CHALLENGING THE "APARTHEIDS" OF KNOWLEDGE

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Chapter 6

Legitimate knowledge: At the border between learning and perceived learning for students in service-learning

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1. Introduction

In this chapter we analyse a year-long service-learning course at the honours level at a South African university. We investigate specifically how the course triggered personal growth in students and contributed to their academic learning. Interestingly, in the assessment surveys we used, students reported learning very little in relation to what they themselves expected to learn. Our analysis of students' reflective journals, however, brought these reports into question. The reports showed evidence of both academic learning and personal development in students. This suggests that there is a remarkable discrepancy between learning evidenced through the student reflections and what the students recognised as 'legitimate' knowledge gained through community-based service-learning as reported by themselves in their assessment surveys. In this chapter we suggest that these findings raise important questions about what knowledge students see as 'legitimate' or 'academic' and the challenge this poses in terms of the institutionalisation of service-learning and the transformation of HE as a whole.

Service-learning is often understood as both a teaching philosophy and a pedagogy (Osman & Petersen, 2013), though the roots of service-learning as a pedagogical approach stem from the North American tradition (Taylor, Butterwick, Raykov, Glick, Peikazadi & Mehrabi, 2015). Within this tradition, service-learning activities are undertaken by students to address the needs of communities in the context of disciplinary learning (Bringle & Hatcher, 1996). Increasingly, service-learning is gaining momentum as both a philosophy and a pedagogy in different disciplines at universities across the globe (Butin, 2006; Jackson, 2008; Gearan & Hollister, 2013; Taylor, 2017). The increased uptake and popularity of service-learning is potentially explained by the belief that service-learning makes positive contributions to all stakeholders involved: students grow as citizens, communities benefit from an active and eager-to-learn group working within their organisations and universities enhance their social responsibility (Chambers & Lavery, 2018).

Service-learning, however, is not merely the addition of service to a traditional academic 'learning' course; it is the integration of both service and academic components within the learning of a course (Howard, 1998). The service must be relevant to the academic goals so that it enhances students' learning, and it must be also relevant to the community partner in order for the relationship to be mutually beneficial (Butin, 2005; Deeley, 2010). It is the unique ability of service-learning that situates service in a context that is familiar to students' own lifeworld that provides a space for their personal growth and enhanced meaning-making. By bringing together the cognitive and the affective learning in academic and service activities, service-learning courses support the personal development of students (Eyler, 2002; Butin, 2005).

As a pedagogy, service-learning courses challenge students, lecturers and community partners to take on a new role in the learning space, but these experiences are not necessarily beneficial. Students do not always see the value of such courses, and lecturers are not always prepared for challenges that they will face (Jones, 2002). These challenges are heightened when courses are poorly planned, designed and prepared, but even the most well-designed courses will present challenges to students and staff. Nonetheless, service-learning courses' potential to combine learning goals with practical service activities – a process that can benefit community partners and enhance students' civic and universities' social responsibility – has great appeal and can justify the increased attention such courses have received in both the HE and secondary schooling sectors.

South Africa in particular has seen a rapid uptake of service-learning in the HE sector (Preece, 2016). HE institutions in post-apartheid South Africa are

increasingly concerned with developing graduates who understand and contribute to the development of a more just society, using their acquired knowledge to do so (Osman & Petersen, 2013). This is partly attributable to the increasing prominence given to The Education White Paper 3 (Department of Education, 1997), which brought forward a national programme for the transformation of HE. This programme has both national and institutional goals and identifies community service initiatives as catalysts of change. The transformation of HE is also aligned with the development of the South African Critical Cross-Field Outcomes (CCFOs)¹, which set out the qualities that should be the goal of all qualifications (National Qualifications Framework). These skills go beyond disciplinary boundaries and are associated with how one relates to other people and skills that will be useful throughout people's lives (SAQA, 2000; Carmichael & Stacey, 2006). Service-learning has been seen as a pedagogical approach which allows the CCFOs to be embedded within course goals, contributing to the growing popularity of service-learning courses.

