express their emotions, even if these were unpleasant, and on the other hand, she protected the Ethiopian children from being hurt by helping them to control their emotions or respond less aggressively. The *clashing values* which she formulated are expressed here. She tried to respect the children who were "different" by relating to the problem they had with the class. At the same time, again out of respect for them, she tried to guide the way the other children reacted to them. Tali has a high level of *critical thinking*. She asks herself questions and ponders deeply how to act. This challenging deliberation is evident in the activity described above (Level 2); she tried to protect the Ethiopian children by helping the other children to control their emotions. She *perceives* her dilemma in a broad manner. Although she knows that the situation is highly ambivalent ("it will not be easy to achieve my goals") she shows a definite desire to tackle it.

Miriam

As mentioned earlier, Miriam's investigation of her dilemma related to teaching science. The title of one of her activities was "What changes do we feel after exercise?" Her plan was for the children to experience the fact that physical exercise causes physiological changes in our bodies, e.g., increased heart rate, sweating, thirst, etc. She also hoped that the children would enjoy physical exercise and active games. Finally, she thought that the way she planned to teach, the children would better understand the work in their workbooks in the unit on physical exercise using experiential work as opposed to learn the technical data as they usually did (they normally only worked from their workbooks).

Miriam undertook the following in order to achieve these goals:
- She asked the children to shut their eyes and place their hands on their chests;
- She asked them to do a number of vigorous physical tasks which she had prepared, e.g., running, skipping, relay races, etc.;
- The children then placed their hands on their chests to see if there was a change in their heart beat;
- The children then relaxed while she led them through a guided imagery session;
- The children then worked on the unit dealing with physical exercise in their workbooks.

Miriam's reflection

Miriam thought deeply about the dilemma. She wrote thus: "When I saw how much time this activity required, I felt empathy for the teachers who back away from it. I understand that they have no choice but to bow to time constraints. However, I saw how the children enjoyed themselves and how much they learned. The experiment that each of them conducted on him/herself raised the children's awareness of the effect of physical activity, which reinforced what I thought about the efficacy of autonomous learning through research and discovery."

Analysis

Miriam did not give up. She *managed the dilemma* while seriously considering all aspects of the dilemma she had chosen (Level 3). She assessed whether she had managed to achieve the activity goals she had set in a short space of time and without surrendering the principles of investigative learning. She made real didactic suggestions in order to reach a compromise on her dilemma. Her high level of *critical thinking* was also particularly evident in the first reflection. There she evaluated the logic of her judgment regarding the way that her teacher worked. Moreover, she expressed doubts about her preconceptions. She clearly had a sincere wish to tackle the *conflicting values* identified in her dilemma. In the activity described above, she explored how she could respect the demands of the school management that the children should do well in reading and arithmetic and at the same time to do justice to the children's Nature classes and teach this subject as she believed it should be taught. She *perceived* the dilemma broadly in terms of both its facets (Level 3) and, at least at this stage, stated that even though the situation was complex and *ambivalent* she wanted to confront it (Level 3).

My reflection

Relating to categories

The analysis of the students' actions so far reveals an entirely different picture to Cycle 1. At an early stage, the students graduated to higher levels (Levels 2 and 3) in the different categories. In the initial stages, when the students engaged in characterizing the conflicting values and evaluating the situation before tackling it in the classroom, it was still not clear to me whether, when they confronted the dilemma in practice, they would still want to tackle both its facets. I was concerned that the same thing would happen as in Cycle 1, when, after the students had formulated both facets of the dilemma and declared their

intentions of confronting it in practice, they only tackled one aspect of it. I was pleased when I observed the activities, and subsequently when I read the reflections the students had written on these activities, to see that in the second cycle of my study, the students had both a genuine intention of tackling the dilemma they had identified and formulated, and the ability to do so.

I found other differences between the two cycles of the study. In the first cycle, the most common categories in the analysis of the students' handling of the dilemmas were *coping with ambivalence* and *perceiving the dilemma*. However, in the second cycle, the students had slight difficulty with these areas and therefore these categories were less common. They were replaced by the two categories *managing the dilemma in practice* and *critical thinking*. The importance of the former with regard to handling dilemmas is obvious and, in the second year, I learned more about the importance of the latter. I saw that *critical thinking* helps the student to judge her actions reflectively. Additionally, students who can think critically are able to provide more appropriate reasons for what they do and to better adapt the way they handle the dilemma to what happens in fact.

Exciting discoveries

I was very moved to discover how sensitive the students were, particularly towards children who were in some way different. In a large proportion of the intervention plans, the students expressed concern that a particular action of theirs might hurt a group of children. Their activities, of course, reflected this sensitivity. There was evident awareness and deliberate consideration of the different groups of pupils. For example, the dilemma tackled by Or dealt with the question of whether it is fair to give weaker children the same teaching time as stronger children. She thought that perhaps those who had more difficulty should receive more time. On the other hand, she told herself that the more able children also needed challenges suitable to their level and why should they not have the time spent on them that they needed. This example, besides illustrating Or's sensitivity, also testifies to her ability to think about teaching in moral terms. I found that the students considered moral questions such as fairness and justice. These I think raise the level of the teacher's work and transform the teacher into a genuine educator not just a professional transferring information.

<u>My opinion of the intervention activities</u>

I learned how important it is for students to conduct a status evaluation before they put their intervention plans into effect. I saw that only when they had studied the subject their dilemma concerned very thoroughly were they indeed ready to bring it into the classroom.

When I considered my students intervention programmes I found a significant difference between them and the programmes my students wrote under my supervision a few years ago. This year, when the students planned activities they deliberated much more, the list of considerations they took into account before acting was based on moral and not only didactic justification; moral rather than simply practical.

At this stage, I am disappointed that there is insufficient expression of emotion, both verbally and in writing, by the students regarding the management of their dilemma. However, this may become apparent at a later stage.

Difficulties in dealing with professional dilemmas

Although undertaken with enthusiasm, the very fact of research and action dealing with professional dilemmas arouses a number of difficulties. The following are some of them:

Rina

Rina's main difficulty related to holding discussions with the children on ideas raised in the Bible. The children in her class were not accustomed to classroom discussion and therefore, the level of discussion was poor. Despite this difficulty, which persisted all through her intervention, at the end of her intervention work, Rina felt that a by-product of her work had been to raise the standard of discussion of the children in her class to a considerable degree.

Another difficulty was that the class fell behind in the material they were meant to cover due to the change in the style of learning that she had introduced. The discussion on the Bible stories took time and Rina felt that she could not devote as much time as she wished and stimulate the children to think because she needed to cover all sections of the syllabus. Additionally, sometimes she found it difficult to provide frank answers to searching questions the children asked about the biblical narrative.

Analysis

The first two difficulties described above may be termed 'didactic difficulties', while the third difficulty relates to Rina's dilemma. Her *practical management of the dilemma* sought to explore the question of how to teach young children complex issues raised in the Bible. As she taught, it became clear to her that it was very difficult to address some of them or to give the children answers. This might have led her to again *perceive the dilemma* in its narrowest sense, in other words, she might have decided to just address one aspect of it, which in practice would have meant giving up the classroom discussions. In fact, this did not happen and she still tried to answer the children's questions.

Tali

The main difficulty that Tali encountered when investigating her dilemma concerned her fear of digging too deeply and talking too specifically about the Ethiopian children and the rest of the class's immigrant pupils. She was worried about obtaining the opposite result to that she wanted. She thought: "If I highlight their difference I will hurt them. They may start to feel different and unusual even if they did not feel that way before. I decided therefore to slightly tone down the classroom discussion and not to be specific, at least not at first, but keep it general. The drawback of this approach was that it prevented me from addressing the social problems in the class in a direct and focused manner".

Analysis

This expressed the full-blown dilemma. Tali wondered how to *manage the dilemma:* whether to opt to tackle both aspects of the dilemma equally or asymmetrically. Eventually, she chose the latter option for fear of being disrespectful toward the children. It is also possible to identify numerous examples of her *critical thinking* (Level 3). She offered justification for her decisions, constantly re-examined the values and standards she had set herself (respect for the children), and finally, after examining all the data available to her, she took the decision on how to deal with the dilemma. She also noted her awareness of the 'price she paid' for her decision, i.e., that she was unable to address the problems in the class head on. In my opinion, this process became possible because Tali *saw the dilemma* from a broad perspective (Level 3) and although she was felt concerned about handling the *ambivalent* and delicate situation, she nevertheless intended to tackle it (Level 2).

Analysis of outcomes of student handling of dilemmas

We can divide the results of the students' intervention programmes into two parts, which are obviously related. One part relates to the learning achievements in the subjects that the students taught the children and the other part relates to the process the students underwent when tackling the dilemma. The following relates solely to the latter process as that is the subject of this thesis.

Or

"I feel that I went through a process of trial and error. All my decisions, and all the professional help that I received, gave rise to new questions and choices. It is recognised that teachers never have enough time, but handling this issue in an academic way was new for me. Changes took place as I tackled the dilemma. When I formulated the dilemma to myself, I put the value of 'equality' in the scales opposite the value of 'diversity'. Initially, I treated these values as though they conflicted with one another. I now think that they clash sometimes but are not in conflict. Everyone is different. That is natural. When we accept that difference, we can relate to the wide diversity that characterizes human beings. Equality on the other hand is a social value. In order for everyone to feel equal, we sometimes need to create different conditions. I now understand that the teaching time allotted to children should be divided differently. However, I think that every situation has to be assessed in its own right. Every teaching experience is different in terms of what it teaches and therefore each time we need to reassess our approach."

Analysis

Or's thoughts above indicate her way of managing her dilemma. Throughout the entire teaching experience, Or examined the *two clashing values* of equality and respecting diversity during the intervention. At the same time, when she managed her dilemma in practice, she was undecided whether to tackle one side of it or both. Finally, she decided that, from her point of view, the right compromise was to tackle one side of the dilemma but allow herself the option of changing her mind if the conditions in the system in which she worked changed.

Miriam

"To me, one of the major successes of investigating the dilemma was the new insights that I gained into the education system in which I am going to work, although at the same time,

I have become extremely critical of that system. I believe that without significant change in the size of classes (which can have as many as 40 children), one cannot offer the education that I believe is possible. Also, in its present format, the system's demand for so many achievements to be checked throughout the year alienates the children from learning and places stress on the teachers at a level which leads to a race after results and detracts from the teachers' ability to teach children using alternative methods.

The specific programme that I introduced involved research and discovery skills. Even before this, I believed in learning through practical experience, especially when children are young, and this programme reinforced my belief. With my own eyes, I saw that children who could not understand the material when it was explained to them in words could understand it through simple investigation and discovery. This was the unambiguous proof of the effectiveness of this method of teaching."

Analysis

At the end of the process of coping with the dilemma, Miriam underwent a surprising transformation. While she was managing the dilemma in practice, she repeatedly addressed the two aspects of the dilemma and tried to offer a suitable practical answer to them both. However, at the end of the process, a regression occurred. She decided to address just one side of the dilemma; she said that she had always believed in research and discovery and that the whole school and class structure should be tailored for this teaching method. In this decision, she in fact also chose between the conflicting values. Essentially, this was a decision that the value of doing what was best for the children as far as possible, overrode the value of loyalty to the demands of the system (which in this case involved reaching high achievements in a relatively short time).

Students' evaluation of the process of investigating their dilemma

Yona

"During my intervention programme, I tried to integrate the social facet with the learning. My intention was to create a pleasant atmosphere for the children in which they would be involved in creative work and cooperate in working with one another while at the same time also engaged in learning through writing. During the teaching practice, I was able to tackle the two values which were in conflict in the dilemma I had defined. On the one hand, relating to difference and responding to this difference by creating tasks with different levels of writing; in other words, each child was given his own individual writing

251

task. On the other hand, relating to the value of equality by creating activities which required everyone to cooperate thus making everyone feel equal. At the conclusion of the intervention, I had a sense of satisfaction; I felt that I had provided learning with a pleasant and free atmosphere. During the year, there had not been enough creative activities for the children and most of the time they were only given academic type learning. I felt that I had succeeded in breaking the tedium for a while through the various creative activities they had with me.

Analysis

According to Yona's self-evaluation, she had been successful in *practically managing both sides of the dilemma* she had defined (Level 3). In her self-evaluation, she also highlighted the *conflicting values* arising in the dilemma: equality versus diversity (similar values to those in Or's dilemma, though here they are part of a different issue), which she felt she had managed to address together. If she had difficulty coping with the *ambivalence of the situation* this was no longer apparent and she seems to have succeeded in addressing both aspects of the dilemma concurrently, despite the fact that initially, the situation had been ambivalent (Level 3).

Miriam

"The process I went through in my intervention was only moderately successful. The reason for this is that I was forced to compromise quite considerably. The following are two examples of this:

- I decided to conduct one of the experiments in pairs, but the teacher disagreed. She said it was not worth it because it would take too long. I therefore compromised and only asked for volunteers to carry out the experiment in front of the rest of the class. The teacher's insistence on not working in pairs once again emphasized how the lack of resources and conditions for conducting more complex experiments is detrimental to the children. I am positive that the ideal thing would be to carry out most of the research and discovery activities in small groups or pairs. However, the need to compromise owing to external conditions forced me to conduct many of the activities in larger forums.

- In another activity, when we learned about nutrition, I came across a good example of the need to compromise because of external conditions. My original idea was for the children themselves to prepare the food, i.e., for each group to prepare one part of the meal, in order to reinforce the children's awareness of the food they eat. Unfortunately,

however, the regular teacher said this was not practicable. Once again, I needed to consider the teacher's point about the size of the class. I was concerned that the activity lacked depth, although the children did get to eat nutritious food. I decided that organizing a class meal was better than no experience at all."

Analysis

As in the previous analysis, the increasing impression here is that Miriam had difficulty in *practically managing both aspects of the dilemma* (Level 1). Here she voices disappointment at being unable to comprehensively teach the subject relating to one side of the dilemma and anger at having to consider the other side of the dilemma as well (in this case, the teacher symbolized this side). She was forced to accept some form of compromise and then agreed that it was better to accept a compromise to the dilemma than the previous situation where the only method of teaching science had been the frontal method.

Tali

Tali recounted the following in one of the college classes. "At first, the intervention went according to plan and I thought that I had really found some kind of compromise for the dilemma. However, subsequently, I was surprised to discover things from my conversation with the children which made me wonder if I would succeed. My doubts surfaced in one of the class discussions when some of the children said that they had heard their classmates saying very insulting things. One child burst into tears and said that someone in the class had said that 'blacks don't know anything' (aimed at the Ethiopian children in the class). When I heard this, I felt that if the children could be so insulting my entire intervention had been futile. I wondered whether something I had taught, or alternatively something I had not taught, had caused the children to be so nasty. Although I had completed the activities I had planned, I felt I had to do something to rectify matters." (Tali consequently conducted additional short educational interventions and her evaluation of them and feeling about them improved).

Analysis

Tali's reaction clearly points to her *critical thinking*; she expressed doubts regarding her teaching methods. Additionally, she quite objectively evaluated all the facts she had gathered from her intervention, explained her opinions and based them on what had occurred and concluded how to solve her problem (Level 3). Unlike Miriam, Tali wanted to *manage both aspects of her dilemma* (Level 3). When she felt that she had not

succeeded in this and the "different" children were still not feeling good in the class, she tried hard to do something.

Her description strongly emphasised her *expression of emotions*. Throughout tackling her dilemma, she revealed empathy toward those who were different in her class (new immigrant children from Russia and Ethiopia) (Level 2). However, in the end, her sensitivity though laudable, prevented her from coping directly with the problems of the children in her class.

My summarizing reflection

Now, having reached the stage where I can look back at the process of supervising and instructing students that I have experienced, I feel that I have travelled a fair distance and changed quite a bit in my understanding of the processes which the students go through when coping with professional dilemmas in their teaching practice. The changes in my instruction can be seen from the differences in the two cycles of the study.

In Cycle 2, I identified common lines as well as differences in the students' management of the dilemmas they identified. What the students shared was the fact that they coped with the dilemma at a high level relative to the students in Cycle 1. They knew what was expected of them and tried their best to apply what they had learned. However, beyond that, it seems that they themselves were convinced that what they had learned in college about coping with dilemmas was appropriate and would help their growth as professional teachers. The students all tried to address both sides of the dilemma at the same time, or at least to consider them. This differed from Cycle 1 when some of the students decided just to address one side of the dilemma from the very outset. However, as I noted earlier, there were still differences between the students.

While **Yona** and **Or** indeed managed the dilemma while addressing both its facets throughout, **Rina,** from the start, concentrated more on one side of the dilemma. In other words, she had deep discussions with the children on complex issues but spent very little time considering the children's ability and understanding and the impact of these discussions on young children.

After serious deliberation and deep concern over possibly insulting the children, **Tali** decided to handle the two aspects of her dilemma asymmetrically, i.e., in the classroom

discussions not to get too explicit about the Ethiopian and Russian children. When I read her final paper, I thought back to my evaluation meeting following my observation of the activity she had led. Many times, she had shared with me her concern that she would not know what to do if children in the class directly verbally insulted these children during class discussion, she therefore chose not to raise the problem in the class explicitly. After my meetings with her, I often pondered the question of whether a third year student was in fact equipped to cope with complex class issues or would only be able to do this once she was an experienced teacher.
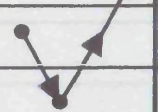
At the end of Cycle 2 of the study, I concluded that there is no clear-cut answer to this question. Some of the students were capable of doing this in the same way as a qualified teacher and were even able to substitute in the teacher's absence. Others, like Tali, were afraid to resolutely deal with the problem and so only partially confronted the issue. The extreme example of this was **Miriam.** All the while she tackled the dilemma, Miriam managed both its facets. However, at the concluding stages when she reflected on her intervention programme and evaluated it, she admitted that she did not think that she should take one of the facets into account at all. Despite her emotional honesty, I was sorely disappointed, a feeling that I had not managed to equip her with practical and realistic tools for coping with the dilemma. From my point of view, she had stayed with the unrealistic opinion she had previously held which went, 'I want to give the children in my class the best in my opinion and I do not want to take the demands of the system around me into account.' However, a ray of light that I found was that she realised her intervention, even with compromises that took the requirements of the system into consideration, was better than the teaching method used by the regular class teacher.

When I read the students' evaluation of their intervention programmes, I felt very proud. I felt that I had succeeded in equipping my students with a different level of professionalism. Many times I have heard Israeli teachers criticised for not being practiced in formulating moral dilemmas and discussing dilemmas. The blame was often levelled at the training given to teacher trainees, where they were not given adequate practical training to prepare them to discuss the subject of dilemmas and tackle dilemmas in practice. My impression is that my students this year are capable of formulating a dilemma, they think about it while addressing it and can critically and reflectively justify their decisions.

Findings – Year 2 of Study – In the School

Below is an analysis of the data described in this chapter, referring to the students' handling of their dilemmas in practice. In Table 6.2, below, the black text refers to the students' progress in dealing with the dilemmas in their work 'on campus'; the red text relates to their progress in school. Naturally, the two new categories, which emerged from the analysis of the students' school-based work, only appear in red.

		Rina	Or	Miriam	Yona	Tali
A. Culture-Reference	3. Addressing the environment in its cultural context.					
	2. Relates the environment to own cultural context.	●	●	—	—	—
	1. Lack of reference to cultural context.					
B. Perceiving the Dilemma	3. Broadly perceives of all aspects of the dilemma.	●	●	●	●	●
	2. Perceives some aspects of the dilemma.	●	●		●	
	1. Black and white perspective.					
C. Coping with Ambivalence	3. Student chooses intractable issues.	●	●	●	●	●
	2. Student chooses to address difficult, but solvable issues.					
	1. Student chooses to deal with issues that promise success.					

257

		Rina	Or	Miriam	Yona	Tali
D. Coping with Conflicting Values	3. Copes with the clash between all values involved in the dilemma.	↗ ●	● ●	● ●	↗ ●	● ●
	2. Only addresses one of the values involved in the dilemma.	●			●	
	1. Simplification of situation, relates to global values.					
E. Expressing Emotions	3. Expresses emotions when handling dilemma.				↗ ↘	
	2. No cognitive-affective symmetry.	↗ ●			●	● ↗
	1. Student presents the dilemma ignoring the emotional dimension.	↗	● —	● —		↗
F. Critical Thinking	3. highly effective critical thinking.		↗	●		↗
	2. Some critical thinking.	●	●		●	●
	1. Absence of critical thinking					
G. Practical Dilemma Management	3. Addressing both issues of the dilemma.		↗	●	●	↗
	2. Managing the facets asymmetrically.	●	●	↘		●
	1. Managing one facet and ignoring the other.			↘		

258

In this research cycle, similar to the first cycle, each of the five subjects went through a process, making her own progress in handling the dilemma she had chosen to address. Each one reached a different level in each of the abilities required to cope with a dilemma (presented by categories) and each one faced difficulty in a different category. A detailed description of each subject's progress can be found in Appendix 6.

Distribution of categories in the students' intervention programmes

An examination of the differences between the first and second cycles of the study shows that the same categories appeared in both research cycles (see Figure 5.2 for flow chart of Cycle 1). However, differences were apparent in both the frequency and intensity in which the skills categories appeared. In the flow chart, the skill categories which occurred frequently are shown in a dark colour, the less frequently occurring skill categories are shown in a light colour, and the skill categories which never appeared in the second year, or which appeared very rarely, are shown in white.

Figure 6.1 Connections Between Categories – In School – Second Year of Study

Connections between categories

- g. Critical thinking
- a. Culture-Reference
- b. Relating to the Dilemma
- e. Coping with Conflicting Values
- f. Expressing Emotions
- d. Coping with Ambivalence
- c. Perceiving the Dilemma
- h. Practical dilemma management
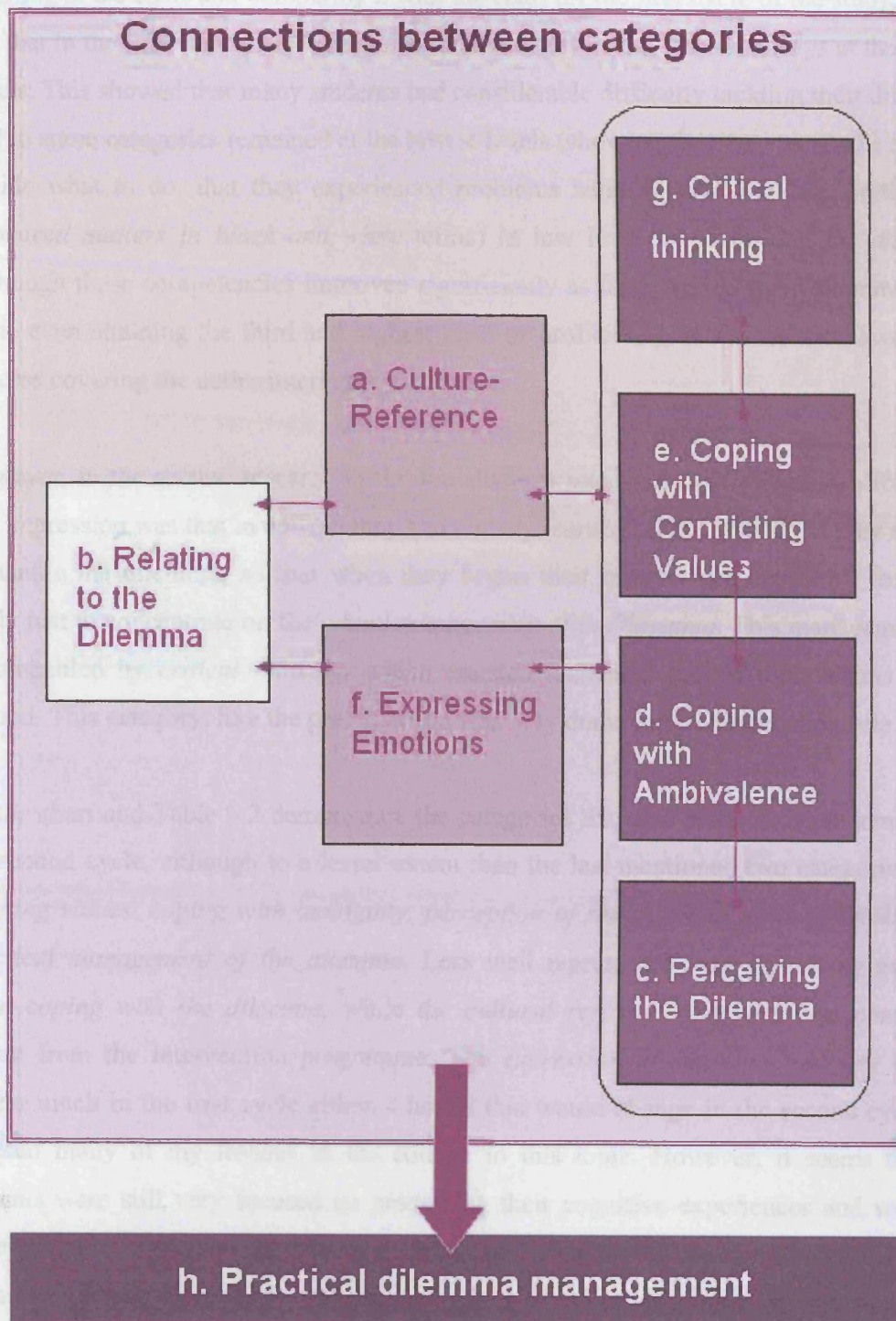
Looking at the chart and comparing it with the chart for the first cycle of the study, we can see that in the first chart many categories appeared very often, but not always at the highest levels. This showed that many students had considerable difficulty tackling their dilemmas, and in some categories remained at the lowest levels (showing that they were still trying to decide what to do, that they experienced problems handling *ambivalence*, or that they *perceived matters in black and white* terms) (a low level of *perceiving the dilemma*). Although these competencies improved significantly as they tackled their dilemmas, with some even attaining the third and highest level of proficiency, it was nevertheless a slow process covering the entire intervention exercise.

However, in the second research cycle, the students managed their dilemmas differently. My impression was that in college they had already learned most of the skills they required to handle the dilemma, so that when they began their intervention activities, they were ready just to concentrate on the *actual management of the dilemma*. This management was accompanied by *critical thinking,* which assisted them and guided their efforts on the ground. This category, like the previous one was very dominant in the second cycle.

As the chart and Table 6.2 demonstrate the categories that also seemed to predominate in the second cycle, although to a lesser extent than the last mentioned two categories, were *clashing values, coping with ambiguity, perception of the dilemma, critical thinking* and *practical management of the dilemma*. Less well represented was *expressing emotions when coping with the dilemma,* while the *cultural reference* category was completely absent from the intervention programme. The *expression of emotions* category did not appear much in the first cycle either. I hoped this would change in the second cycle and devoted many of my lessons in the college to this topic. However, it seems that the students were still very focused on processing their cognitive experiences and were not therefore able to process their feelings. I can speculate that if the topic had been taught from the students first year in college, they might have been more skilled and open to the emotions aroused by their dilemmas. Regarding the *cultural reference* element: the differences between the two cycles apparently stems from the differences in the composition of the groups that I taught. In the first cycle, there was a high degree of cultural heterogeneity in the class, which was lacking from the second research cycle.

Comparison of achievements in the "Practical management of the dilemma" category

All categories in this study represent skills which aided students in coping with dilemmas in the field. The most salient of these functions was the category *practical management of the dilemma*. Having completed both cycles of the study, the students' achievements in this category may now be compared. When discussing the students' achievements, it is important to note that although this thesis reports the findings for five students in each year of the study, in fact 22 students were taught the syllabus each year, i.e., the course was taught to a total of 44 students. I taught and supervised all the students in my class.

At this final stage of the study, one can see the differences between the two research cycles, taking a broad perspective of all of the students in the course. Two tables are presented, illustrating the differences in the students' progress. The first five students in each table are the students who represented the research population in each of the years.

Table 6.3:Practical Dilemma Management Cycle 1

Level 3	Level 2	Level 1	Students
	x		Rina
x			Or
		x	Miriam
x			Yona
x			Tali
x			6
x			7
		x	8
x			9
	x		10
	x		11
x			12
x			13
		x	14
x			15
	x		16
x			17

Table 6.4:Practical Dilemma Management Cycle 2

Level 3	Level 2	Level 1	Students
x			Ella
	x		Limor
	x		Lena
		x	Fatma
		x	Maya
		x	6
		x	7
	x		8
x		x	9
x			10
	x		11
x			12
		x	13
	x		14
		x	15
		x	16
	x		17

X			18			X		18
X			19			X		19
		X	20		X			20
X			21			X		21
	X		22				X	22

Analysis of the tables reveals the differences between them. In Cycle 1, only one out of the five sample students attained the highest level, Level 3. In Cycle 2, however, three of the five students sampled achieved Level 3. In Cycle 1, two of the students remained at the lowest level, and two at the intermediate level. In contrast, in Cycle 2, only 1 student was found in each of these levels. These findings for the five students represent the finding for the total student population of the class in Year 1 and Year 2. According to the findings, the students in Year 2 showed significant progress in their *practical dilemma management.* Most of them addressed both aspects of the dilemma, not simply one. They defined the conflicting values associated with each of the dilemmas and applied critical judgment when deciding how to tackle them.

Insights regarding the teaching unit: "Coping with Professional Dilemmas"

The study provided a large number of insights; the following are the most important of them.

<u>General insights regarding Cycle 1 and Cycle 2</u>

- During the first cycle of the study, the students underwent a process in which they tried to tackle a dilemma that they had met in teaching practice. In the second cycle, it was also found that the process did not chart a smooth, straight line, but more a pattern of ups and downs. Even when a student appeared to handle her dilemma with a high level of competence that sometimes regressed to a lower level, as in Miriam's case.
- No direct link was found between academic ability in college and proficiency in dilemma management. In fact, top students who were very confident sometimes tended to address one side of the dilemma and did not wish to seek a compromise, as in the case of Miriam.
- In the second research cycle especially, it was evident that suitable college preparation can raise the level of coping with dilemmas in practice. For the second

cycle, I modified and improved my method of teaching the students in college and instructing their teaching practice class teachers. Consequently, the students' proficiency in dilemma management also improved.

- Active involvement and cooperation from the regular class teachers greatly facilitated the students' experiences, and improved conditions for coping with the dilemma in class. I noted this while teaching and supervising the students, and from their interview statements. Or recounted how her dilemma came to light after her regular class teacher discussed her own feelings with Or. The teacher told Or that she did not have time to be with the children in what she deemed was a fair way. Or recounted that the concerns voiced by the veteran teacher led Or to ask numerous questions about classroom management, the lack of answers to which led to the formulation of the dilemma which she eventually investigated. Throughout her investigation the regular teacher of Or's class worked collaboratively with Or in managing her dilemma.

The students' voice

By way of summarizing the data regarding the second year of the study, and to complete my recommendations to teacher educators wishing to study the subject, I wish now to present extracts from my interviews with students. Emphasis is on the process the students experienced and their recommendations for improving and modifying the curriculum so that it contains teaching units on coping with professional dilemmas. The following are selected extracts (for the complete list of interview questions, see Chapter 3, Methodology).

Question No. 6 in the second interview questioned students concerning their insights following the intervention:

Yona

"I learned a great deal from the intervention. I set out with clear plans for the activities I wished to teach. However, during the course of the activities, I realised that I needed to drop these rigid plans and go with the flow of the activity. I saw that if I was too fixed on my original plan, I would not achieve what I hoped. A very large gap sprang up between the plan and the practice. I learned things from each activity and subsequently modified my programme. It was not always easy to flow with what was happening and change without being rigid about my plan. However, as I see it, I am more professional following this

experience and will manage dilemmas better in future having learned to be more flexible and adapt to circumstances on the ground."

Or

"First, the best thing I did was to choose 'a different' subject and not one of the school's compulsory subjects, like reading or maths. I am pleased that I chose the subject (time) which they did not teach at college. Now that I've finished my project, I am glad I learned how to cope with an ambiguous issue that has no clear or known structure. Another important thing I learned was that we mustn't ignore dilemmas, but recognise when you are in a dilemma, then look for how tackle it and be able to see what works and what doesn't."

Question No. 8 in the second interview asked students whether their ability to handle dilemmas had improved and if so how:

Yona

"My ability to manage a dilemma has improved in several ways. Now, I feel that when I next face a dilemma in my professional work teaching preschool or school, I will be able to define it as a dilemma and identify the conflicting values involved. I think that just being aware is extremely important. Obviously, my real test with regard to coping will be when I am a proper teacher."

Or

"My ability has improved simply because I understand that each dilemma is a world in itself. You often start in once place and end up somewhere else. Coping with a dilemma is a dynamic process; the situation is constantly changing. You must keep trying to decide what to do. You cannot tell if an activity is going to work, you just keep looking for the right direction until you come up with a compromise."

Question No. 11 in the second interview asked students what was the most exciting part of their intervention:

Tali

"I felt that the compromise I found for my dilemma produced results. I saw that the children's relationships improved. Before that, they did not really know how to listen to

one another or give each other respect. There was a lot of alienation in the class. Suddenly, the class got friendlier, both during activities and in the breaks. What was most exciting though was when they suddenly gave me a lot more affection than before. They did not just see me as one more person coming to teach them."

Rina

"I felt that that the children who always seemed to behave in a certain way behaved differently when I worked with them. For example, some children who never usually said anything allowed themselves to speak and express their feelings. I think this was because of the warmth I developed with them by working with them in a meaningful, collaborative way."

Summary

The student interviews indicated that students felt they had learned something significant about coping with professional dilemmas. They had learned something completely new. By the end of the course, they said that they felt they had learned an important subject that also had practical uses. In other words, they felt they could apply it as teachers/preschool teachers. It was very moving to hear the variety of insights the students had gained from analysing their experiences, and even more so from their reflective analysis when they underscored their awareness of the growth in their professional competence.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Discussion

Having described the research and presented its results, I can now summarize and elucidate the research questions presented in the introduction to this action research.

Preface

There are several approaches regarding the best way to train prospective teachers. According to one of these approaches, training should provide students with basic and essential tools for managing all of the technical functions required in the class, and for imposing discipline on the children (Kagan, 1992). Another approach suggests that, while these are important tools which the students need to function as teachers, they are not enough. Therefore, teacher training should provide additional tools. Thus, in addition to technical factors, training should help students to ask questions about the ethical dimensions of training and other value related issues (Grossman, 1992). Supporters of this approach contend that teacher training programmes should help students on their teaching practice to question and address other moral, ethical and value related questions relating to the teaching profession.

In contrast, supporters of the first approach believe that the training period is not the appropriate time to deal with such complex issues, since students are frustrated and stressed and experience feelings of ambiguity at many stages during training (Caruso, 1977). They add that these feelings accompany students' private and professional development as they construct their personal and professional identity. There are several reasons for this: while building an identity, students experience difficulties due to ambivalence in their role in the practice classroom; a lack of familiarity with the school system and a lack of confidence that is inevitably related to the unknown (ibid). These reasons place students in a survival situation during their teaching practice. In other words, they make strenuous efforts to manage and 'control' groups of children, trying to assert themselves as an authority and get the children to agree to their demands (Katz and Cain, 1987). This struggle for survival does not allow students to address more complex educational issues.

However, other researchers offer different theories. They identify (Grossman 1992) training programmes in which students ask themselves questions about what teaching

267

means even before they learn how to teach. For example, they think about the aim of learning English, history or maths, before learning how to teach these subjects. The studies found that pondering these questions does not stop them learning the subject matter at the same time. On the contrary, the questions enhanced their ability to teach the subjects while examining them critically.

The argument developed in this study is that we should not simply teach trainee teachers teaching techniques. Third year students addressed value issues while dealing with multiple tasks in all spheres of learning in their practice classroom. The value-related work was not only theoretical, but required them to work with the children and address issues that they themselves wished to examine. They also tried to find explanations and compromises relating to these complex questions. This multi-faceted work supports the claim that, in parallel with their regular learning of routine and technical teaching subjects, students can and need to contend with complex and often insoluble professional issues: in short, they can cope with professional dilemmas.

Discussion of Research Questions

1. What abilities do education students require in order to cope with dilemmas?

Identifying lack of abilities prior to the study
My desire and need to understand precisely how I and other educators deal with dilemmas began many years before undertaking this study. Chapter Four of this thesis documents my ideas and sense of dissatisfaction when still a schoolteacher and afterwards as a teacher instructor in schools nationwide. While working in these posts, I experienced the first inklings of teachers' problems regarding dilemmas. The difficulties in this regard evoked responses ranging from frustration and professional burnout to utter indifference. When I began teaching education students, I learned that, compared to experienced teachers, the students' methods of coping had specific characteristics in terms of coping with problems in general and coping with dilemmas specifically. When I observed them teaching children, I was often impressed by the variety of ways in which they solved routine problems, and the great difficulty they had (to the extent of feeling helpless) when dealing with a harder situation than a regular problem, i.e., in which there was no evident solution.

When I analysed the difference between teachers and students more closely, I saw that students came up with **black and white solutions**, or convinced themselves that they knew

which solution was most appropriate to the situation facing them. In other cases, I saw how hard they found it to perceive **all sides of a complex situation**, and that they saw only one facet of it, which they tried to contend with. At this stage, students also had no awareness or data regarding the differences between different situations and could not formulate the difference between a problem, a conflict, and a dilemma. But circumstances required their response, since in teaching situations one usually has to respond instantly to situations, i.e., teachers need to chose a coping strategy quite rapidly (Corrigan and Tom, 1998). As a result, they often chose **coping strategies** that only addressed one side of the dilemma, while consciously or unconsciously ignoring the other.

Abilities needed when learning the subject in college

The first part of the study was conducted in college and the second part in the school practice class. I will first identify the abilities I needed to teach the subject in college.

With the above insights in mind, as well as others described in Chapter Four, I commenced the First Research Cycle. This lasted an entire academic year and was followed by the Second Research Cycle with a fresh group of students. In the two years of the study, I taught students the new curriculum that I had developed with the aim of equipping them with the necessary tools to contend with professional dilemmas.

Through teaching the students, I discovered several abilities and perceptions needed when coping with dilemmas. The students used these in different ways and had different levels of competency (the study identified three levels of competency: low, average and high). The abilities in dilemma management were constructed one stage at a time. The abilities were described as categories and used to describe and analyse the research data and results. Students used the same abilities in both the college and at school. For most categories, the students needed to learn the topic at college and manage it in practice at school. Some abilities dominated more in the college-based studies whereas other abilities were only needed when managing the dilemma in practice at school.

College abilities required

1. Ability to identify a dilemma

2. Formulating a dilemma

3. Coping with ambivalence

4. Perceiving the dilemma

5. Contending with conflicting values

6. Expressing emotions

7. Choosing a coping strategy

In other words, for a student to complete her college studies on the subject and reach the point of being able to choose a coping strategy, she had to acquire the above abilities. The following details these abilities. Firstly, the student must be able to identify **and define the dilemma.** Then, she must be able to **cope** with **an ambivalent situation,** i.e., a dilemma by definition. She must **understand** which **values clash** for her, and which create the dilemma, in order to decide which of the values is most important and how to reach a compromise in choosing between them. In addition, it should be mentioned that when **the student's perception of the dilemma is broader** the compromise that she proposes will be broader and will address both aspects of the dilemma.

Whenever a person contends with an issue, and more specifically when people contend with educational issues, the body and mind, or cognition and emotions, are involved. This study found that it is very important to be aware of one's emotions at each stage of tackling the dilemma. In addition, the student must reflect and clarify which of the two aspects of the dilemma these emotions lean towards. This awareness will help the student to decide how to act in a balanced way which takes both sides of the dilemma into account and eventually leads the student to **choose the most appropriate strategy** for dealing with the dilemma.

The order of using the abilities when coping with a dilemma

Logically, the first two abilities above will be the first to be used when addressing a dilemma, with the rest coming into play at later stages. However, the results analysis shows that this is not necessarily so. Although handling the dilemma does indeed begin with these first two abilities, what follows does not always proceed linearly. In other words, there is no fixed pattern or organized way of determining the abilities required at each stage of the students' progress. Some students did in fact progress linearly, although others went back to earlier stages of formulating the dilemma in order to re-examine the definition and thence address both aspects of the dilemma.

Having concluded the study, I can say that every student **demonstrated the necessary abilities, although the order in which they used them was not the same.** In other words,

each student progressed along her own path. However, all the abilities mentioned were needed to carry out the first step in managing a dilemma.

Differences in categories (abilities) in the two research cycles

So far, we have mentioned the categories that dominated in both years of the study. However, I found that if a class had a different composition or different learning history, this caused certain categories to be stressed. For example:

- In the description of the data for the first year of the study, I presented the category/ability "Relating to the Dilemma". This category appeared intensively only in the data analysis for the **first year**. In this year, many students responded to the difficulty of handling the dilemma by blaming other people (especially their practice class teacher), for the dilemma observed. When I analysed the data, I speculated that the reason for this lay in their difficulty in handling the dilemma. This difficulty was less evident in the second year of the study because of the preview of the topic that the students had received in the previous year.