An important dimension of service-learning is the personal growth of students during the course (Eyler & Giles Jr., 1999; Taylor, 2017). The personal growth of students seen in service-learning is thought to underlie the transformative potential of the pedagogy (Butin, 2005). This transformative quality could develop citizens who are aware of the social and local issues and are able to use their knowledge to tackle real problems (Eyler, 2002). Furthermore, the skills learned serve a deeper purpose in society by building social cohesion, which is important in relation to the broader transformation of HE in South Africa.

What is particularly interesting about service-learning is that it raises critical questions about the type of knowledge that is recognised and prioritised in HE settings. Service-learning challenges the priority of declarative knowledge over procedural knowledge; stresses the relationship between knowledge and behavioural change; and expands the boundaries of the traditional knowledge economy.

1 SAQA defined seven outcomes to be pursued: identify and solve problems; team work; organisation skills; collect and critically evaluate information; communication skills; use science and technology effectively and critically; demonstrate an understanding of the world as a set of systems within a context (South African Qualifications Authority SAQA 2000). SAQA also laid out five developmental outcomes, which speak to the growth of students as citizens and their awareness of: the importance of reflecting on how to learn more effectively; the key role they play as citizens in local, national and global communities; the importance of being culturally and aesthetically sensitive in a variety of social contexts; the key role of exploring education and career opportunities; the importance of developing entrepreneurial opportunities (South African Qualifications Authority SAQA 2000).

A traditional theory of knowledge bases knowledge claims on empirical evidence (Liu, 2000). To claim to have knowledge is to be able to justify it and its accuracy. This would suggest that declarative knowledge – explained as 'know-what' (Hong, Pi & Yang, 2018) – holds a key place in HE. Declarative knowledge involves understanding and remembering what was learned. In contrast, procedural knowledge, the 'know-how', implies learning the declarative knowledge related to the subject and understanding how to use or apply what was learned (Hong *et al.*, 2018). Declarative knowledge demands less cognitive skills than procedural knowledge (Anderson, 1995), yet commands less attention in formal learning due to the difficulty involved in assessment. Service-learning courses provide a space for students to not only learn from real-life problems, but also to apply the knowledge that they already have to resolve such problems – working as a bridge between the 'knowledge' and the 'real world'.

Service-learning thus calls for a pedagogy that is essentially relational, bringing together the theory and the practice (Liu, 2000). In so doing, service-learning challenges the priority of declarative knowledge in student learning.

Service-learning courses challenge students' "inert" knowledge (Eyler & Giles Jr., 1999), the knowledge that students possess but which is dormant unless it is accessed through reflection. The concrete examples with which students are faced in service-learning give them an opportunity to relate abstract concepts with their experience, thereby promoting deeper learning (Eyler, 2002). This is crucial in triggering students' critical thinking about their understandings of the world, challenging their assumptions, and, most importantly, promoting a change in behaviour (Mezirow, 1991; Mezirow, 1994; Lynch, 1996).

By bringing a community partner into the learning space, service-learning also pushes the traditional boundaries of who has knowledge and where knowledge is produced (Osman & Petersen, 2013). Students learn not only from their lecturers but also from their peers and from the community partners. The knowledge is then constructed through the experience (Eyler, 2002) and with the partners. This process of knowledge co-production integrates different sources of knowledge and ways of knowing (Davies, 2016), and, in doing this, recognises the legitimacy of other sources of knowledge.

The service-learning pedagogy mirrors the broader South African HE framework, but there is a lot of unexplored territory regarding the implementation of such courses. Many questions can be asked, such as: Is the partnerships truly beneficial? How prepared are the lecturers to handle the challenges that will be faced? The objectives of service-learning courses might be well-defined and

known; however, the extent to which these courses actually achieve these goals is yet to be established.