- Another category which mainly arose in the first year was "Cultural Reference", and I think this was due to the cultural make up of the group. The group comprised Jews, Arabs, new immigrants, and religiously traditional Jews. This often produced disagreement between students. Everyone saw the dilemma in terms of her own culture. Student perceptions were polarized and students could not accept different approaches from their own. However, in the second year, the group was more homogenous and therefore the cultural category appeared less significant.

- Another difference in the two cycles with regard to the categories concerned the students' learning history. In the second year of the study, I discovered that the students had touched on the subject in the previous year during their kindergarten teaching practice. Although the study was not taught intensively or in a structured form, but rather casually and spontaneously, the brief introduction abbreviated the learning process: the students had already mastered the abilities of identifying and formulating the dilemma and only needed to learn the remaining aspects of dilemma management.

Different levels of handling a dilemma

Almost from the start of my analysis of the study findings, I observed that there were different levels of dealing the various categories/abilities. I also discovered that handling

dilemmas is a process, i.e., a person at a low level could advance to the middle or higher level (three levels were defined for each category). Naturally, the students' progress was individual, i.e., each student varied. Some students stayed at the same level while they managed the dilemma. Others gradually progressed and rose to higher levels. A third group seemed to have advanced but later, I found they had remained at a lower level.

This information, which gradually emerged during the study, produced two conclusions. Firstly, one cannot expect students to all understand the subject in the same way. In other words, teacher instructors who plan to teach the subject should expect a high degree of heterogeneity in achievements. On the other hand, these findings will encourage the teacher instructor and lead to another conclusion, that coping is not a static process, and that each student can advance, even if she finds it very hard in the beginning.

Another optimistic finding was that there was not necessarily a direct correlation between students' achievements in their overall college studies and their achievements in handling dilemmas. Some students from the college's special track for excellent students only achieved a low level of coping with dilemmas. Others did well in both their academic work and in handling the dilemma. However, the biggest surprise was the students who were not very good in their academic work but were very good at coping with professional dilemmas. I can suggest several reasons for these variances:

- The student approached the dilemma armed with strong personal motivation – the reason for this is that she was tackling a dilemma she had chosen herself and therefore the subject obviously interested her.
- The student did not have to deal with the dilemma alone – the regular class teacher was her partner in tackling it. She was able to consult the teacher, which naturally made it easier to cope.
- Handling dilemmas requires qualities that are not related to cognitive ability, for example, sensitivity, caring, empathy, which are not necessarily connected to academic achievement.

Abilities needed to manage the dilemma in the school

When the students began to manage their dilemmas in school, they used all the abilities they had used in college. In other words, at both school and college they needed the abilities of coping with **ambiguity** and **perceiving the dilemma**. However, in their

school-work, the students required two additional abilities, namely: **critical thinking** and **managing the dilemma in practice.**

- **Critical thinking** was needed when deciding which options to choose; for self-evaluation; and when questioning what to do before, during, and after taking the practical steps related to handling their chosen dilemma.
- **Managing the dilemma in practice** – putting the strategy they had chosen into practice, i.e., all the steps involved in managing the dilemma in their class.

2. What topics should be included in the curriculum to teach students to handle professional dilemmas?

The curriculum taught in the two research cycles consisted of two sections: the first section related to the college-based course and the second section related to the school-based teaching practice.

The main topics taught in **college** were:

1. Identifying which situations constituted a professional dilemma.
2. Formulating the identified dilemma.
3. Analysing and describing the values that clashed for the student.
4. Using different means to collect data on the professional dilemma.
5. Examining different options for managing the dilemma.
6. Analysing the advantages and disadvantages of using different measures to manage the dilemma.
7. Awareness of emotions in general and in particular emotions relating to coping with the professional dilemma.
8. Choosing a strategy for managing the dilemma.

These topics relate to the first stage of coping with a professional dilemma. This is an important preparatory stage prior to dealing with the dilemma in practice. It provides all the background needed by the student to contend with the dilemma.

The same topics were taught in the two years of the study. However, the emphases in the two years differed in the light of the conclusions I had drawn from teaching the first year of the course. In other words, some topics were taught in greater or less detail than others. Another, and more significant, conclusion relates to enhancing and revising the teaching

methods for the topic. The following are some of the most important changes in the teaching methods:

Insights regarding teaching methods

1. It was found that the above listed topics had to be **learned gradually**, and could not be taught as a single unit in a short space of time. The student needed to learn and practice each sub-topic thoroughly and only then proceed to the next one. The practice time allowed for each topic was important and mostly lasted more than one lesson since the subjects were not simple and the students needed time to internalize each of them.

2. It was important to enable the students to each describe the professional dilemmas they encountered at school and for the whole class at college to analyse them. This has numerous benefits:

    -   Each lesson gradually exposes students to a wide variety of professional dilemmas

    -   All the students in the class can discuss them

    -   It provides people with practical ideas for handling dilemmas

    -   The students evaluate each other's dilemmas and acquire the necessary tools for handling the dilemma identified in their teaching practice class.

    Another advantage of having the students present their dilemmas in class is that it allows the teacher instructor (me in this case) to ensure that all the students in the class practice all the issues needed to handle dilemmas. For example, it is important for the instructor to ask students to formulate dilemmas and portray both facets of the dilemma, the values that clash.

3. **A dynamic process** – at the early stage in which the students present their dilemmas, they might have already chosen a strategy for handling it. I learned that this choice is not the last word. Thus, they may choose one strategy to begin with and then change their minds and revise the strategy. There are two types of change: they might change and deal with it on a higher level, i.e., a student may decide to contend with one aspect of the dilemma and later shift to addressing both aspects; or, the opposite may happen and they may start off intending to address both aspects of the dilemma and in the end only deal with one. This taught me that

dealing with dilemmas can be dynamic and therefore students need constant supervision, at both the college learning stage and at the stage when they have to cope practically at school.

Curriculum for handling professional dilemmas in the school

Unlike the static study of dilemmas in college, in their school practice, the students needed to undertake practical work in order to contend with the dilemmas they had identified. Each of the ten teaching units they taught was another step in dealing with the dilemma.

The students had to deal with two issues relating to the dilemma at the same time: the subject, e.g., mathematics, Bible Studies, social issues, etc. in which they had decided to construct their activities, and their identified dilemma. During the two research cycles, a wide variety of subjects arose in my class. This was because the topics were chosen based on the problems identified in the teaching practice class and different problems occurred in different classes. The planned activities in the chosen subject included advancement of the children in the chosen subject and contending with the dilemma in practice, i.e., managing it. A high level of managing a dilemma meant that the students related to both sides of the dilemma.

To explain this, I will describe how a dilemma is managed when only one aspect is tackled and what happens when both aspects are tackled together.

Initially, Limor, a student in the first research cycle, was aware of both sides of the dilemma, but when it came to the practice, she paid little attention to one aspect and put most effort into the other. Thus, in her dilemma, she tried to teach the children to be more prudent about their belongings and paid less attention to the fact that the children came from wealthy backgrounds where, one can reasonably assume, they saw very little prudent consumerism. Coming from affluent families, and given the children's own account of their lives, they were not interested in being careful regarding money, belongings, etc. The question then arises, what might have improved Limor's performance in tackling her dilemma?
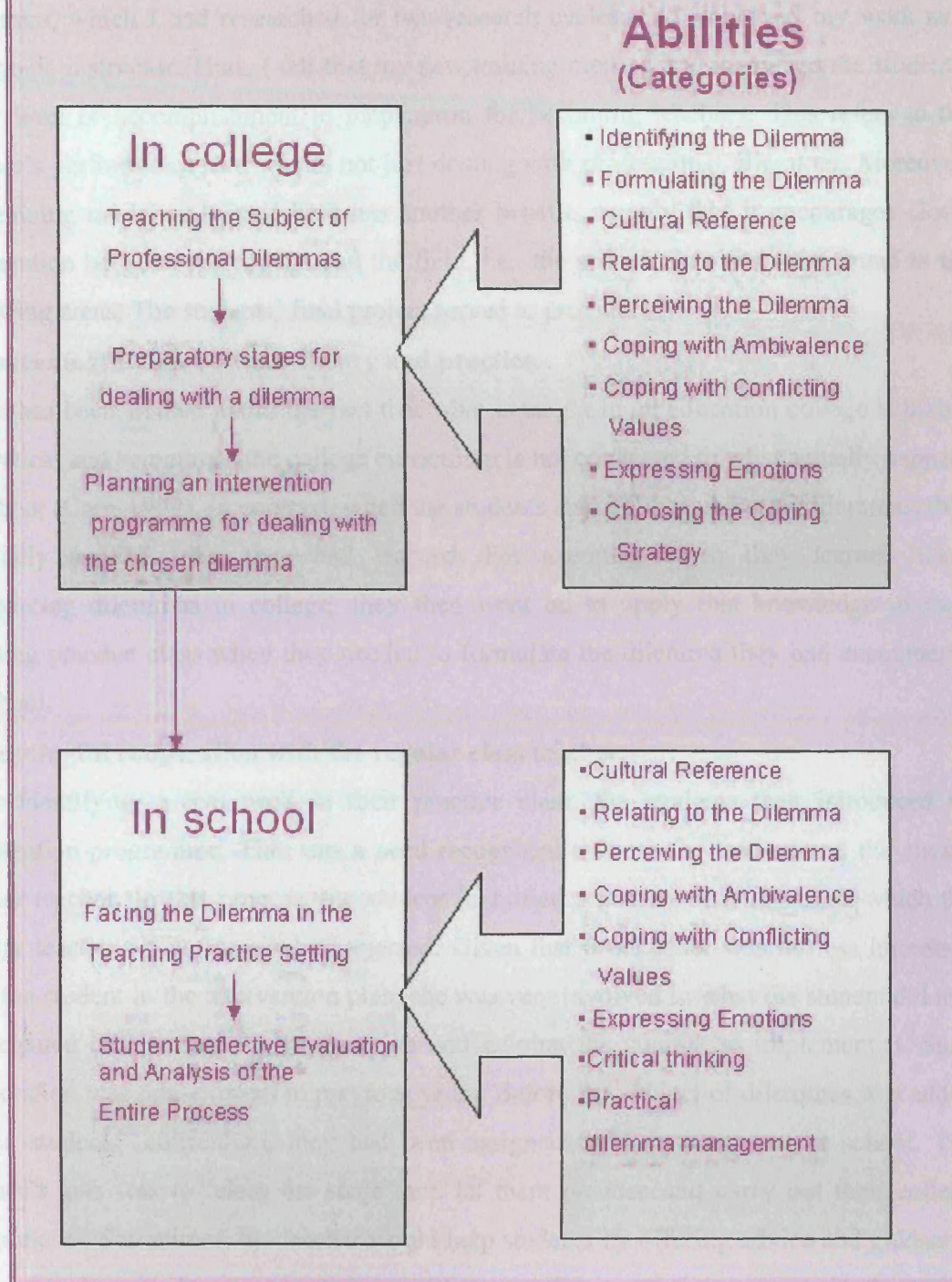
Limor reported having observed that one child in her class threw away an unused bottle of glue just because its label had come off. The child explained that the glue had stopped working. I would have first expected Limor to empathise with the child's thinking since

her pupils came from wealthy homes and lacked a sense of the value of things. Then, Limor could have suggested alternative behaviours to her pupil, for example, the pupil could ask another child whether they wanted the glue, or Limor could have offered to stick a label on the bottle and then use it, or set up a special corner in the class for the children to collect unwanted items and donate them to needy children in another part of town. My suggestions for coping differently with the dilemma take account of the children's behaviour and reflect an understanding and acceptance of who they are, while gently trying to improve what the teacher thinks should be improved (this addresses both aspects of the dilemma). I believe that a teacher who chooses an approach that only addresses one aspect of a dilemma will not be a successful teacher.

This approach to the dilemma calls for very high competence in handling dilemmas. It applies all the skills mentioned above that were used when learning about dilemmas in college and also critical thinking, which, as noted in the literature review, is vital when coping with dilemmas in practice. Critical thinking has many different meanings (Baker, 1996). When coping with dilemmas, students need to apply 'functional' critical thinking, e.g., questioning, examining options, etc. (Other skills are discussed in the main body of this work). Students who showed a high level of competence in handling a dilemma constantly applied critical thinking.

In summary, in answer to the second research question, Figure 7.1 sets out which subjects should be taught when teaching students to manage professional dilemmas and also the abilities (categories) that affect the person's competence at each stage of the dilemma.

Figure 7.1: Curriculum for Handling Professional Dilemmas

Abilities
(Categories)

In college

Teaching the Subject of Professional Dilemmas

↓

Preparatory stages for dealing with a dilemma

↓

Planning an intervention programme for dealing with the chosen dilemma

- Identifying the Dilemma
- Formulating the Dilemma
- Cultural Reference
- Relating to the Dilemma
- Perceiving the Dilemma
- Coping with Ambivalence
- Coping with Conflicting Values
- Expressing Emotions
- Choosing the Coping Strategy

In school

Facing the Dilemma in the Teaching Practice Setting

↓

Student Reflective Evaluation and Analysis of the Entire Process

- Cultural Reference
- Relating to the Dilemma
- Perceiving the Dilemma
- Coping with Ambivalence
- Coping with Conflicting Values
- Expressing Emotions
- Critical thinking
- Practical dilemma management

3. How does learning to contend with dilemmas assist in improving students' professional abilities?

Without a doubt, throughout the research it was evident that the subject of contending with dilemmas, which I had researched for two research cycles, had improved my work as a pedagogic instructor. Thus, I felt that my new training method had improved the students' entry level of accomplishment in preparation for becoming teachers. This refers to the teacher's performance as a whole, not just dealing with professional dilemmas. Moreover, the training model suggested here has another benefit, namely that it encourages closer cooperation between the college and the field, i.e., the school. Benefits were found in the following areas. The students' final project served to provide:

- **A meaningful link between theory and practice.**

Much has been written about the fact that what is taught in an education college is highly theoretical and sometimes the college curriculum is not connected to what actually happens in school (Carr, 1992). In contrast, when the students learned the subject of dilemmas, they explicitly applied what they had learned. For example, when they learned about formulating dilemmas in college, they then went on to apply this knowledge in their teaching practice class when they needed to formulate the dilemma they had encountered in school.

- **Meaningful cooperation with the regular class teacher.**

After identifying a real need in their practice class, the students then introduced an intervention programme. This was a need recognized by both the student and the class's regular teacher. In this process, the student identified a professional dilemma, which the regular teacher either accepted or rejected. Given that the teacher was no less interested than the student in the intervention plan, she was very involved in what the student did and participated in planning the intervention and helping the student to implement it. Such cooperation was non-existent in previous years. Before the subject of dilemmas was added to the students' curriculum, they had been assigned tasks to carry out in school. The teacher's task was to 'clear the stage' and let them practise and carry out their college assignments. Sometimes, the teacher would help students by offering advice and guidance. However, she was less involved than in the second year of the research in the actual planning and implementation.

Similarly, after the students' interventions, the teachers showed satisfaction that a subject they had indeed experienced difficulty in handling had been dealt with. Moreover, the teacher also gained a new tool, namely a practical method for identifying and managing

dilemmas. Before the students started tackling the dilemma in their class, I introduced the regular teacher to dilemma management concepts. Also, when I visited the class to observe my students, I held joint feedback sessions with the teacher and student together. The teachers themselves practiced handling and managing professional dilemmas through my supervision and instruction of the students. When I spoke to the teachers privately, they told me that, although they had been working with students for many years, this was the first time they themselves had grown and developed professionally.

- **Creating a student commitment.**

Unlike the students' assignments in previous years, in the two years of this study, the students were required to evaluate their own achievements at the end of the intervention; in other words, they also needed to take responsibility. This was also different from in the past, when they needed to plan and carry out activities, but where the activity was the main task. Now, at each point in their intervention, they were expected to consider the consequences of the programme. They had to assess their achievements on two levels: the first related to their progress in managing the dilemma and the second to the children's accomplishments in the subject they were learning and around which the dilemma had been formulated. Here too, the teacher was a partner in evaluating and helping the students to find the evaluation tools and evaluation criteria. Besides taking responsibility, which was very important, the students learned to evaluate a work plan.

Improvement in students' professional competencies

I have differentiated between students' **professional competencies** that improved directly as a result of learning how to handle dilemmas and **related competencies** that also improved.

<u>Direct improvements</u>

1. The very fact that the students became aware of and accepted professional dilemmas was an improvement. The idea that dilemmas are an integral part of the teacher's work (Lampert, 1986), and that one must learn to live with them even if one cannot solve them was not a simple one for students to accept; it was also quite difficult for teachers to accept (Shkedi, 1996). This meant that students had to live with ambiguity and work within it. At the conclusion of my action research, I believe that all the students are now aware of the existence of dilemmas and the ambivalent situation that they create. In addition, most know when a certain situation poses a dilemma for them, a dilemma being a subjective situation and

what causes it for one student is not a dilemma for another (Dimmoc, 1999), and can distinguish it from a normal problem.

2.   There was an improvement in the students' ability to manage a professional dilemma in all its aspects. From my experience, I had seen that teachers have difficulty in managing dilemmas. However, I think that when the students who participated in this study become teachers they will manage them better than their peers, i.e., students who did not learn how to cope with professional dilemmas.

3.   The students' ability to think reflectively improved because their intervention programmes required them to reflect at the end of each of the activities they conducted. This reflection provided the basis on which they constructed the planning for next action activity.

4.   The students' capacity for value related reasoning improved. Previously, the curriculum had not addressed values at all. In contrast, in the curriculum developed by the author, there was great emphasis on values and an exploration of the personal values that clashed in situations that created a dilemma for the student.

5.   The students' ability to function under conditions of uncertainty and ambiguity improved. Throughout the study, I saw that students try to place themselves in situations that will result in success and have difficulty functioning in situations where there is no unequivocal way to act. This is problematic and does not prepare students professionally for teaching, since when one teaches one often functions in ambiguous situations. The fact that, throughout the year, the students worked on dilemmas at college and at school gave them an opportunity to identify and familiarize themselves with ambiguous situations in practice, and provided them with the practical tools to function and manage ambiguous situations. In particular, this skill improved in the students who managed both aspects of the dilemma together. This method of management shows a very high level of handling dilemmas, requiring good control of the situation facing the individual.

Improvement in related competencies

When students tackle dilemmas, in addition to the direct competencies that improve as a result their efforts, there is also an improvement in other competencies.

1.   Consideration/deliberation – in every activity carried out by students, and particularly in their work with children, they must consider the relevant issues. But it is not enough just to consider, dilemma management calls on them to weigh

issues and then decide how to act, since the main characteristic of dilemmas is that they call for action (Statman, 1993).

2. Practice in decision-making – decision-making is the heart of education (Maslovaty, 2000). Teachers must constantly decide how to act. In dilemma management, decision-making is extremely important because the student feels that whatever she does will negatively affect the issue on the other side of the dilemma. The decision maker must decide what to do, even though it is very hard to make that decision. Dilemma management is a process of deciding what to do at each stage of handling the dilemma. The students' decisions varied greatly and often changed, i.e., many times, a student would decide on one strategy and during the course of her work, change it for another.

3. Improvement in ability to give explanations – the students were required to justify their decisions and take responsibility for them, as in (McPeck, 1981). In practice, this meant reflecting at each dilemma management stage. Based on Baker's (1996) idea reflection was both verbal and written. The student needed to examine her actions and decide whether to continue applying the same strategy for handling the dilemma or to replace it. When she had finished managing the dilemma, each student evaluated the results of her dilemma management and the outcome of teaching her chosen subject and considered the implications for the next stage.

4. Uncertainty – one of the main difficulties when teaching dilemma management is that students need their educational reality to provide unequivocal answers. Apparently, the desire to succeed plus the need to interpret reality form part of the students' professional development, and help bolster their professional confidence. Dilemma management involves a lack of clarity and unequivocal answers since the individual cannot be sure which of her actions will help her discover a compromise to her dilemma (Cuban, 2001). That she has identified and formulated a dilemma reflects uncertainty with regard to finding a solution to the situation; after all, if the student thought that a situation could be solved, there would not be a dilemma. In my opinion, questioning is important in teacher decision making, since if the teacher ponders her actions her professional competence will improve.

5. Expressing emotions – during the course, I encouraged students to express their feelings, not just their thoughts. They were asked to express their feelings in class at college and in their reflections after the teaching activities. Awareness of the emotions that flood in upon students when tackling their dilemmas is important for making decisions as what to do at each stage. This awareness helps them to see

whether their emotions are tending towards one side of the dilemma or whether they are managing the dilemma and finding balance and compromise between the two sides of the dilemma. Emotional understanding and awareness ensure better control and appropriate choices of actions aimed at dilemma management.