The aim of this chapter is to investigate the impact of a year-long service-learning project at the honours level at a university in South Africa looking at how, if at all, the service-learning triggered changes at the personal and at the academic levels of the students. On a personal level, the paper seeks to uncover if the service-learning course had an impact on students' behaviour in relation to their social context and their role as citizens. On an academic level, the aim is to assess students' learning in relation to their discipline in practice.

On the strength of the above, the chapter argues that the course did in fact reach both academic and personal growth goals. However, the students did not recognise the learning process, which raises questions about the type of knowledge that they were most used to. The chapter will also discuss the role of time and consistency as key in the learning process.

2. The Environmental Science service-learning course

Service-learning is an integral component of the honours programme of the Environmental Science Department at Rhodes University. The honours year is a one-year postgraduate course offered to students who have completed a three-year undergraduate degree majoring in Environmental Science. A year-long service-learning course is a compulsory module which honours students must take along with other modules offered throughout the year. The department sees the course as providing students with the opportunity to apply the academic knowledge on environmental issues to real-world cases and contexts. It is also seen as providing students with the opportunity to share the knowledge gained through the classroom-based components of the degree as they work with local communities to address challenges.

During the academic year of 2017, the Environmental Science Department partnered with the Amakhala Foundation for their service-learning course. Through this partnership, the course aimed to successfully establish an Eco-Schools² Project at the Sandisulwazi High School in Paterson³, Eastern Cape.

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- 2 The Eco-Schools Project is an education programme that has been implemented in over 52 countries. In South Africa, Eco-Schools are managed by WESSA (Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa) and it has the support of Nampak (Wildlife and Environment Society of South Africa, 2013).
 - 3 Paterson is a small town the Eastern Cape, South Africa, part of the Sundays River Valley municipality. One of the poorest provinces in South Africa, the Eastern Cape is faced with issues regarding inequality and access to education.

The Sandisulwazi High School formed an Eco-School committee with learners from Grade 9 to 12. Learners had to submit an essay outlining why they wanted to be a part of the Eco-School Committee. These essays were used to assess the level of commitment learners were willing to make to the Eco-School Project. Thirteen students submitted an essay and were all selected to participate as they had all written eloquently about their desire to improve their school environment.

The 2017 Environmental Science Honours class consisted of 21 students. The class was divided in two working groups in order to have appropriate ratios of students to learners in the Eco-School activities, as well as for logistical reasons, owing to the need to transport students by bus to the school. The honours students divided themselves up, making sure they had an equal number of isiXhosa speakers (the home language of Sandisulwazi learners) in each group (two isiXhosa speakers in each group). Group 1 comprised 10 students who went on four trips to carry out Eco-School activities in the first semester of the year. Group 2 had 11 students who went on two trips to carry out Eco-School activities in the second semester. The whole group had two trips together, one in July and one in October. The July meeting served as a symbolic handing over between Group 1 and Group 2, as it was the last meeting Group 1 would attend before the end of the year October meeting. In July and in October both groups worked with the learners on Eco-School activities. In total there were eight trips to Sandisulwazi High School for joint student-learner Eco-School activities.

3. Methods

The project utilised two means of data collection: assessment surveys and student reflections. An initial assessment survey was administered before the start of the service-learning course. The survey contained eight open-ended questions related to: what the students' expectations about the experience were; what the students thought they would learn through the course; and what the students thought the partners would learn (**Table 1**). The survey contained 11 Likert-scale questions related to the extent to which students thought the project would provide a space for them to improve particular skills, such as: analytical skills, organisation skills, personal growth and knowledge about local issues (**Table 2**). Answers to the Likert-scale questions had a four-point distribution: 1) not at all, 2) minimally, 3) moderately, and 4) extensively. After the completion of the course, each student answered a second assessment survey with the same questions, but with reference to what they believed they had learned on completion of the course.