Throughout the study, I was not satisfied with the frequency with which students expressed their emotions, despite the fact that I spent several lessons on this subject. However, when teaching the subject of coping with dilemmas, the students improved their expression of emotions while tackling the dilemma. I think, however, that the college curriculum should address this matter and deal with it in the first year of the course. In this way, by their third year, the students would no doubt be better skilled in relating to and expressing their emotions.

Student opinions regarding their professional development

In my **interviews** with students, they offered information on how the new subject I was teaching helped their professional development.

- "The college taught me how to teach math and reading. In other words, I learned structured techniques. In this course (dilemmas), I gave a lot more of myself: it was my choice which dilemma to investigate, I was responsible for formulating and managing it. The process was extremely meaningful because it was mine, and therefore I also learned a lot from it as well."

- "The most important thing I learned was not to accept a situation as is. Now, I realize I can deal with dilemmas; that I can change things. Even in the short time I taught in school, I managed to change things."

- "Because the intervention affected the whole class, I learned to see things from a broad, classroom perspective rather than just see the specific child or group of children as I had previously."

- "I became aware of professional dilemmas in the class – even if they can't always be solved."

- "I became much more sensitive about seeking a dilemma solution and compromise that would not affect the children connected with the dilemma issue negatively."

- "I became braver about tackling dilemmas. I learned not to ignore them, because in the end I realized that I can deal with them. I had not realized that before."

Analysis of the students' statements reveals that they all realized the importance of the subject and the new skills they had acquired as a result of studying the subject, and in particular as a result of constructing an intervention programme for managing the dilemma.

4.   How does the reflection process contribute to coping with dilemmas?

Students are taught reflection techniques in their first year at college. Reflection is one of the most important elements in handling and managing dilemmas, because even though students construct the intervention programmes in advance, it is important to analyse each stage, since each stage forms the basis for the next one. Reflective analysis involves drawing conclusions about what has happened; critical thinking based on deliberation; examining alternatives for subsequent action; and speculating about the implications of each new action (McPeck, 1981). It also involves analysing thoughts and feelings regarding each stage of tackling the dilemma.

The students' reflections helped not only to deal with the dilemma, but also to increase their professionalism. In other words, the reflective skills formed part of a professional 'tool kit' that students used in their work with the children and which would serve them well or teachers.

Reflection was a crucial process throughout the study. The students' reflections were both written and oral, in both college and after teaching in the school. College participation was very important for the students' progress. In class, they reflected on their teaching practice. Kagan (1992) stresses the importance of reflecting with others rather than alone. The group is an audience which listens to achievements as well as difficulties (Kagan, 1992). The atmosphere was supportive because the students were learning the subject of dilemmas together in college, and were each tackling a dilemma and therefore needed to share. McCotter (2001) adds that talking about teaching practice improves it and helps students to learn from their experiences. He also points out that this assistance is not only cognitive since reflection always involves feelings. In both groups I taught, the two dimensions – cognitive and affective – were both expressed in the reflective discussion in class.

I also reflected after teaching each unit and after feedback sessions with students following their teaching activities in school. My reflections concerned the students' progress; what I thought and felt about the process they were undergoing; my own method of instruction; and how I planned to continue instructing them.

The main contribution of the reflection process may be summarized as follows:

- *Help in expressing emotions* – "I admit that initially I found the writing difficult. The hardest thing was writing about my feelings. My reflections were mostly cognitive. Gradually, I also learned to write about my feelings" (Ella).

- *Crux in dilemma management* – "After each activity, I thought or wrote about what I had done: was I emphasizing one side of the dilemma and neglecting the other? Did the children feel good about my work? Was my teaching effective? Did it achieve its goal?" (Miriam).

- *Help with decisions* – "It was very helpful to document each activity in writing. When I wrote up my conclusions following activities, or recorded comments from the regular teacher/pedagogic instructor, rereading them helped me to plan the rest of my dilemma management" (Rina).

Two other benefits of reflection were:

- *A student investigator, not just an information transmitting student*

The student is someone who not only conveys knowledge, but is also an investigating teacher, whose professional knowledge undergoes dynamic development and construction. Knowledge is constructed from knowledge gained from the field encounter and from theoretical data. Thus, the students' professional knowledge contained both theoretical and practical components. The professional literature discusses the teacher's 'professional knowledge' in depth: today it is defined as a field, which is dynamically developed and constructed, and relates to problems stemming from the teacher's work at school (Elliott, 1995). This concurs with teacher training approaches (Schon, 1988; Shulman, 1988) which stress the importance of the teacher's personal experience as a meaningful source for constructing her professional knowledge.

Fenstermacher (1986, 1987) extends this question, suggesting that the goal of teacher training is not to tell teachers how to act, but to teach them to voice their considerations regarding teaching. Teachers and students must therefore learn to use their knowledge base when planning teaching activities. This knowledge, which Shulman (1988) defines as the teacher's pedagogic content knowledge, is individual and accumulates through contact with pupils and through subsequent reflection about the work.

In this study, the accumulation of each student's knowledge was helped by the reflective process which most students carried out using the model I had taught them (Luzati, 1999).

- The first stage of this model involved **reconstruction** – at the end of each activity, students contemplated what had gone according to plan and areas they had found difficult. Were the resources used to convey their messages suitable for the goal they had set? Generally, it is important to conduct reconstruction after any activity. However, in dilemma management, it is even more essential as this activity helps to thoroughly scrutinize every step in managing the dilemma in practice and allows the student to draw conclusions regarding the implementation of the next action.

- The second stage involves **innovation** – the student considers what she has learned about the dilemma and as a result of the activities she has conducted. During the study, because of these innovations, some students formulated sub-dilemmas of the main dilemma or changed their direction.

- The third stage involves **summary** – here the student summarized what she had learned from the process: methods for coping with the dilemma, work with the children, general improvement in planning and implementation of activities. The student also summed up her feelings while handling the dilemma: frustration/challenge/etc.

- Conclusions concerning **the future** – the student thought about how her professionalism had improved; in other words, next time she encountered a dilemma, what would she do the same, what would she do differently? What did she feel needed improvement? What else would she like to learn about handling dilemmas?

These were not consecutive stages: each reflection contained some or all of the stages, depending on the situation the student had chosen to analyse. At the end of the dilemma management, i.e., at the general reflection stage, the two latter stages occurred more frequently.

Assistance in developing insights about educational and learning phenomena – reflective analysis of the findings and connecting them to the theoretical background helped the students to understand the subjects they investigated in depth and to generalize about the issues in education that the dilemma involved.

Diary

The study highlights the importance of the teaching practice diary for improving and developing reflective skills (Spilkova 2001; Hatton and Smith, 1995). Written reflection on their teaching activities was integral to the students' practice. Student opinions were split when the task was first assigned: some preferred to reflect orally – in conversation with me or a colleague; others stated that from the outset, writing helped them focus on what they had learned from the activities, helping them to reconstruct lessons, and to analyse and formulate their conclusions. The latter added that writing also helped them to improve their professional skills and formulate areas needing improvement, as in (Moran and Dallat 1994). It helped them to understand the level at which they were tackling the dilemma and why. Thus, if they saw they were only addressing one side of the dilemma (low level of competence), writing the diary enabled them to analyse why this was so. The next time they faced a dilemma, this awareness might improve their ability to tackle it properly.

Linking theory and practice

Reflection helps students to link the theory they learn in college and from the literature to the practical school context. They often complained that what they learned in college was inapplicable to the classroom. They often felt that their college studies were irrelevant to their professional development and that only practical work could further professional growth. When I first began teaching them about handling dilemmas, I heard the same complaints. At first, they thought they would not be able to identify dilemmas at school and that even if they could, they would have difficulty handling them. They felt that the subject they were studying in class was only theoretical. However, when they began to tackle the dilemmas in class and to reflect after each activity – alone and with classmates – they discovered that, not only was it not theoretical, but that it offered them a practical model for when they were teachers (Levin and Nevo, 2000).

College vision and the curriculum

When we consider the curriculum produced by this study in view of the college's humanistic educational vision (see Chapter One, Introduction) we discern a correlation between the two. When a student studies dilemma management, she practices examining her own values, some of which are the humanistic values contained in the college vision.

She learns to define them and consider them in educational situations. Essentially, she is learning the language of values. She also learns how to weigh matters up and not take them for granted and regard them as unimprovable. When guiding her in tackling a dilemma, this new curriculum teaches the student to make decisions that address both sides of the dilemma, and to identify the best compromise. Besides managing dilemmas, this method has another advantage: it can help teachers avoid making 'knee-jerk' decisions, perhaps prompted by personal biases. This considered form of dilemma management could help students to envisage the picture in total, without negatively affecting any of the factors involved. This is consistent with the humanistic principle that seeks respectful treatment of every child, regardless of who they may be and their abilities. Exploring options and selecting a strategy for tackling a dilemma reinforces this humanistic educational approach. It encourages teachers to relate where possible to the variance between children and not to believe that one approach is 'always right'. Many teachers believe that they know exactly what to do in a given situation. Clearly, such teachers fail to consider what they should do, or show sensitivity to difference, or make reality-based decisions. In contrast, teachers and prospective teachers whose educational approach leaves room for deliberation and openness regarding what constitutes the right way to respond to events are likely to relate to the diversity they find in their classrooms.

Closing Personal Statement

My decision to study this subject was not easy and I experienced considerable trepidation during the process. This was because dilemmas are difficult if not impossible to solve, and I was concerned about teaching something that I was unsure that students could tackle. Since even experienced teachers have difficulty handling dilemmas, I wondered how students would be able to handle them. Nevertheless, because of my experiences as a teacher and as a teacher instructor in many schools, I was determined not to 'raise' a generation of teachers that could not identify a dilemma, or that chose to ignore dilemmas rather than confront them, as I had seen so many teachers do.

When I decided to teach students to manage professional dilemmas, I rapidly encountered difficulty myself in learning the subject, since the literature contains material about teachers coping with different areas, but the subject that interested me had not been researched specifically, only related subjects, for example, ethical dilemmas. This discovery, of course, hampered my efforts to gather material on the research subject. On the other hand, I felt I was treading virgin ground, and was pleased that I would be one of

the first people to study it. The fact that I had not found many articles on the subject did not deter me. On the contrary, it reinforced my belief that this was an important subject worth researching.

Recently, I received further reinforcement from A. Cohen, a senior educationalist at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem, and a former teacher of mine. In the February 2005 issue of *Hed Hachinuch* (the professional journal for teachers in Israel), he wrote that one of the main problems facing the education system is that: "teachers do not know how to formulate value related dilemmas, hold discussion on the subject of dilemmas or know different models for broad, complex discussion of values" (p. 42). Now, having completed this study, I feel that even if I only succeed to some extent in meeting this need of the education system, I will have contributed something to its improvement.

In summarizing this study, I can end by saying that, over the two years that it lasted, I felt that I was upgrading my methods for training prospective teachers. I became more satisfied with myself in terms of my responsibility for preparing them to teach. I was also delighted to see how excitedly they spoke of the process they had undergone in their interventions. They felt that, in their final year, they had become more professional, and they felt more independent than past students regarding their classroom management ability. I hope that the moral reasoning, which forms part of their experience in handling dilemmas, will make them more 'moral' teachers in terms of how they handle classroom situations. Our paths were not always smooth; they often had difficulty with dilemma management because of the ambiguity that, by definition, characterizes dilemmas and makes their management more complex. The students' interventions entailed an unpredictable process. The students required planning and implementation skills for their interventions that differed from those they were used to using in their earlier training: they were required to enter dialogue with themselves and be able to respond to unplanned events. Because each student's intervention programme was unique and different from the others, I supervised each of them individually as they proceeded through the 'stations' of the intervention.

In this research, I constructed a new curriculum for handling and managing professional dilemmas. It can be taught in full or in part in any year of the college teacher training programme, and indeed, during the period of my study, other instructors from the early childhood team which I am part of, showed interest in teaching the subject as well. My informal discussions with them about the subject of my research had helped to raise

awareness of this important issue and encouraged them try it. In fact, before this they had analysed dilemmas with their students, but only casually and without having formal data on the subject. Now, after consulting me and receiving tools for working with students, they have begun addressing the subject in class in a more consistent and professional fashion, and this I am proud of!

References

Abu Baker, H. (1998) *The Unpaved Path: Arab Women in Political Leadership in Israel*, Raanaan, The International Center for the Study of Israeli Arab Society.

Altrichter, H., Posch, P. and Somekh, B. (1995), *Teachers Investigate Their Work*, London and New York: Routledge.

Amdore, L. (2000) 'Reflection', in *Alternatives in Evaluation*, pamphlet published by Center for Educational Technology, Tel Aviv (in Hebrew).

Aram, J. (1976) *Dilemmas of Administrative Behaviour*, Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Atweb, B., Cbristensen, C. and Dornan, L. (1998) 'Students as Action Researchers' in Atweb, B., Kemmis, S. and Weeks, P. (eds.) *Action Research in Practice*, London and New York: Routledge.

Bain, D. J., Ballantye, R., Packer, J. and Mills, C. (1999) 'Using journal writing to enhance student teachers' reflectivity during field experience placement', *Teachers and Teaching: theory and practice*, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 51-73.

Baker, C. R. (1996) 'Reflective learning: a teaching strategy for critical thinking' *Journal of Nursing Education*, Vol. 35, No. 1, pp. 19-22.

Ball, D. (1990) Reflection and deflections of policy: The case of Care Turner', *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, Vol. 12, pp. 263-275.

Ball, D.L. and Cohen, D.K. (1996) 'Reform by the book: What is or might be the role of curriculum materials in teacher learning and instructional reform', *Educational Researcher*, Vol. 25, No. 9, pp. 6-8, 14.

Ballantyne, R. and Packer, J. (1995) Making connections: using student journals as a teaching/learning aid'', HERDSA Gold Guide No. 2, Canberra: HERDSA, quoted in Bain, D. J., Ballantye, R., Packer, J. and Mills, C. (1999) 'Using journal writing to enhance student teachers' reflectivity during field experience placement', *Teachers and Teaching: theory and practice*, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 51-73.

Baron, J. (1985) *Rationality and Intelligence*, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Barrow, R. (1990), 'Teachers education: theory and practice', *British Journal of Educational Studies*, Vol. 38, pp. 308-319.

Bassey, M. (1986) 'Does action research require sophisticated research methods?' in Hustler, D., Cassidy, A. and Cuff, E. C. (eds.) *'Action Research in Classrooms and Schools'*, London: Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd.

Bell, J. (1989) *'Doing Your Research Project*, Buckingham: Open University Press.

Ben-Peretz, M. (1995) *The Teacher and the Curriculum and Freeing the Shackles of the Written Text*, Tel Aviv: Mofet Institute (in Hebrew).

Ben-Peretz, M. and Kremer-Hayon, L. (1990) 'The context and context of professional dilemmas encountered by novice and senior teachers', *Educational Review*, Vol. 42, No. 1, pp. 31-40.

Bengstsson, J. (1993) 'Theory and practice - two fundamental categories in the philosophy of teacher education', *Educational Review*, Vol. 45, No. 3, pp. 205-211.

Bengstsson, J. (1995) 'Theory and practice - two fundamental categories in the philosophy of teacher education', *European Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol. 18, pp. 231-239.

Bergem, T. (1993) 'Examining aspect of professional morality', *Journal of Moral Education*, Vol. 22, No. 3, pp. 297-309.

Berlak, H. and Berlak, A. (1981) *Dilemmas of Schooling, Teaching and Special Change*, London: Methuen.

Berman, P. and McLaughlin, M.W. (1977) 'Factors affecting implementation and continuation', *Federal Programs Supporting Educational Change*, Vol. 7, prepared for the U.S. Office of Education Department of Health, Education and Welfare, HEW, Rand Corporation, Santa Monica, Calif.

Berman, P. M. and Milbery W. (1978) Federal Programs Supporting Educational Change. Implementing and Sustaining Innovations, Rand, Santa Monica, Ca., Vol. 8.

Berube, M. S. (1982) *The American Heritage Dictionary*, quoted in Volmann, M. J. and Anderson, M. A. (1998) 'Creating professional identity: dilemmas and metaphors of a first-year chemistry teacher', *Science Education*, Vol. 82, pp.293-310.

Beyer, B. K. (1985) 'Critical thinking: what is it?' *Social Education*, April, pp. 270-276.

Beyer, L. (1984) 'Field experience, ideology, and the development of critical reflectivity', *Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol. 35, No. 3, pp. 36-41.

Beyer, L. E. (1997) 'The moral contours of teacher education', *Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol. 48, No. 4, pp. 245-254.

Bloom, B. S. (1956) *Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, New York: Longmans.

Borko, H. and Mayfield, V. (1995) 'The roles of the cooperating teachers and university supervisor in learning to teach', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 11, No. 5, pp. 501-518.

Britzman, D. P. (1986) 'Cultural myths in the making of a teacher: biography and social structure in teacher education', *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 56, pp. 442-456, quoted in Penny, A. J., Harley, K. L. and Jessop, T. S. (1996) 'Towards a language of possibility: critical reflection and mentorship in initial teacher education', *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 57-69.

Brookfield, S. D. (1987) *Developing Critical Thinkers*, Milton Keynes: Open University Press.

Brookfield, S. D. (1998) 'Foreword', in Pratt, D. D. (ed) *Five Perspectives on Teaching in Adult and Higher Education*, Malbar, Florida: Krieger Publication.

Bunting, C. (1988) 'Cooperating teachers and the changing views of teacher candidates', *Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol. 39, No. 2, pp. 42-46.

Burgess, R. G. (1994) 'On diaries and diary keeping' in Bennett, N., Glatter, R. and Levacic, R. (eds.) *Improving Educational Management through Research and Consultancy*, London: Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd/The Open University.

Calderhead, J. (1987) *Exploring Teachers' Thinking*, London: Cassell Educational Limited.

Calderhead, J. (1988) *Teachers' Professional Learning*, London: Falmer Press.

Calderhead, J. (1989) 'Reflective teaching and teacher education', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 43-51.

Cardno, C. (1995) 'Diversity, dilemma and defensiveness: Leadership challenges in staff appraisal contexts', *School Organisation*, Vol. 15, No. 2, pp.117-131.

Carr, D. (1992) 'Practical inquiry, values and the problem of educational theory', *Oxford Review of Education*, Vol. 18, No. 3, pp. 287-299.

Carr, W. (1986) 'Recent development in teacher education: a response', paper presented at the Conference on Teacher Research and INSET, University of Ulster, February (Mimeo}.

Carter, K. and Richardson, V. (1989) 'A curriculum for an initial-year-of teaching program', *The Elementary School Journal*, Vol. 89, pp. 405-419.

Caruso, J. J. (1977) *Phases in Student Teaching*, Washington DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, pp. 57-63.

Chen, D. (1978) 'Design and development of curriculum, Unit No. 3' The Open University, Tel Aviv (in Hebrew).

Cohen, A. (2005) 'Pedagogy was left out', *Hed Hachinuch, Journal of Education and Society*, Tel Aviv: Israel Association of Teachers, Vol. 69, Issue 6, pp. 40-43 (in Hebrew).

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2000) *Research Methods in Education*, London and New York: Routledge Falmer.

Connelly, F. M. and Ben-Peretz, M. (1980) 'Teachers' roles in the using and doing of research and curriculum development', *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 2, pp. 95-119.

Conway, P. F. (2001) 'Anticipatory reflection while learning to teach: from a temporally truncated to a temporally distributed model of reflection in teacher education', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 17, pp. 89-106.

Cornett, L. M. (1995) 'Lessons from 10 years of teacher improvement reforms, *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 54, No. 5, pp. 4-9.

Corrigan, S. Z. and Tom, A. R. (1998) 'The moral dilemmas of teacher educators', *The Educational Forum*, Vol. 63, pp.66-72.

Cuban, L. (1992) 'Managing dilemmas while building professional communities', *Educational Researcher*, Vol. 21, No. 1, pp. 4-11.

Cuban, L. (2001) *How Can I Fix it?*, Columbia University: Teachers College.

Day, C. (1999) *Developing Teachers: The Challenges of Lifelong Learning*, London: The Falmer Press.

Delpit, L. (1986) 'Skills and other dilemmas of a progressive Black educator', *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 56, pp. 379-385.

Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln Y. S. (2000) *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, California: Sage Publications.

Dewey, J. (1933) *How We Think: A Restatement of the Relation of Reflective Thinking to the Education Process*, Chicago, D.C.: Heath.

Dimmock, C. (1999) 'The management of dilemmas school restructuring: a case analysis', *School Leadership and Management*, Vol. 19, No. 1, pp. 97-113.

Dinkelman, T. (2000) 'An inquiry into the development of critical reflection in secondary student teachers', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 16, pp. 195-222.

Donahue, D. M. (1999) 'Service-learning for pre-service teachers: ethical dilemmas for practice', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 15, pp. 685-695.

Drever, E. (1995) *Using Semi-Structured Interviews in Small-Scale Research*, Edinburgh: The Scottish Council for Research in Education.

Dunn, T. G. (1999) 'Deliberate practice in teaching: what teachers do for self-improvement', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 15, pp. 631-651.

Ebbutt, D. (1985) 'Educational action research: Some general concerns and specific quibbles', in Burgess, R. (ed) *Issues in Educational Research: Qualitative Methods*, Lewes: Falmer Press.

Eden, E. (1980) 'New curricula: teaching practice and conclusions', *Theory into Practice in Curriculum Planning,* Vol. 3, pp. 7-22 (in Hebrew).

Elliott, J. (1991) *Action Research for Educational Change,* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Elliott, J. (1995) 'What is good action research?', *Some Critical Action Research,* Issue No. 2, pp. 10-11.

Emberson, J. W. (1993) 'Teachers' thinking and reflective teaching: issues for teacher training in Ireland', *Irish Educational Studies,* Vol. 12, pp.122-133.

Emig, J. (1977) 'Writing as a mode of learning collage', *Composition and Communication,* Vol. 28, pp. 122-128, quoted in Hoover, L. A. (1994) 'Reflective writing as a window on pre-service teachers' thought processes', *Teaching and Teacher Education,* Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 83-93.

Ennis, R. H. (1962) 'A concept of critical thinking', *Harvard Education Review,* Vol. 32, No. 1, pp. 81-111.

Ennis R. H. (1987) 'A taxonomy of critical thinking dispositions and abilities' in Baron B. J. and Sternberg J. R. (eds.) *Teaching Thinking Skills: Theory and Practice,* New York: W. H. Freeman and Company.

Erdman, J. I. (1983) 'Assessing the purposes of early field experience programs', *Journal of Teacher Education,* Vol. 34, No. 4, pp. 27-31.

Ericsson, K. A., Kramp, R. T. and Tesch-Romer, C. (1993) 'The role of deliberate practice in the acquisition of expert performance', *Psychological Review,* Vol. 100, pp. 363-406.

Evans, M., Lomax, P. and Morgan, H. (2000) 'Closing the Circle: action research partnerships towards better learning and teaching in schools', *Cambridge Journal of Education,* Vol. 30, No. 3, pp. 405-419.

Fenstermacher, G. D. (1986) 'A philosophy of research on teaching three aspects', in Wiltrock, M. C. (ed.) *Handbook of Research on Teaching,* New York: Macmillan.

Fenstermacher, G. D. (1987) 'Prologue to my critics', and 'A reply to my critics', *Educational Theory,* Vol. 37, No. 4, pp. 413-422 and pp. 537-560.

Fenstermacher, G. and Amarel, M. (1983) 'The interests of the student, the state, and the humanity in education', in Shulman, L. and Sykes, G. (eds.) *The Handbook of Teaching and Policy,* pp. 392-407, New York: Longman.

Flick, U. (2002) *Qualitative Research,* London: Sage Publications.

Follett, M. P. (1924) *Creative Experience,* quoted in Lyons, N. (1990) 'Dilemmas of knowing: ethical and epistemological work and development', *Harvard Educational Review,* Vol. 60, No. 2, pp.159-181.

Freese, A. R. (1999) 'The role of reflection on pre-service teachers' development in the context of professional development school', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 15, pp. 895-909.

Fuchs, S. (1995) *The Psychology of Resistance to Change*, Ramat Gan: Bar-Ilan University (in Hebrew).

Fuchs, S. (1998) *Change as a Way of School Life*, Tel Aviv: Cherikover Goma (in Hebrew).

Fullan, M. (1982) *The Meaning of Educational Change*, Columbia University: Teachers College Press.

Fullan, M. (2001) *The New Meaning of Educational Change,* New York: Teachers College Press.

Fullan, M. and Pomfret, A. (1977) 'Research on curriculum and instruction implementation', *Review of Education Research*, Vol. 47, pp. 97-335.

Funk and Wagnall, (1961) *Britannica World Language Edition of Funk & Wagnall's Standard Directory,* New York: Funk and Wagnall.

Gardner, H. (1991) *The Unschooled Mind*, NY: Basic Books.

Globman, R. (1997) *Are we Successful in the Change Process*, Jerusalem: Ministry of Education (in Hebrew).

Golby, M. and Appleby, R. (1995) 'Reflective practice through critical friendship: some possibilities', *Cambridge Journal of Education,* Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 149-160.

Goodlad, J.I. (1990) 'The occupation of teaching in schools' in Goodlad, J.I., Soder, R. and Sirotink K.A. (eds.) *The Moral Dimensions of Teaching*, San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Goodson, I. (1995) 'Education as a practical matter: some issues and concerns', *Cambridge Journal of Education,* Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 137-148.

Griffin, G. (1986) 'Clinical teacher education', in Hoffman, J. V. and Edwards, S. A. (eds.) *Reality and Reform in Clinical Teacher Education*, pp. 1-23, New York: Random House.

Grossman, L. P. (1992) 'Why models matter: an alternative view on professional growth in teaching', *Review of Educational Research,* Vol. 62, No. 2, pp. 171-179.

Grossman, S. and Williston, J. (2002) 'Strategies for helping early childhood students learn appropriate teaching practice', *Childhood Education, Olney,* Vol. 79, Issue 2, pp. 103-107.

Grundy, S. (1987) *Curriculum: Product or Praxis*, New York: The Falmer Press.

HaCohen, R. and Zimran, A. (1999) *Action Research-Teachers Researching Their Work*, Tel Aviv: Mofet Institute (in Hebrew).

Handy, C. (1994) *The Empty Raincoat: Making Sense of the Future*, London: Hutchinson.

Hansen, D.T. (1998) 'The moral is in the practice*'*, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 14, No. 6, pp. 643-655.

Hatton, N. and Smith, D. (1995) 'Reflection in teacher education: towards definition and implementation, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 33-49.

Hoogveld, A. W. M., Paas, F., Jochems, W. M. G. and Van Merrienboer, J. J. G. (2002) 'Exploring teachers' instructional design practices from a system design perspective', *International Science,* Vol. 30, pp. 291-305.

Hoover, L. A. (1994) 'Reflective writing as a window on pre-service teachers' thought processes', *Teaching and Teacher Education,* Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 83-93.

Jacobson, S. L., Hickcox, E. S. and Stevenson, R. B. (1996) *School Administration: Persistent Dilemmas Preparation and Practice*, Westport Connecticut, London: Praeger Publishers.

Jarvis, J. (1992) 'Using diaries for teacher reflection on in-service courses', *ELT Journal,* Vol. 46, No. 2, pp. 133-143.

Johnston, J. (1994) 'Experience is the best teacher, or is it? An analysis of the role of experience in learning to teach', *Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol. 45, No. 3, pp. 199-208.

Kagan, M. D. (1992) 'Professional growth among pre-service and beginning teachers' *Review of Educational Research,* Vol. 62, No. 2, pp. 129-169.

Kainan, A., Asaf, M., Hoz, R., Elam, N., Bzalel, Y. and Back, S. (2004) *Pedagogical Tutoring: Social and Cultural Aspects*, Beer-Sheva: Ben-Gurion University of the Negev Press (in Hebrew).

Katz, G. L. and Cain, J. (1987) 'Special purpose-teacher education for early childhood education', in Dunkim, J. M. (ed) *The International Encyclopedia of Teaching and Teacher Education*, Oxford: Pergamon, pp. 773-780.

Katz, L. and Raths, J. (1992) 'Six dilemmas in teacher education', *Journal of Teacher Education,* Vol. 43, No. 5, pp. 376- 385.

Kemmis, S. (1999) 'Action research' in Keeves, J.P. and Lakomski, G. (eds.) *Issues in Education Research*, Amsterdam: Pergamon.

Kemmis, S. and McTaggart, R. (1988) *The Action Research Planner*, Victoria: Deakin University Press.

Kemmis, S. and Wilkinson, M. (1998) 'Participatory action research and the study of practice', in Atweb, B., Kemmis, S. and Weeks, P. (1998) *Action Research in Practice*, London and New York: Routledge.

Kidder, R. M. and Born, P. L. (1999) 'Resolving ethical dilemmas in the classroom', *Educational Leadership,* December 1998/January 1999, pp. 38-41.

King, P. M. (1994) *Developing Reflective Judgment,* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Klinzing, H. G. (1988) 'Skill acquisition and reflection-based decision making in a teaching laboratory: an evaluative study', *European Journal of Teacher Education,* Vol. 11, nos. 2/3, pp. 167-175.

Knowles, J. G. and Holt-Reynolds, D. (1991) 'Shaping pedagogies through personal histories in pre-service teacher education', *Teachers' College Record,* Vol. 93, No. 1, p. 87.

Knowles, J.G. and Sudzina, M.R. (1991), 'Skeletons in closet: Failure in student teaching', paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Teacher Education, New Orleans, LA.

Koehler, V. (1985) 'Research on pre-service teacher education', *Journal of Teacher Education,* Vol. 36, No. 1, pp. 23-30.

Koerner, M. E. (1992) 'The cooperating teacher: An ambivalent participant in student teaching', *Journal of Teacher Education,* Vol. 43, No. 1, pp. 46-56.

Korthagen, F. A. J. (1992) 'Techniques for stimulating reflection in teacher education seminars', *Teaching and Teacher Education,* Vol. 8, No. 3, pp. 265-274.

Korthagen, F. A. J. and Wubbels, T. (1995) 'Characteristics of reflective practitioners: towards an operationalization of the concept of reflection', *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice,* Vol. 1, No. 1, pp. 51-72.

Lampert, M. (1985), 'How do teachers manage to teach? Perspectives on problems in practice', *Harvard Educational Review,* Vol. 55, No. 2, pp. 178-194.

Lampert, M. (1986) 'Teachers' strategies for understanding and managing classroom dilemmas', in Ben-Peretz, M., Bromme, R. and Halkes, R. (eds) *Advance of Research on Teacher Thinking,* Lisse: Swets and Zeitlinger.

Leat, D. (1995) 'The cost of reflection in initial teacher education', *Cambridge Journal of Education,* Vol. 25, No. 2, pp. 161-174.

Levin, T. and Nevo, Y. (2000) 'Change processes in schools and community centers', in *Meta-Disciplinary and Constructivist Learning,* Jerusalem: Ministry of Education, Elementary School Division, Department of Approaches and Methods (in Hebrew).

Levine, D. U., Levine, R. F. and Ornstein, A. C. (1985) 'Guidelines for change and innovation in the secondary school curriculum', *NASSP Bulletin*, May, pp. 9-14.

Lipman, M. (1991) *Thinking in Education*, New York: Cambridge University Press.

Little, J. W. (1993) 'Teachers' professional development in climate of educational reform', *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, Vol. 15, No. 2, pp. 129-151.

Lomax, P. (1994) 'Action research for managing change' in Bennett, N., Glatter, R. and Levacic, R. (eds.) *Improving Education Management Through Research and Consultancy*, London: The Open University/Paul Chapman Publishing.

Lortie, D. C. (1975) *School Teacher: A Sociological Study*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lortie, D. C. (1975b) *Speculation on Changes, School Teacher*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Loucks, S. F. and Lieberman, A. (1983) 'Curriculum implementation' in English, F. W. (ed.) *Fundamental Curriculum Decisions*, Alexandria: Assoc. for Supervision and Curriculum Development Yearbook Committee.

Lovell, T. J. and Wiles, K. (1983) *Supervision for Better Schools*, (5th edn.), Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.

Louis, K. (1980) *Findings From the Study of the R & D Utilization Program*, Cambridge: Abt.

Luzati, S. (1999) *Curriculum Planning*, Jerusalem: Ministry of Education and Sport, (in Hebrew).

Lyons, N. (1990) 'Dilemmas of Knowing: 'Ethical and Epistemological Dimensions of Teachers' Work and Development', *Harvard Educational Review*, Vol. 60, No. 2, pp. 159-181.

Maclagan, P. and Snell, R. (1992) 'Some implications for management development of research into managers moral dilemmas', *British Journal of Management*, Vol. 10, pp. 127-168.

Mahapil, A. (1997) *Colleges for Education in the Late 90's: Proposing Frameworks for Discussion*, Jerusalem: Israeli Ministry of Education (in Hebrew).

Markee, N. (1997) *Managing Curricular Change*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Maslovaty, N. (2000) 'Teachers choice of teaching strategies for dealing with socio-moral dilemmas in the elementary school', *Journal of Moral Education*, Vol. 29, No. 4, pp. 429-443.

McChesney, J. (1998) Whole School Reform, ERIC DIGEST, No. 124, Eric clearinghouse on educational management, ED427388.

McCotter, S. S. (2001) 'Collaborative groups as professional development', *Teaching and Teacher Education, Vol.* 17, pp. 685-704.

McIntyre, D. (1988) 'Designing a teacher education curriculum from research and theory or teacher knowledge', in Calderhead J. (ed.), *Teachers' Professional Learning,* London: Falmer Press.

McNamara, D. (1990) 'Research on teachers' thinking: its contribution to educating student teachers to think critically' *Journal of Education for Teaching,* Vol. 16, No. 2, pp. 147-160.

McNamara, D. (1995) 'The influence of student teachers' tutors and mentors upon their classroom practice: an exploratory study', *Teaching and Teacher Education,* Vol. 11, No. 1, pp. 52-61.

McNiff, J., Lomax, P. and Whitehead, J. (1996) *You and Your Action Research Project,* London and New York: Hide Publications.

McPartland, M. (2001) 'Moral dilemmas, narrative and the teaching of Geography', *International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education,* Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 114-126.

McPeck, J. E. (1981) *Critical Thinking and Education,* New York: Martin Robertson.

Middlewood, D., Coleman, M. and Lumby, J. (1999) *Practitioner Research in Education: making a difference,* London: Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd.

Moran, A. and Dallat, J. (1994) 'Reflecting on professional practice, with special reference to the use of diary in high education', *Higher Education Annual Conference,* pp.171-183.

Morrison, M. (1999) 'Action Research', University of Leicester, Teaching pack, MAPSE (Malaysia) pp.8-9.

Morrison, M. (2002) 'Interviewing and Interview Analysis', PhD Summer School, University of Leicester, School of Education.

Munby, H. (1999) 'Learning to implement and evaluate a field-based teacher education program, *Teacher Education Quarterly,* Vol. 26 No. 2, pp. 89-95.

Munn, P. and Drever, E. (1995) *Using Questionnaire in Small Scale Research,* Edinburgh: The Scottish Council for Research in Education.

Nickerson, R. S. (1987) 'Why teach thinking' in Boykoff, B. J. and Sternberg J. R. (eds.) *Teaching Thinking Skills: theory and practice,* New York: Freeman and Co.

Noffke, S. E. and Brennan, M. (1988) 'Student teachers use action research: issues and examples', paper presented at the national meeting of Association of Teachers Educators, San Diego.

Oja, S. N. and Smulyan, L. (1989) *Collaborative Action Research: A Development Approach*, London: The Falmer Press.

Olson, J. K. (1980) 'Teacher constructs and curriculum change', *Journal of Curriculum Studies,* Vol. 12, No. 1, pp. 1-11.

Olson, J. K. (1985) 'Changing our ideas about change', *Canadian Journal of Education,* Vol. 10, No. 3, pp. 294-308.

Oppewal, T. J. (1993) 'Pre-service teachers' thinking about classroom events, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 9 No. 2, pp. 127-136.

Ornstein, A. C. and Hunkins, F. (1993) *Curriculum Foundations, Principles and Theory'*, Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Oser, F. (1991) 'Professional morality: a discourse approach (the case of teaching profession)', in Kurtines W. and Gewirtz (eds.) *Handbook of Moral Behavior and Development,* Vol. 2, pp. 191-228, New Jersey: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, quoted in Tirri, K. (1999) 'Teachers perceptions of moral dilemmas at school', *Journal of Moral Education,* Vol. 28, No. 1, pp. 31-47.

Oser, F. and Althof, W. (1993) 'Trust in advance: on the professional morality of teachers', *Journal of Moral Education*, University of Fribourg, Switzerland, Vol. 22 No. 3, pp. 253-275.

Passmore, J. (1980) *The Philosophy of Teaching*, London: Duckworth.

Pasternak, R. (1994) *Guiding Principles and Tasks for Secondary School Teaching Practice*, Tel Aviv: Levinsky College of Education, (in Hebrew).

Paul, R. W. (1984) 'Critical thinking: fundamental to education for a free society', *Educational Leadership*, Vol. 42 No. 1, pp. 4-14

Penny, A. J., Harley, K. L. and Jessop, T. S. (1996) 'Towards a language of possibility: critical reflection and mentorship in initial teacher education', *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice,* Vol. 2, No. 1, pp. 57-69.

Petty, M. and Hogben, D. (1980) 'Explorations of semantic space with beginning teachers: a study of socialization into teaching', *British Journal of Teacher Education,* Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 51-61.

Ponte, P. and Beers, R. (2000) 'Action research as an educational strategy in post-initial teacher training: An example', in Velon, W., Gerand M. and Jos, H.J. stakenborg wiel veugelers (eds.) *Trend in Dutch Teacher Education*, Netherlands: Gerard, pp. 131-141.

Prawat, R.S. (1992) 'Teachers believe about teaching and learning: A constructive perspective', *American Journal of Education*, Vol. 3, pp. 354-390.

Prochaska, J. O. and DiClemente, C. C. (1982) 'Transtheoretical therapy toward a more integrative model of change', *Psychotherapy: Theory Researchers and Practice*, Vol. 19, pp. 276-288.

Rearick, M. L. and Feldman, A. (1999) 'Orientations, purposes and reflection: a framework for understanding action research', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 15, pp. 333-349.

Richardson, V. and Koehler, V. (1988) 'Barriers to the effective supervision of student teaching: A field study', *Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol. 39 No. 2, pp. 28-34.

Rogers, C. R. (1969) *Freedom to Learn*, Resident Fellow Center for Students of the Person, La Joller, California: Charles E. Merill Publication Company (translated to Hebrew in 1977).

Rogers, E. (1995) *Diffusion of Innovations*, NY: Free Press.

Russel, T., Munby, H., Spafford, C. and Johanston, P. (1988) 'Learning the professional knowledge of teaching: Metaphors, puzzles and the theory-practice relationship', in Grimmett, P.O. and Erickson, G.L. (eds.) *Reflection in Teacher Education*, New York: Teachers College Press.

Salomon, G. and Almog, T. (1994) 'The desirable image of the graduate of the educational system', internal publication of The Haifa University, School of Education (in Hebrew).

Sarason, S. (1982) *The Culture of School and the Problem of Change*, Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Schneider, B. (1987) 'Tracing the provenance of teacher education', in Popkewitz, T. (ed), *Critical Studies in Teacher Education*, Lewes: Falmer Press.

Schon, D.A. (1983) *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*, New York: Basic Books.

Schon, D. A. (1987) *Educating the Reflective Practitioner: Toward a New Design for Teaching and Learning in the Professions*, San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Schon, D. A. (1988) 'Coaching reflective teaching', in Grimmett, P. P. and Erickson, G. L. (eds.) *Reflection in Teacher Education*, New York: Teacher College Press.

Schwab, J. J. (1983) 'Something for curriculum professors to do', *Curriculum Inquiry*, Vol. 13, No. 3, pp. 239-265.

Schwab, R. (1989) 'Stress and intern teacher: An exploratory study', paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA.

Sellick, D. (1996) 'Learning to use mirror: reflection and teacher education', *Education Today,* Vol. 46, No. 4, pp.11-16.

Shremer, O. (2003) 'Curriculum - Conceptual Studies', *Theory into Practice in Curriculum Planning,* Vol. 8, pp. 1-19 (in Hebrew).

Shulman, L. S. (1984) 'The practical and the eclectic: a deliberation on teaching and educational research', *Curriculum Inquiry,* Vol. 14, p. 183.

Shulman, L. (1988) 'The danger of dichotomic thinking in education' in Grimmett, P. P. and Erickson, G. L. (eds.) *Reflection in Teacher Education,* New York: Teacher College Press.

Shulman, L. (1996) 'Just in case: reflection on learning from experience', in Colbert, J. Desberg, P. and Trimble, K. (eds.) *The Case for Education: Contemporary Approaches Using Case Methods,* Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Shkedi, A. (1996) 'School-based workshops for teacher participation in curriculum development', *Journal of Curriculum Studies,* Vol. 28, No. 6, pp. 699-711.