Table 1: Open-ended questions on the before and after surveys

Question number	Before survey	After survey
1.1	What do you understand by the term service-learning?	What do you understand by the term service-learning?
1.2	Describe your expectations in relation to the service-learning project you are about to embark on.	Describe your experience in relation to the service-learning project you have been involved in.
1.3	What do you think you are going to learn personally and academically?	What do you think you have learned personally and academically?
1.4	What do you expect to learn from working with your community partners?	What do you think you have learned from working with your community partners?
1.5	Do you think the service-learning will help you to gain specific skills or knowledge that you might not learn otherwise? If so, which ones?	Do you think the service-learning has helped you to gain specific skills or knowledge that you might not have learned otherwise? If so, which ones?
1.6	In what ways do you think your community partners will benefit from this service activity?	In what ways do you think your community partners have benefitted from this service activity?
1.7	What do you think your community partners will be able to learn from you?	What do you think your community partners have learned from you?
1.8	Why do you think service-learning activities might be worthwhile activities for university students to participate in, and do you think that such activities can contribute to the broader transformation agenda of universities?	Why do you think service-learning activities might be worthwhile activities for university students to participate in, and do you think that such activities can contribute to the broader transformation agenda of universities?

Table 2: Likert-scale questions on the before and after surveys

BEFORE: I expect my participation in the service-learning activity to:				
	Not at all	Minimally	Moderately	Extensively
2.1 Strengthen my analytical skills				
2.2 Improve my research skills				
2.3 Enhance my understanding of academic content				
2.4 Enhance my understanding of local issues				
2.5 Enhance my understanding of social issues				
2.6 Enhance the likelihood that I will participate in civic activities				
2.7 Improve my ability to listen to others				
2.8 Improve my ability to work as part of a team				
2.9 Deepen my understanding of myself				
2.10 Improve my understanding of how environmental issues affect communities				
2.11 Improve my organisational skills				

AFTER: My participation in the service-learning activity has:				
	Not at all	Minimally	Moderately	Extensively
2.1 Strengthened my analytical skills				
2.2 Improved my research skills				
2.3 Enhanced my understanding of academic content				
2.4 Enhanced my understanding of local issues				
2.5 Enhanced my understanding of social issues				
2.6 Enhanced the likelihood that I will participate in civic activities				
2.7 Improved my ability to listen to others				
2.8 Improved my ability to work as part of a team				
2.9 Deepened my understanding of myself				
2.10 Improved my understanding of how environmental issues affect communities				
2.11 Improved my organisational skills				

Students were also asked to, as part of the service-learning course, write down their experiences in a reflective journal after each trip to the school. Critical reflection is a key step in the learning process of a service-learning course (Mezirow 1991; Mezirow, 1998). According to Cress, Collier and Reitenauer (2005), reflective practice helps students to grapple with the multiple knowledges being taught in service-learning: content, process and social knowledge. Reflective journals have been used extensively in transformative and experiential learning and have subsequently become popular tools for teaching, learning and assessment within service-learning courses. Experiential learning takes place in a continuous process of action and reflection on that action, which will change one's understanding of past experiences and way of thinking and will inform future experiences (Mezirow 1991; Mezirow 1998).

Students are asked to integrate course materials (such as reading and lecture notes) and thoughts about their experiences through service activities into a written piece when completing their reflective journal. In constructing the written narrative, students are asked to critically analyse their knowledge, together with their thoughts, experiences, beliefs and assumptions. Through reflective journals, students are thus able to critically bring together their learning in relation to both course materials and their experiences throughout service activities over time. Students can revise unfounded assumptions in their beliefs and derive meaning from their experiences and so concretise and showcase their learnings and plan for future actions (Hubbs & Brand, 2005). At the beginning of the academic course of 2017, the honours class went on an honours year introductory excursion during which, amongst other things, they learned about reflection and reflective practice. They were each given a reflection journal. During the week-long excursion, they wrote reflections about their daily activities. Most of the students used the same journal for their service-learning reflections. To reiterate the importance and the process of reflection, there was a two-hour session dedicated to reflection before the start of the service-learning course.