Shkedi, A. (2003) *Words of Meaning, Qualitative Research Theory and Practice'* Ramot: University of Tel-Aviv, (in Hebrew).

Shkedi A. and Horenczyk G. (1995), 'The role of teacher ideology in the teaching of culturally valued texts', *Teaching and Teacher Education,* Vol. 11, No. 2, pp.107-117.

Siegel, H. (1988) *Education Reason: Rationality, Critical Thinking and Education,* New York and London: Routledge

Sinot-Armstrong, W. (1988) *Moral Dilemmas,* Oxford: Oxford University Press, quoted in McPartland, M. (2001) 'Moral dilemmas, narrative and the teaching of Geography', *International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education,* Vol. 10, No. 2, pp. 114-126.

Sluss, D. and Minner, S. (1999) 'The changing roles of early childhood educators in preparing new teachers: findings from three preparation programs', *Childhood Education, Olney,* Vol. 75, Issue 5, pp. 280-284.

Smyth, J. (1991) *Teachers as Collaborative Learners,* Birmingham: Open University Press.

Spilkova, V. (2001) 'Professional development of teachers and student teachers through reflection on practice', *European Journal of Teachers Education,* Vol. 24, No. 1, pp. 60-65.

Statman, D. (1993) *Moral Dilemmas*, Jerusalem: Magnus (in Hebrew).

Stenhouse, L. (1980) *Curriculum Research and Development in Action*, London: Heineman Educational Books.

Stenhouse, L. (1981) *An Introduction to Curriculum Research and Development*, London: Heineman Educational Books.

Stones, E. (1987) 'Teaching practice supervision: bridge between theory and practice, *European Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol. 10, No. 1, pp. 67-79.

Tanner, C. A. (1993) 'Thinking about critical thinking', *Journal of Nursing Education*, Vol. 32, pp. 99-100.

Tillema, H. H. (2000) 'Belief change towards self-direction learning in student teachers: immersion in practice or reflection to action', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 16, pp. 575-591.

Tirri, K. (1999) 'Teachers perceptions of moral dilemmas at school', *Journal of Moral Education*, Vol.28, No. 1, pp. 31-47.

Valli, L. (1992) *Reflective Teacher Education: cases and critique*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Van Manen, M. (1995) 'On the epistemology of reflective practice', *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*, Vol. 1, pp. 33-50.

Vermunt, J. D. and Verloop, N. (1999) 'Congruence and friction between learning and teaching', *Learning and Instructions*, Vol. 9, pp. 257-280.

Volmann, M. J. and Anderson, M. A. (1998) 'Creating professional identity: dilemmas and metaphors of a first-year chemistry teacher', *Science Education*, Vol. 82, pp. 293-310.

Wally, C. (1995) 'Looking at school change', *Childhood Education, Olney*, Vol. 71, Issue 5, pp. 258-260.

Wheeler, D.R. (1967) *Curriculum Process*, London: University of London Press.

Wideen, M. P. and Grimmett, P. P. (1995) *Changing Times in Teacher Education-Restructuring or Reconceptualization?* London: Falmer.

Wood, E. and Geddis, A. N. (1999) 'Self-conscious narrative teacher education: representing practice in professional course work', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 15, pp. 107-119.

Wragg, E. C. (1994) 'Conducting and analysing interviews', in Bennett, N., Glatter, R. and Levacic, R. (eds.) *Improving Educational Management through Research and Consultancy*, London: The Open University/Paul Chapman Publishing Ltd.

Yifat, R. and Zadonaiski, S. (1999) *Conversations in Kindergarten – Analysis According to the Principles of Action Research*, Tel Aviv: The Mofet Institute (in Hebrew).

Youngman, M. B. (1994) 'Designing and using questionnaires', in Bennett, N., Glatter, R. and Levacic, R. (eds.) *Improving Education Management through Research and Consultancy*, London: The Open University/Paul Chapman Publishing.

Zabar, N. (1999) *The Qualitative Research in Teaching and Learning*, Tel Aviv: Modan (in Hebrew).

Zeichner, K. (1980) 'Myths and realities: field–based experience in pre-service teacher education', *Journal of Teacher Education*, Vol. 31, No. 6, pp. 45-49.

Zeichner, K. M. (1992) 'Conceptions of reflective teaching in contemporary U.S teacher education program reforms', in Valli, L. (ed.) *Reflective Teacher Education*, Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, quoted in Bain, D. J., Ballantye, R., Packer, J. and Mills, C. (1999) 'Using journal writing to enhance student teachers' reflectivity during field experience placement', *Teachers and Teaching: theory and practice*, Vol. 5, No. 1, pp. 51-73.

Zeichner, K.M. and Gore, J.M. (1990) 'Teacher socialization', in Houston, W.R. (ed.) *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education*, New York: McMillan.

Zeichner, K., Tabachnick, B. R. and Densemore, K. (1987) 'Individual institutional and cultural influences on the development of teachers' craft knowledge', in Calderhead, J. (ed.) *Exploring Teachers' Thinking*, London: Cassell Educational Limited

Zelemaire, M. (2001) 'Action research in education', in Zabar, N. (ed.) *Educational Trends in Qualitative Research*, Tel Aviv: Dvier (in Hebrew).

Zeuli, J. and Buchmann, M. (1988) 'Implementation of teacher-thinking research as curriculum deliberation', *Curriculum Studies*, Vol. 20, No. 2, pp. 141-154.

Zilberstein, M. (1998) 'Teaching as a practical reflective occupation, an outline for training programs and alternative studies', *Research and Development in the Training of Teachers*, Tel Aviv: Mofet Institute (in Hebrew).

Zilberstein, M. (2005) 'A collaborative network: college-school', *Journal of Mofet Institute*, Vol. 18, No. 12, pp. 18-19, (in Hebrew).

Ziv, S. (1988) 'Alternative approaches in teaching training practice', unpublished doctoral thesis, Tel Aviv University (in Hebrew).

APPENDICES

Appendix 1
Analysis of questionnaire and findings

Professional Dilemmas
Questionnaire for 2nd Year Students

This questionnaire concerns the professional dilemmas student teachers encounter during teaching practice. The purpose of the questionnaire is to find ways of teaching student teachers on this subject.

Thank you for your co-operation.

The following definition of the term 'dilemma' will help you when completing the questionnaire.

A dilemma – *is a situation in which a person faces a quandary when having to decide <u>on the best and most efficient solution to a given problem</u>. In such a situation, not only are there a number of opposing considerations, but these considerations make it difficult to take action and are even liable to paralyse the involved individual to the extent that he/she is unable to take any action.*

Please circle the answer you consider is most appropriate:

1. **When faced with a professional dilemma during teaching practice, I usually:**

One.   Solve the dilemma myself drawing on personal experience.

Two.   Consult professional colleagues.

Three.   Read relevant professional literature.

Four.   Discuss with professionals in the teaching college.

Five.   Discuss with my coaching teacher.
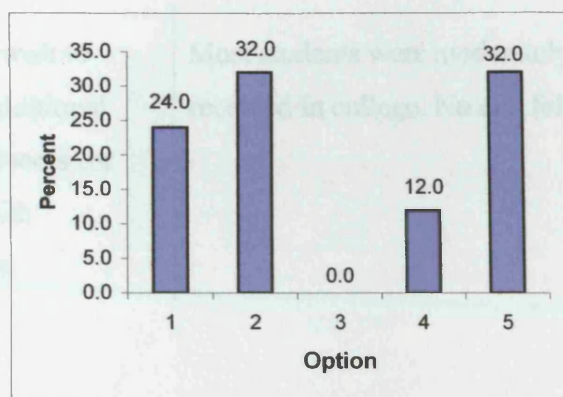
	This question	When faced with dilemmas students would rather consult colleagues or
	shows student lack	training teachers than discuss dilemmas with training college faculty
	of awareness of the	(their second choice). No one was interested in reading the professional
	importance of	literature on the subject.
	theoretical	
	information on	
	coping with	
	dilemmas.	

2. **My studies have provided me with many tools for handling professional dilemmas:**

a. Totally agree   b. Agree   c. Partially agree   d. Do not agree   e. Do not agree at all
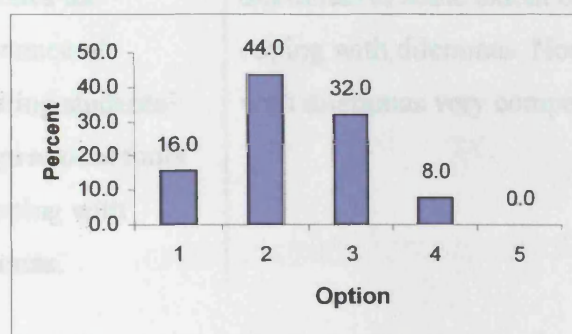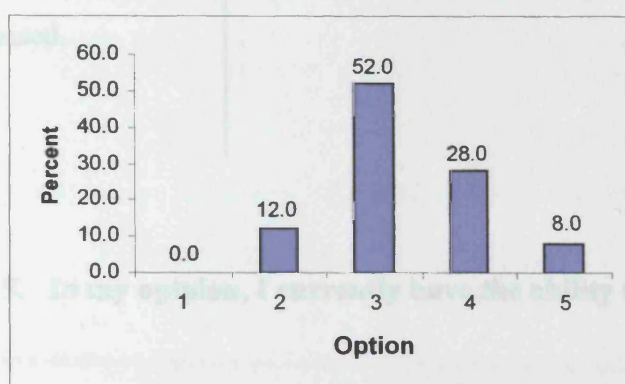
| Students wish to acquire additional **practical** tools for coping with dilemmas | Most students were moderately satisfied with the tools they had received in college. No one felt that tools had not been provided. |

3. I am always able to solve professional pedagogic dilemmas:

    a. Totally agree   b. Agree   c. Partially agree   d. Do not agree   e. Do not agree at all


| This question illustrates the importance of providing students with **practical** tools for coping with dilemmas. | Over half the students perceive themselves as able to cope with dilemmas to some extent only. The rest think they have problems coping with dilemmas. None of the students felt themselves able to cope with dilemmas very competently. |

4. It is extremely important to include the subject of coping with professional dilemmas in the teacher training curriculum:

    a. Totally agree   b. Agree   c. Partially agree   d. Do not agree   e. Do not agree at all

Percent

60.0
52.0
50.0
40.0 — 40.0
30.0
20.0
10.0 — 8.0
0.0 — 0.0   0.0

1   2   3   4   5

Option
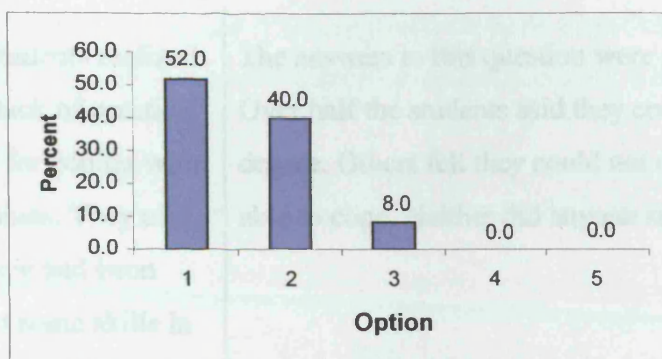
These results
corroborate my own
sense that the college
curriculum needs to
be revised.

Almost all the students (92%) thought it very important for the subject of coping with dilemmas to be included in the curriculum.

5. In my opinion, I currently have the ability to cope well with dilemmas:

a. Totally
agree   b. Agree   c. Partially agree   d. Do not agree   e. Do not agree at all

Percent

60.0
56.0
50.0
40.0
32.0
30.0
20.0
10.0
8.0
0.0   0.0   0.0

1   2   3   4   5

Option
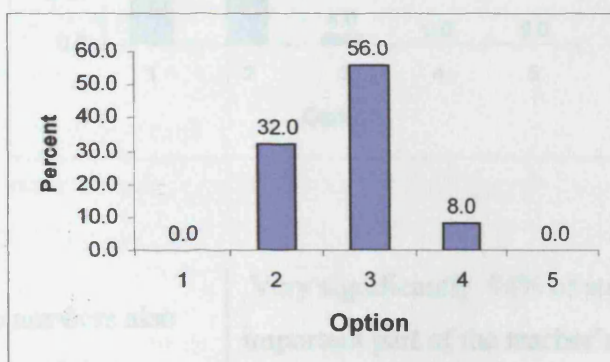
The students realized	The answers to this question were similar to the answers to Question 3.
their lack of practical	Over half the students said they could cope with dilemmas to some
skills for coping with	degree. Others felt they could not cope. No one felt themselves fully
dilemmas. They also	able to cope. Neither did anyone say they were totally unable to cope.
felt they had been	
taught some skills in	
the first year of the	
course.	

6. **The ability to solve pedagogic dilemmas is an essential component of the teacher's work.**

a. Totally agree   b. Agree   c. Partially agree   d. Do not agree   e. Do not agree at all
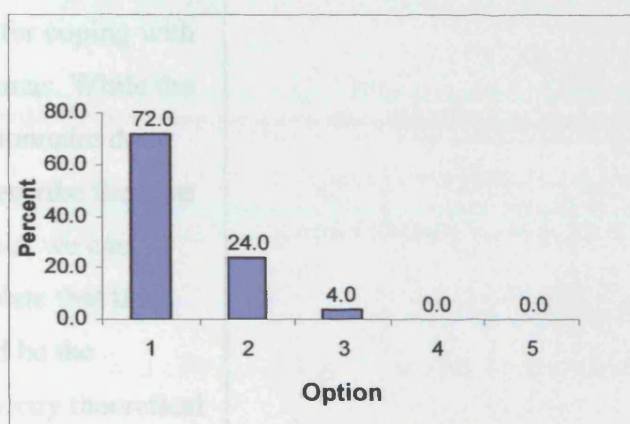
| These answers also	Very significantly, 96% of students saw coping with dilemmas an
clearly point to	important part of the teacher's work.
student awareness of	
the importance of	
teaching the subject	
at the college.	

7. **The pedagogic training received during my first year of studies provided me with practical tools for coping with professional dilemmas.**

a. Totally agree   b. Agree   c. Partially agree   d. Do not agree   e. Do not agree at all
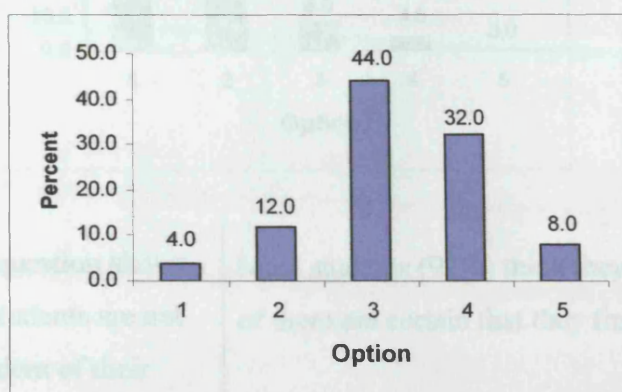

This implies that the students would like to receive additional tools for coping with dilemmas. While the questionnaire does not describe the type of tools, we can speculate that they would be the customary theoretical and practical tools taught by the college.

All through the questionnaire (questions 3, 5, 9), students indicated that they had been partially equipped with tools for coping with dilemmas

8. **The inability to solve professional dilemmas makes the job of teaching more difficult.**

a. Totally agree   b. Agree   c. Partially agree   d. Do not agree   e. Do not agree at all
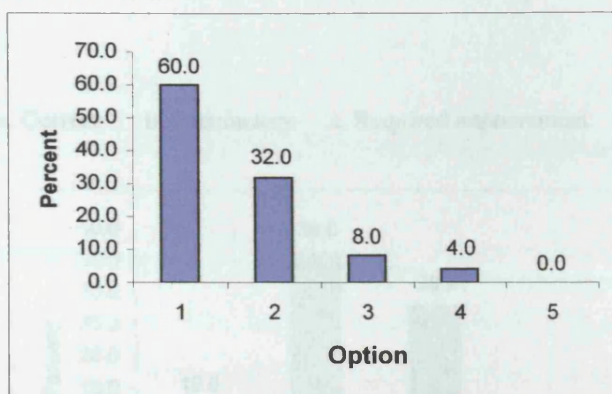
This question shows that students are not confident of their ability to "**manage**" dilemmas unaided.

Most students (92%) think they find it hard to cope with dilemmas, 60% of them are certain that they find it hard.

9. **Describe a pedagogic dilemma which you encountered in the class or kindergarten.**

These are some examples of the responses given to the question above:

1. I saw two children fighting over something but when I tried to separate them, one of them hit me and I did not know what to do.

2. I prepared something to do with the children but they wouldn't cooperate and I was forced to abandon the activity in the middle.

3. In the preschool class, I saw the boys physically touching the girls and I was not sure if punishment was appropriate.

Analysis

Students described incidents that had arisen during classroom practice which they found difficult to cope with. None of the students **described a dilemma** which had two alternatives each demanding a "high price" from them in value terms. Thus, the incidents described did not conform to what constitutes a dilemma, but related to every day problems that a teacher encounters.

10. I feel that the manner in which I responded was:

a. Correct   b. Satisfactory   c. Required improvement   d. I had no idea how to respond
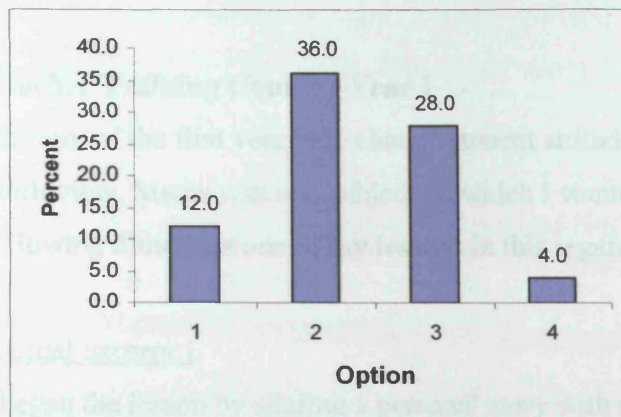
The responses to this question resembled the responses to earlier questions (e.g., questions 3 +5). This question shows that the students had acquired some confidence in the first year of their studies but nevertheless felt they needed additional tools to cope with dilemmas.

36% of the students thought that their work was satisfactory. 28% felt they could improve their competency in coping with dilemmas. Only 12% were sure they could cope with dilemmas. Only 4% said they were completely unable to cope with dilemmas.

Students' responses varied. Some said that they used their intuition when responding to dilemmas. Others referred to their experience. None said that they applied insights gathered from the professional literature or based their responses to dilemmas on what they had been taught in college.

Analysis

The above shows that students had not been taught the theoretical aspects of coping with dilemmas in their pedagogic course or any other courses taught at the college.

312

Appendix 2

Analysing How College Students Cope with Dilemmas

Teacher Training Course - Year 1

The aim of the first year is to change student attitudes and inculcate a humanistic worldview. Maths was one subject on which I wanted to change student views. The following illustrates one of my lessons in this regard:

<u>Journal excerpt 1</u>

I began the lesson by sharing a personal story with the class. The story was that when I was taught maths in elementary school, a very powerful and unpleasant memory involved learning my multiplication tables. Years later, as a teacher instructor in several schools, I visited a class where maths was being taught and saw that, even at this young age, the children's body language showed that they found the subject very stressful. The sight took me back to when I was a little girl and raised many questions, foremost of which was how to teach the subject without making the children's lives a misery.

I asked my class of students how they had felt when they learned maths in elementary school and high school. Did they also invent their own solutions to maths problems? Did they tell the teacher about their method?

Merav – I never felt it mattered how I did things, just that I got the right answer.
Miriam – I like to use my fingers, it's simple and convenient, but my teacher said I was too big to do it that way and insisted I do it in my head. That was hard, so I worked out sums using my fingers… under the desk. I do think that maths is a field where you need to use your head.
MYSELF – The attitude today has completely changed and children can use any means they like to get the answer.
Sharon – In my school, we spent hours learning the multiplication tables at home and everyone knew them by heart.
Michal - I have a good memory. My preschool teacher brought objects to illustrate what we were doing and we could use our fingers and toes.
MYSELF - I'm glad you had a positive experience.

Osnat – I found it hard to learn the multiplication tables by heart and still have problems with it. Even using my fingers and toes was too hard. I felt there was something wrong with me; that I was not a good girl.

MYSELF - Thank you for sharing. Why do you think you didn't succeed?

Osnat – There was only one way to do it, and that was to learn it by heart, which I couldn't do. Therefore, I felt something was wrong with me. There was a right way to do it and I could not do it like that.

MYSELF – Many children find it difficult. Why did you feel different?

Osnat – When the teacher shows you the right way to do something and I couldn't do it that way, then something must be wrong with me: I'm different, not as good as the others.

The following will explain how the categories I devised for analysing the research data came about (the categories are marked in italics).

Analysis

When I asked students to share their experiences, most had neutral or positive stories. Only Osnat reported an unpleasant time learning maths. My own experience, however, tells me something very different, namely that many children find maths very stressful. I think the students failed to share their experiences because they lacked the ability and openness to *express their feelings*.

I also found they held very categorical opinions on educational subjects. In the case of maths teaching, the commonly held opinion was that there was one way to do maths problems – the teacher's way. This is a clear example of *black and white thinking*. No one suggested that children could find their own way of solving maths problems that might be no less effective than the teacher's method. The students believed that there was one tried and tested way of doing things. Osnat very clearly illustrated this, and we can summarize her view in one sentence: "I am at fault if I cannot do something the teacher's way".

Reflection

Sometimes, I start my lessons with a personal story. There are two reasons for this: one is to set an example and break the ice so that students can share their own ideas and feelings. The other is to provide a role model: I hope that they in turn will encourage their teaching practice pupils to share ideas and feelings.

The discussion on whether children should make up their own strategies for solving maths exercises, etc., or use the teacher's methods, failed to take the direction I had hoped and the students failed to suggest a range of ideas.

I wondered why the student opinions seemed so monolithic, and why they all thought that teachers should decide how pupils should solve maths problems. I think that this reflects years of exposure to such teaching methods during their school careers, when they were expected to do what the teacher said and use the methods s/he showed them if they wished get on. The students do not know about the new approach in education, which considers the child's problem-solving strategies.

This lesson was the entrée into the subject, although it was evident that the students found it difficult to step out of their mindset. Attempts to enrich and raise the level of the discussion did not really work. However, at least I now knew where I was starting from in terms of thinking about dilemmas.

Journal excerpt 2

In their first year, students spend a lot of time studying the principles of humanism as applied to education as part of a campaign to change their mindset and encourage their development as humanistic teachers. The following are some of the principles students are taught: the learning environment must be supportive; the teacher must try to realize the potential of each child; learning should incorporate cognitive as well as affective elements.

To show students that this approach is feasible, I showed them a film. The film showed a preschool teacher sitting on a rug. In front of her were objects she used for demonstration: dominos, dice, chalk, and mini-blackboards. The children sat around in a circle with the same items in front of them. The teacher set them a mathematical question and the children used the objects to answer the question. Finally, they were asked to explain how they had arrived at their answers. The film showed how the children solved the problem. The atmosphere the teacher created was pleasant; she smiled a lot and offered the children lots of positive encouragement. One might say that her behaviour encapsulated the principles of the humanistic approach. After the film, I asked the students to identify the humanistic principles they had just observed in action.

Tsippy – The film shows children having a lot of fun learning.

MYSELF – Can you relate this to the principles we have learned?

Tsippy – That we should do whatever we can to ensure children have fun and want to learn, also that it is crucial for children to enjoy learning.

MYSELF – (trying to see whether the student can spot the dilemma here and formulate it, and not just partially). I think this is a topic for us to discuss, it could also be a dilemma. Can anyone put this dilemma into words?

Merav – Of course, it is important for children to enjoy learning. The dilemma is how to accomplish it.

MYSELF –So you agree with the humanistic philosophy of education which says that learning takes place though enjoyment, and therefore whatever we teach we must ensure the children enjoy it (I phrased this somewhat provocatively to sharpen the discussion).

Merav – I certainly do agree.

MYSELF - Why is this so important?

Miriam – Because otherwise they won't want to learn or continue learning.

Michal – Enjoyment leads to curiosity, curiosity leads to meaningful learning. In the film we saw the children were given blackboards and chalk. They were interested and there was a very good chance of them learning.

Analysis

When they considered whether learning has to be enjoyable, the students *related to the global* humanist *value* they had been taught, namely that teachers should make learning enjoyable for children. On the one hand, this was expected since they had only recently studied this subject in class. On the other hand, I did expect at least one student to perceive the clash of values this involved. If such a student had existed, she would have said that society has decided that some subjects must be learned even if we do not enjoy learning them; for example, reading and writing or multiplication tables. However, no one raised this. I believe this shows that students are *fixated on a general principle or value* they have learned, and cannot see the wider educational implications or the *values in conflict*.

This lesson also shows the patterns of thinking revealed in the excerpt of Lesson 1: the inability to see the *complexities of the dilemma at hand*, relating to the educational issue in a categorical fashion, and thinking along a single groove.

<u>Reflection</u>

The two excerpts above show that several cognitive factors emerged when students faced situations involving different options. I was disappointed with the way the students saw things, which could only be called uniform. I wondered why this had happened. I can explain this as follows: they wanted to please me, their instructor, particularly in their first year of college (i.e., the students said what they thought I wanted to hear). They learned that when I kept reiterating that they should plan enjoyable lessons for the children, this was the only option. In those lessons, where my task was to change their opinions and convince them of the righteousness of the path the college wished them to tread, I may have presented the humanistic approach and its values too categorically without opening the subject for discussion and inviting them to query the principles, as I do in most of my other classes.

Now, when I see the consequences of how I taught them, I doubt whether the right approach is to teach a subject and at the same time question it to encourage students to think. The alternative is to teach the main principles in the first year and only in the second and third years discuss them in order to encourage critical thinking and inculcate the necessary skills for coping with dilemmas.

At this stage, I am inclined to encourage students to start questioning in their first year and, if possible, examine each subject from a number of angles. I see categorical thinking as inappropriate to teaching. Instead, the expression of questions and doubts will help to develop a professional teacher who constantly wonders about the right way to work with children.

Teacher training course - Year 2

The second year of the teacher training programme contains two important goals:

1. Development of didactic skills – working in different settings (full class, groups) and planning a teaching unit.
2. Teaching a humanistic outlook by applying the humanistic principles learned in Year 1 wherever possible - in the students' teaching practice school.

I supervise and monitor students' work and I observe them during teaching practice.

The following describes an observation of Irit during teaching practice:

Background

Irit, my college student, had a second year elementary school class for teaching practice. There were several immigrant children from Ethiopia in the class. These children differed from the rest of the class in several ways. Some of the main differences were skin colour, language fluency (they spoke with mistakes), and they played separately during breaks. There was little contact between them and the other children; the food they brought was also slightly different. The Ethiopian children had a hard time socially and a few times, Irit found them being teased. She decided to organise an activity to show how the immigrant children felt. This was the activity I observed.

Irit sat with a group of six children. She showed them a newspaper cartoon, in fact a caricature (shown below).
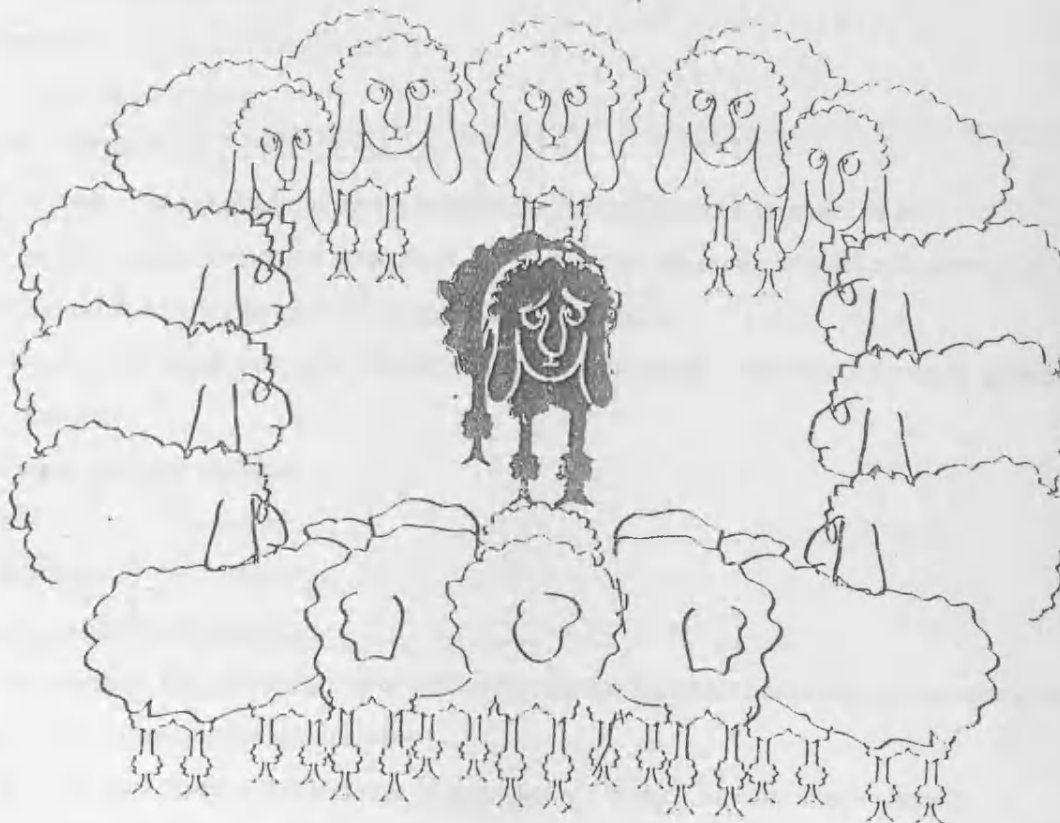
Irit – What do you think the picture is about?

Children – Sheep; white sheep and a black sheep.

Irit – What does the picture tell you?

Children –The white sheep are not letting the black sheep go out.

Irit – Why won't they let it go out?

Children –Maybe it's a game, we have a game like that.

Irit – What can we see from the look on the white sheep's faces?

Children – They are angry with the black sheep.

Irit – Who can show us how the white sheep look?

(Children demonstrate).

Irit – Why do you think they are cross?

Children – Because she's ugly.

- Because she's bad

- Because she's black.

- Maybe because they are bad. They are many of them and she's only one.

- So what if she's black. There are lots of black animals, cats and dogs, why should they be angry?

Irit – Look at the face of the black sheep. How do you think she feels? Can anyone show us what she looks like?

(Children demonstrate)

Children – You can see she's sad.

- I think she's scared.

Irit – What do you think she can do?

Children – She should run away, but she can't because they've shut her in.

Someone should come and scare them off so she can run away. My friends were going to hit me once and my brother came and they ran away.

Irit – Do you think that what happened to the black sheep could also happen to grownups or children?

Silence from the children....

Then

Children – I don't think so.

- I think it could happen.

(The children began telling stories about bad things they had heard about, e.g., someone hit someone; someone killed someone.

Irit – Do you think some children in our class are treated like the black sheep?

Children – Not in our class.

Irit – In our class do children say mean things to other children?

Children – Someone said something mean to me.

- I even got hit, Yossi choked me once.

Irit – Our class has new immigrants from lots of countries. Do you think anyone is mean to them?

Children – Some children are mean to them and they always play together by themselves.

Irit – How do people treat the children from Ethiopia?

Children – They are nice to them, but they are mean to them as well.

Irit – Do you think people are not nice to them because they look different?

Children – They are black.

Irit – I told you in the last lesson about how to treat people who are different.

Children – Yes, we said we must respect them and accept their differences.

- I like playing with the Ethiopians.

- I am nice to everyone, if they don't hit me.

The session concluded with the children all promising to be nice to anyone in the class who was different.

Feedback meeting

After this observation, I met with Irit for feedback.

I began by asking her what had gone according to plan and what had been difficult. Irit indicated she was very pleased that the children had cooperated and understood the drawing. She also said she thought the children had understood the general message she had wanted to convey. The message was that they should be nice everyone in the class without exception regardless of how they look.

She admitted that during the activity she had held herself back from driving the real message across. She felt she had lacked the courage to express her message fully, i.e., to compare the white sheep to the majority of the class and the black sheep to the Ethiopian children. She had considered talking about the Ethiopian children more directly, i.e., asking the group to describe how the Ethiopian children were treated and ways of improving their treatment, but had refrained from doing so.

MYSELF – Reading between the lines, you had a dilemma.

Irit - I think I did because I didn't know what to do. I didn't want to hurt the Ethiopian children. That would have been a big failure for me. I can usually cope with difficulties, but I am not sure how to deal with this, which I see as an important issue.

I asked her if she would do anything different if she taught this activity again.

Irit – I haven't decided. I really want to improve the social climate in the classroom, but am concerned about putting the Ethiopian children in the spotlight because that might hurt them even more.

Here Irit shared her reasons for choosing this issue in particular. Her parents had immigrated to Israel from Yemen. Her whole family was dark skinned like her. "We were all subjected to different kinds of humiliation," she explained. "In families like mine, respect for the other's dignity is very important and here, in my practice class, they don't respect one another. We Yemenites are like the Ethiopians and don't discuss emotions much. We try to cope in silence with our problems, which is why I feel the dilemma of whether or not to speak to the children so intensely.

I'm not sure I have the professional tools to deal with the question although I really want to and sometimes try to do something about it. There are two voices inside me. One says that if the regular class teacher hasn't managed to improve the social situation despite her efforts, then I don't stand a chance. The second voice tells me I must keep trying.

I tried to find explanations for the social difficulty in the class. I thought one reason might be that the children's parents weren't involved enough with the school. They don't come and talk to the teacher and tell her how they and their children feel. Another reason might be that the school principal decided to put all the Ethiopian children in the same class. There aren't any Ethiopian children in the remaining classes and this group is very conspicuous."

After giving herself feedback, it was my turn to give Irit feedback.

I praised her for her original idea of using a caricature to open a discussion on such a delicate and complex subject. I also noted her excellent communication with the children

and her ability to direct and steer the discussion to achieve the goals that she had set. I then chose one important comment, which is summarized below.

I suggested that she might have used the picture more effectively. I understood her concern about explicitly linking the black sheep's predicament to the situation of the Ethiopian children in her class. On the other hand, I told her, you cannot rely on the children to make the connection between the two without the teacher's help, especially when they are this young.

Irit – I think the picture is a powerful tool. Like they say, a picture paints a thousand words. I want to continue using the picture, and I would like you to show me how I could use it in situations you have helped me define as a dilemma.

I promised I would deal with the subject she had raised in the next pedagogic supervision lesson with the whole class. She agreed I could show the class the picture and discuss her activity with them.

Analysis

In this lesson, Irit had a dilemma. **If she spoke about the Ethiopian children directly it would draw attention to them and presumably be embarrassing and do more harm than good. Not being specific about the problem would avoid addressing it in full**.

Irit could sense this was a dilemma. But she did not know how to *identify a dilemma*. In our feedback session, I decided to help her. I described the situation she was facing as a dilemma. The components of the dilemma were evident from her description of the difficulty she was having. What was lacking was a proper *formulation containing these elements*. This might be because she found the situation *ambiguous* and did not know what to do as a result. In other words, she could not see a way of *managing* the situation and therefore she opted to speak about it in general terms.

Irit interpreted what happened in her class against a background of her *own cultural context*. This cultural sensitivity led to ultra-sensitivity to what was happening in the class. What also emerged was Irit's need to *blame others* for creating the dilemma. She thought that the focus of the dilemma concerned the behaviour of the children's parents or the head teacher.

<u>Reflection</u>

I was touched by Irit's sensitivity toward the minority group in her class. However, I also saw indications of a lack of confidence and of professional anxieties with regard to confronting delicate social issues. While watching her at work, I wondered whether, for a student, it was the right thing to take on such a complex challenge. Watching her difficulties, I thought that the college should help students by teaching them skills that would facilitate their work on social issues, so that once qualified, they would be better equipped to deal with such matters which are over and above routine teaching activities.

For Irit, this activity generated more questions than answers, the main question being how to cope with social dilemmas in the classroom. This apart, I was impressed that she had learned a lot from her effort, for example, that the associative world of children when shown a picture is different from that of adults and we should therefore expect them to react differently when working with pictures showing abstract elements or where it is necessary to read between the lines. Her chosen dilemma was not a simple one but her experience with it has opened her mind to coping with other professional dilemmas that she will no doubt face in her career.

The final section is drawn from my observations of a third year student during teaching practice. The observation was conducted three years ago and since then I have been supervising third year students.

Teacher training course – Year 3

<u>Syllabus background</u>

In their third year, students are supposed to be able to manage a class in every way. They have teaching practice twice a week, when they teach all of the subjects the children normally learn. In early childhood lessons, these subjects are mainly arithmetic and reading. The students also prepare lessons where they discuss social topics and hands-on lessons.

I observed a reading lesson in which Michal taught a first grade class. The following is a summary of the lesson.

The lesson involved a group of six children. The group was homogeneous. All members of the group had pretty much the same reading standard and had reached the letter 'S'.

Step 1 – Michal teaches the single sound.

Step 2 – They learn words with the sound 's'.

Michal writes entire words containing the sound 's'. She asks each child in the group to read a word aloud.

Shai has difficulty reading the word.

Michal waits with the children in the group. One of the children tries to whisper the answer. Michal looks disapprovingly at the child. He stops. Michal tries to help Shai and asks him to read each syllable separately. He is very embarrassed and tries again, but still cannot read the whole word. Michal turns to the group and asks if another child can read the word. One child reads it.

Step 3 – Reading a story with the new letter.

Michal reads a short story with lots of words containing the new sound; some words in the story that the children do not know are replaced by pictures. She asks each child to read a line of the story. The children read and when it is Shai's turn, Michal encourages him to read. She says that if it is difficult, she will read his line with him. Shai refuses to read. She starts the first sentence, but he refuses to continue. She leaves him and moves on.

Feedback meeting

After watching this activity, I met Michal for feedback. I asked her to share her thoughts and feelings following the activity.

She reported that she was pleased with some things but that there had been some difficulties. She was bothered about how to react to Shai's difficulty. "I instinctively did what I saw the regular teacher doing when a child had that kind of difficulty."

When Michal had finished evaluating her work, we began our supervision and feedback session.

I noted that I had been pleased with how well she had prepared the lesson and that the children had learned and understood what she wanted them to. I then discussed ways of coping with Shai's difficulty.

MYSELF – When you asked Shai to read, he was unable to read. You waited a few minutes to see if he would eventually read, and when he still couldn't you asked him to read each syllable separately. I felt that Shai was uncomfortable about this. Did you feel that?

Michal – I meant well. I wanted to help him. But often, when I want to help a child or guide him, or help his thinking process, I am not sure what to do. Should I mediate learning as I tried here, and risk embarrassing him, or leave him alone without helping him progress, but not cause him embarrassment, (without letting the others see that he doesn't know).

MYSELF - This is a dilemma; is helping a child during a group teaching session assisting his progress or embarrassing him?

Michal –I'm not certain about when to stop pushing. Should I have stopped asking him or kept on trying to help him, which is what I did. The third option is to try again by asking the child questions. With Shai, it was difficult because I didn't know what to do. I hate it when people try to push me when I don't know something. I want them to drop it immediately and leave me alone.

MYSELF – I agree that if the teacher sees a child is embarrassed they should leave him alone and stop pressing. On the other hand, though, if he is used to people asking him questions when something is being taught then he will be used to the fact that sometimes he doesn't know and will not feel embarrassed.

Michal - In my case, his body language told me that he was embarrassed.

MYSELF – I saw that too.

Michal – When the child next to Shai whispered to him, I showed my disapproval. I wondered whether I should have done that.

MYSELF – I don't think there is a definite answer to that. Being helped by another child can sometimes produce negative feelings in the child experiencing the difficulty and sometimes positive feelings.

Michal – I still don't know the answer. Should a child who can't read be left alone and that's it, which is what I did regarding reading the sentences, or should one insist on instructing him in order to help him cope and get the answer. If you should insist, then up to what point.

MYSELF – I think that the fact that you are asking these questions is very important. Obviously, the solution varies from one child to the next and one situation to the next. I hope that in future you will be able to decide on the most appropriate action in complex situations in education.

Analysis

In this activity, Michal had to cope with a dilemma. She did not define the situation as a dilemma herself, but I assisted her in this. From her uncertainties and questions, however, one could see that she had *identified a situation as a dilemma*. In other words, she sensed a dilemma, but could not *define* or *formulate* it consciously, only intuitively.

Throughout the feedback process, she presented the dilemma and shared her feelings. On several occasions, she said she had had trouble. Michal chose a *coping strategy to deal with the dilemma*. The strategy was flexible. She initially *related to one side of the dilemma*. She waited for Shai to read and when he did not, tried to guide him, although she could see he was embarrassed. Toward the end of the activity, she tried to find a compromise solution to the dilemma and offered Shai a different worksheet if the one he was attempting was too hard. I see this as dealing with the second alternative of the dilemma, i.e., leaving Shai alone, not making comments about him in front of everyone, but not giving up on him, just offering him an alternative that could help his progress.

Reflection

While she was teaching children to read, I could see that Michal tried a number of ways of dealing with the dilemma that had arisen as she was working. I was excited to see these methods. They reflected her personality. She was clearly a girl who thought about things, asked questions, and tried to achieve the best possible results she could. Her efforts at coping with the dilemma were carried out without the benefit of formal learning on dilemmas, but reflected a likeable professional approach to the children, common sense and a basic knowledge of teaching. I think that formal learning about coping with dilemmas will help her develop into a homeroom teacher whose decisions are made on the basis of knowledge and that she will be able to address professional issues on a high level.

Appendix 3

Cycle One-Differences in Students' Progress in College

Ella – Ella's achievements were conspicuous across almost all the categories. She reached the highest level in five out of the ten categories. Note however, that her progress was seen in her practical work in some categories, while in others I could only judge the progress she made from what she said and wrote in college. From the start, she stood out in terms of her motivation and ability to learn the new syllabus and for her declared intention to put what she learned into effect. .

She stood out in some categories especially. For example, in Category G – Coping with Conflicting Values – Ella reached the highest level. She was ranked thus since she was the only one to declare her intention to cope with the clashing values in her dilemma, unlike her peers who chose to address only one of the values despite the fact that they were aware of and had formulated all the values entailed. This declaration of intent placed her at the highest level compared to the others.

With Category J – Choosing a Coping Strategy – the same thing happened as in Category G. As the diagram shows, Ella was the only student to reach the second level. Again, this was not actual progress, which can only be assessed from what the student does at school, but rather a statement of intent – an intention to 'manage' the two aspects of the identified dilemma. In my opinion, a student who declares this intention is one level higher than a student who plans a coping strategy relating just to one side of the dilemma. However, as already, noted the real test is in the field. When students came to putting their plan into action, the picture regarding their achievements can change. For example, in Ella's case, the change might have been that she deviated from her intention of addressing both aspects of the dilemma while her peers might have addressed both.

Maya – Like her peers, Maya progressed in most categories – apart from Category B (Formulating the Dilemma) and Category D (Relating to the Dilemma). In Category B, she 'skipped' Level 1 and started learning the skills for formulating a dilemma already with Level 2 skills. In contrast to most of the others, Maya could formulate a dilemma very early in the course and almost immediately, encompassed multiple components of the dilemma. She also differed from the others in Category D, by not reverting back to Level 1 from Level 2, but rather moving forward from Level 1 through to Level 3. There were two

possible reasons for this. The first is that progress in this category did not relate to hands on work, thus allowing Maya to progress at the 'on campus' learning stage. The second reason concerns her high level of cognitive ability and impressive reasoning abilities (this is referred to in my description of the five students – see page104). These qualities were evident from the college classroom discussions and from her written work. These abilities appear to have contributed to her accelerated progress in categories C and D.

Limor – Regarding Category C (Culture-Reference) Limor entered this category with Level 2 skills. She also showed a high level of sensitivity to social and cultural issues in her college lessons. It was not surprising that she chose a dilemma with multiple social elements. When she described her classroom dilemma, she mentioned both her own culture and that of her pupils. However, I did not appraise her as having reached Level 3 in this category, because although she related to the different culture of her pupils, she clearly had problems accepting this culture and wanted to transmit her own culture to them. Statements she made showed no understanding or empathy for the children's culture, just a familiarity with the children' culture and its contents that she had acquired through teaching.

Lena and Fatma – Both students made similar progress in most categories and the way in which they did this was consistent with their general behaviour in college. Thus, they generally sat together in class, expressed the same kind of ideas and asked to submit joint project work. When I spoke to them separately, they said that because they were in the minority, being Arab students, sitting together and working together made them feel secure. This notwithstanding, there were still differences between them. Fatma presented the professional dilemma she planned to address in an objective way without expression of emotion, while Lena did somewhat share the strong feelings she had. She noted three factors, which led her to increase her expressions of emotions. These were when she described what was happening in her teaching practice class; when she analysed the changes in her attitude during the college year, and when she shared details of her intervention plan with the rest of the class. Like the other students, she still needed practice in expressing her feelings, although she clearly wanted to and realised the need to express feelings.

Appendix 4

Cycle One-Analysis of Each Student's Level of Coping

Based on observations of how each of the students coped with their chosen dilemma, it was possible to analyse their abilities as reflected in their classroom intervention performance. I will begin by examining the two extreme performances: Ella and Fatma.

Ella

I gave Ella the highest appraisal due to the very high level of competence she showed in managing and coping with her chosen dilemma. The process she underwent in *managing* her dilemma was a 'straight line'. She managed the dilemma with great professionalism from the stage of addressing the dilemma in college to the conclusion of the intervention at school. This was despite the fact that, as a new immigrant from Russia, she had to overcome numerous obstacles – coping with a different culture and language difficulties. This notwithstanding, she successfully devise a full programme for handling her dilemma. Both when devising the activities and when implementing them in class, she addressed *both facets* of the dilemma and developed activities that addressed both of them simultaneously. She responded immediately when she identified an element associated with one or other of the facets of the dilemma. In tackling her dilemma, she constantly examined the *values* involved in her action related decisions, and when conflict arose between two values, she could weigh up the pros and cons and come to a decision.

Fatma

I had to give Fatma the lowest evaluation because she treated the dilemma as though it were a straightforward problem or ordinary subject that she had to teach. Although she taught the subject in an interesting way and demonstrated good teaching skills, she taught it as a single unit of information without relating to the children's background culture and knowledge. This method of teaching is not suitable for dilemma management and I was therefore unable to determine whether Fatma in fact knew how to *manage a dilemma*.

The decision to manage her intervention in this way was not made at the very start. At that point, she *identified* the dilemma and *formulated* its dual facets. However, when she *chose her coping strategy* she did not explicitly say that she would deal with both facets of the

dilemma. At that time, I hoped that she might encounter situations along the way that would require her to tackle the second facet too and that she would respond, but this did not happen. Almost from the start, Fatma persistently ignored the dilemma and treated the whole programme – from planning the activities to their conclusion – as though she was teaching an ordinary subject, without considering what the children brought with them from outside school, and in fact while ignoring and negating this aspect of the matter.

When evaluating the professional progress of the remaining three students I identified differences between them. Like Fatma, I gave Maya a poor evaluation for her level of tackling the dilemma, since she too treated the dilemma simply as a subject she wanted to investigate and develop a teaching programme for, rather than a subject she herself had defined from the outset as a dilemma. However, the way she tackled the dilemma differed from Fatma in two respects. The first concerns her high level of ability for *critical thinking* in analysing the situation before her. This emerged at several points in her intervention, for example, when she identified secondary dilemmas stemming from her primary dilemma.

The second difference relates to her awareness of her own failure to truly tackle her dilemma. This awareness is reflected in her need to justify her behaviour (as discussed in the data). The explanations she gave (that the Ministry of Education in its present form prevented this subject from being taught her way) led me to conclude that during her teaching practice she recognised her failure to tackle the dilemma. Throughout Maya's experience of coping with her dilemma, I observed a gap between her cognitive ability and declared intentions of coping with a professional dilemma in a comprehensive way and her actual management of the dilemma. In other words, there was not necessarily a fit between her high cognitive ability and her level of *coping with the dilemma*. Furthermore, there was not always a connection between her declared plan of action and what happened in practice. Although in college she stated her desire to tackle the dilemma fully, in practice this is did not happen.

Limor

Limor tried to address the dilemma fully and *deal* with its *two facets*. However, I ultimately evaluated her performance as mediocre. This was because she failed to tackle the facets symmetrically. At the start, I rated her very highly because she showed many of the factors needed for coping with a dilemma effectively. For example:

- She wanted to address the children's *culture* (second facet of dilemma)

- She defined the secondary categories, trying to *conceptualize* her dilemma in the *broadest sense*
- She tried to envisage all the options in order to reach a compromise in her dilemma
- She addressed both of the *conflicting values* and wished to manage them
- She *shared* her *feelings* more than other students
- She saw things in a new light *(critical thinking)*

Nevertheless, when we observe her activities with the children, there are no signs of particular empathy for where they are coming from, i.e., their culture. Rather the activities are all focused on teaching the topic of prudent consumerism. The title she gave her topic "should we try to educate children in prudent consumerism when their home and social environment exemplifies irresponsible consumerism?" already points to a highly judgmental view since according to the title the children's society is irresponsible, i.e., it does not know how to behave. Therefore, she may have decided that she needed to change their behaviour completely. It is important to note that Limor responded professionally when she encountered the second facet of the dilemma in an activity. For example when she realised that the children were not a homogeneous group in terms of the dilemma issue (for details see Chapter 5 which presents the data).

Lena

Like Limor, I also thought Lena's performance mediocre. There was a lack of symmetry in the way she addressed the two subjects at either pole of the dilemma and the conflicting values arising from the dilemma. Lena planned her teaching practice with the intention of tackling the dilemma situation. She described the two subjects entailed in the dilemma and the *conflicting values*. When deciding on her intervention goals, and later when planning her intervention activities, she almost completely ignored the second issue of the dilemma, concentrating intently on gender equality instead. She explained that this was because of her deep belief that Arab society needed to adopt a policy of gender equality and because of the pressing need focused entirely on that. She had trouble empathizing with people who held her old beliefs since she had moved in her thinking. From the activities she planned and carried out we can clearly see her desire to teach the new subject and ignore or even blank out her *existing culture*. Here are two examples of this: In one of the activities, Lena explained that in the Arab culture in the neighborhood where she lived, only the mother reads the children stories. In order to modify this she sent the children home with books

and a request for their fathers to read to them. If Lena had addressed both sides of the dilemma, she would have asked both parents to read stories. By only asking the fathers, she ignored the traditional behaviour found in the children's families. Similarly, regarding the activity that involved making a present for their father (instead of mother) on Mother's Day. If she had recognised the need to respect the children's customs and had not been so anxious to change their behaviour come what may, she would have pre pared two presents – one for the mother as customary in the children's society and one for the father as well. This can be summarised by saying that even though Lena *identified the dilemma* in her teaching practice class and *formulated* it, she nevertheless had difficulty *tackling it fully* and mostly chose to teach gender equality and only address the second feature of the dilemma lightly.

Appendix 5

Analysis of the Five Sample Students' Achievements Focusing on the Categories

A.   Regarding Category 1, Identifying the Dilemma, all five students began at Level 2 and rapidly progressed to Level 3.

Year 2 showed a considerable difference in the time it took to progress through the various levels compared to Year 1. In Year 1, the students required a lot of practice before they could identify a dilemma and distinguish it from a problem.

As noted earlier, the difference between the two years in terms of student progress in this category can be explained by the fact that a colleague at college had informally practiced dilemma identification with them in the previous year. Even though it was not taught formally, the practice that the students received was very helpful in expediting their learning of this topic.

B.   Similar to Category 1, the students also began Category 2 – Formulating the Dilemma – at Level 2 /Level 3. As with Category 1, the starting point for this category differed from the students in Year 1 who underwent a lengthy process before grasping all of the elements that they needed to incorporate when formulating their dilemma. Here too, the reason for the difference between the two years was that they were already prepared for learning this topic.

C.   Despite its relevance to tackling dilemmas, Category 3, Culture Reference, rarely arose in Year 2, although there were some cases where the dilemmas concerned a clashed with the student's culture, especially where religious beliefs were concerned. In such cases, students found it difficult to accept different views and especially difficult to accept secular views differing from their own. It was hardest for them to grasp that a secular approach to Bible studies actually generated dilemmas when teaching Bible stories. I think that this category was far more evident in Year 1 because in Year 1, the group was more heterogeneous, containing Arabs, new immigrants, Israeli-born students, and students with both secular and religious backgrounds. This group composition produced different ways of viewing situations and considerable variance in their views of what constituted dilemmas.

D.   The category 'Relating to the Dilemma' did not appear at all. This was because the students had already encountered dilemmas, albeit in a limited way, and therefore the concept was not 'strange' to them. This obviated their tendency to 'blame

others' for dilemmas, and helped them to accept that dilemmas form a routine part of teaching. In Year 1, on the other hand, this category often arose although student levels of achievement in it were inconsistent: they tended to reach a high level and then slip back to a low level, etc. I think the reason for the significant difference between Year 1 and Year 2 is because in Year 1, the students were learning about dilemmas for the first time and had difficulty accepting the fact that their chosen profession contained many insoluble situations. Because of their difficulty in accepting this, it was often easier for them to believe that the dilemma was caused by the regular teacher's behaviour for example.

E.   Perceiving the Dilemma – this was the most frequent category in the students' dilemma analysis and, unlike the previous categories, they had difficulty reaching Level 3 and could only reach Level 2. In some cases, they slipped back to Level 1 after reaching Level 2. In a few isolated instances, however, they managed to perceive all aspects of the dilemma (Level 3), although this was only achieved with guidance and help from their colleagues. As noted in the analysis of Year 1, in Year 2 as well, I also felt that they might rise to Level 3 during their teaching practice and be able to perceive all aspects of the dilemma.

When I compared the students' performances for this category in Year 1 and Year 2, I discovered that in college, most students were at Level 1 with only a few reaching Level 2. One of the main reasons for the differences in perceiving dilemmas in the two years is due to the large number of dilemmas to which students were exposed in Year 2. Picturing a wide range of dilemmas no doubt helped them to perceive dilemmas at a very high level.

F.   Coping with Ambivalence – like the previous category, this aspect of dilemmas was too complex for students and took them a while to reach a high level of competence. Mostly they achieved Level 2 competence. When I thought about their difficulty in attaining a high level of competence after formulating and defining the dilemma, I felt that their intervention would improve their handling of ambivalence since they would confront the ambivalence in reality.

The findings for this category are no surprise. Year 1 saw a similar process, namely students found it hard to handle the ambivalent aspect of dilemmas. The difference between Year 1 and Year 2 was that in Year 1 the students only reached Level 1 in

handling ambivalence, while in Year 2 most of them reached Level 2. This I believe was thanks to my modifications to this unit.

G.   Coping with Conflicting Values – this category was not in much evidence in Year 2. Even though students had never learned about values or clashing values, they quickly understood the connection between defining the dilemma definition and the values that clashed in it and for each dilemma most could say which values clashed for them. Most students also expressed a desire to address the values concurrently as practiced in class.

The students' grasp of clashing values reflected an improvement in my teaching of this subject in Year 2. The first time I taught it, even though they were able to define the clashing values they ultimately only opted to address one of those values.

H.   Expressing Emotions – based on my conclusions from Year 1 and the discovery that students hardly expressed their emotions when relating to their dilemmas, I spent far more time raising their awareness of the importance of expressing emotions when dealing with dilemmas. I placed considerable emphasis on this category and consistently tried to teach them that in order to cope with dilemmas effectively we must be able to identify the emotions that we experience. Most of the students only reached Level 1 in emotional expression, which was in fact an improvement since previously they had not been aware of this issue. My aim was to raise their awareness of their emotional response to dilemmas, while at the same time helping them to gain a cognitive understanding of the subject.

I.   Choosing a Coping Strategy – apart from one case, the group members opted to deal with both aspects of the dilemma at the same time. This contrasted considerably with Year 1, when out of the representative sample of five students only one chose to address both aspects of the dilemma. The other four defined and formulated both sides of the dilemma, but eventually chose a coping strategy which only addressed one of them. On analysing the reasons for the differences between the two years, I identified several factors that were responsible for this:

- Previous exposure to dilemmas
- Intensive practice of the characteristics of dilemmas, i.e., identification, formulation, clashing values and emotions aroused
- Analysis by the whole class of the less complex dilemmas identified in teaching practice

- Helping students to make the connections between the educational philosophy (humanistic) of the college and their own approach when tackling dilemmas.

Appendix 6

Cycle Two - Evaluation of the Level Reached by the Students in Their School-Based Intervention

Or

Of the subjects chosen by the five sample students, the subject chosen by Or was the most ambivalent since it addressed the question of time, which by nature is ambiguous as there are no set rules regarding how much time the teacher should spend with each child in the class. This notwithstanding, Or went ahead and investigated this issue, in the hope, as she put it, that it would help to make her a better teacher in future. As she tackled her dilemma, she analysed the two values that had come into conflict. Throughout her project, for all the activities she held, she examined and considered her perception of the conflicting values in the light of the activity. I awarded her a good grade for her *management of the dilemma in the field*. Throughout her intervention, she addressed both sides of the dilemma together (*perception of the dilemma*), while *examining the values* involved in both facets of the dilemma. She also sought a comprise solution to the dilemma, in other words, she tried to reach a decision which would stand her in good stead once she qualified and started working as a teacher. She eventually found such a compromise. When her intervention was concluded, she indicated her feeling that she had learned something important, which would serve her professional development well.

Yona

Yona received the highest grade of all for her *management of the dilemma*. The activities she developed for her intervention consistently reflected both sides of the dilemma (*perception of the dilemma*). In other words, she considered each activity in terms of *both of the values*. After each activity, she evaluated her work and planned her subsequent activities, taking the different dilemma variables into account. This was why, at the end of her intervention, I felt that she had done very well. Also, besides devising an action programme and addressing the dilemma and clashing values, the children in the class also made good progress in what she wanted them to learn (written composition). I observed that even though she assigned the children different levels of tasks, which they found more or less difficult, the atmosphere that Yona generated was extremely pleasant and amicable. This indicated that she had achieved what she set out to do. Yona had not faced an easy task. This was evident from the fact that, in Yona's pre-intervention implementation

evaluation of the class, the class's regular teacher had indicated how difficult she found it to achieve a pleasant friendly atmosphere. The teacher had reported that in her experience, most of the subjects she taught generated an unhealthy kind of competition between the children. Thus, Yona's accomplishment with this class was all the more significant in the light of this background.

Tali

Tali's dilemma differed from the other students' dilemmas in that hers was a social dilemma whereas theirs involved the curriculum. This, I believe, greatly affected the way Tali *managed her dilemma*. Her dilemma concerned children in the class who were new immigrants, which made their status in the class extremely delicate, causing them to be frequently subjected to social humiliation. Because of this delicate situation, Tali proceeded very cautiously with her intervention and seemed rather anxious about what she was doing compared with the other students. She clearly identified, and was very pleased at doing this, both sides of the dilemma (*broad perception of the dilemma*). She also identified the values which the dilemma brought into conflict. However, when it came to actually *managing the dilemma in practice*, she experienced considerable anxiety about delving too deeply into the more complex issue at one end of the dilemma, which would have required directly confronting the insults suffered by the immigrant children at the hands of their peers. It should be noted that during the intervention, Tali understood that she was handling the dilemma asymmetrically, but found it difficult to change this course. Ultimately, I awarded her a grade of 'Very Good' for her management of the dilemma, even though room remained for improvement. Probably, once she is more experienced and confident as a teacher, she will be capable of dealing with the two facets of a dilemma in a symmetrical fashion.

Rina

Rina received a grade of 'Fair' for her *management of the dilemma*. She initially formulated both facets of the dilemma and said she would address them both. However, at some point, she switched and began just tackling *one aspect* (*perception of the dilemma*). Most of her intervention involved discussing issues which she identified in the Bible, without considering their effect on the children (pre-elementary age). When I discussed these activities with her, I asked her why this was so. Her answer was that her reading of the professional literature on teaching the Bible, and her conversations with the Bible Studies expert on the college staff, had convinced her that even young children could

discuss highly complex subjects. This had prompted her decision to teach the children discussion skills and not to address the second facet of the dilemma further. While it was true that the children's capacity for discussion had greatly improved, Rina regrettably had failed to acquire sufficient practical tools for coping with dilemmas.

Miriam

Miriam's method of managing her dilemma differed from the methods adopted by the other students. Her intervention addressed the dilemma widely (*perception of the dilemma*). The data reveals that in each of her activities, she confronted all of the issues relating to the two facets of the dilemma. She also gave great thought to the question of the values, i.e., she thought about which values were involved in each of her intervention activities. However, towards the end of her intervention, she decided to dismiss the issue of one facet of the dilemma (which she herself had formulated) and only addressed the issue of the other facet. She thus decided that teachers did not have to consider the requirements of the system in which they work, and that they only need to follow their own conscience. This naïve attitude was more appropriate to a first year student than a third year student, and so I felt that despite her excellent academic record (Miriam was an honours student), Miriam found it very difficult to accept that in order to realise her ideals she needed to compromise. Thus, by the end of her intervention, I knew that **my opinion of the way she handled her dilemma was not good.**