Student reflections were first coded following an inductive pattern finding method, and, from this, a set of themes of was identified. The reflections were then re-coded accordingly (Boyatzis, 1998). The codes were then manually counted and added to a spreadsheet, where after they were divided into groups 1 and 2 from which descriptive statistics were derived. The open-ended questions from the survey were handled in the same way. The Likert-scale questions were added to a spreadsheet that led to descriptive statistics.

The project received ethical clearance from Rhodes University Centre for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education.

4. Results

4.1 *Open-ended survey responses*

Table 3 (below) shows a summary of the themes which emerged in the open-ended responses given by students across the before and after surveys. With regards to their expectations about personal transformation in the service-learning course, prominent themes in student responses suggest that they: believed that the experience would challenge their perceptions about life; thought that they would learn about themselves; and believed that they would become more aware of social and local issues. In terms of the academic learning, prominent themes in student responses suggest that they felt they would gain

by: learning specific skills; learning new methods; and by being able to link what they have learned in class with their lived experiences through service.

Table 3: A comparison of themes and their prominences across open-ended questions in before and after surveys

Question	Before survey		After survey	
	Theme	Prominence	Theme	Prominence
What do you understand by the term service-learning?	Learning from service	31.25%	Teaching and learning approach	20%
Describe your expectations/ experiences in relation to the service-learning project.	Learn about social networking	21.42%	Help translate knowledge to practice; great potential	16.66%
What do you think you are going to learn/have learned personally?	Calm, patience	20%	Patience	27.27%
What do you think you are going to learn/have learned academically?	Mutual learning; direct space inhabitants	20%	Not much	25%
What do you expect to learn/think you have learned from working with your community partners?	Be more creative	20%	Organisational skills (team work, the value of communication, time management, planning)	44.44%
Do you think the service-learning will help/has helped you to gain specific skills or knowledge that you might not learn otherwise? If so, which ones?	People skills	25%	Organisational skills	15.38%
In what ways do you think your community partners will benefit/ have benefitted from this service activity?	Partners will learn	50%	Knowledge about environmental issues	25%

Question	Before survey		After survey	
	Theme	Prominence	Theme	Prominence
What do you think your community partners will be able to learn/have learned from you?	Environ-mental awareness; different angle	27.27%	Confidence about their knowledge	22.22%
Why do you think service-learning activities might be worthwhile activities for university students to participate in, and do you think that such activities can contribute to the broader transformation agenda of universities?	Broader horizon	21.42%	Applied and engaged learning	45%

When asked about what they thought they had achieved at the end of the course in a second survey, students believed that they had learned: to be patient in relation to situations that are out of their control; to facilitate; to relate to people/ people's skills; and to communicate and engage using different methods. When asked which skills, if any, they thought they had acquired throughout the year, students mentioned: organisation skills; facilitation skills; and new methods of engagement.

Looking at what students thought they were going to learn and what they say they have learned, it is evident that students have indeed learned some of the skills they believed they would and also acquired many skills they had not expected to. Most importantly for this paper, in the after survey students reported that they felt they had not learned much academically from the course when responding directly to the question of what they felt they had learned academically. However, students reported in the same after survey, just two questions before, that they felt they had learned to translate their knowledge into practice. This highlights students' association of declarative knowledge with academic learning and clear lack of association between procedural knowledge and academic learning.

4.2. Likert-scale survey responses

Likert-scale questions were analysed in two thematic groups:

- 1. *Academic Learning*, comprising questions 2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 2.4; 2.5; and 2.10.

Figure 1 shows the answers before the start of the course as well as the results after completion of the course.

- 2. *Personal Growth*, comprising questions 2.6; 2.7; 2.8; 2.9; and 2.11.

Figure 2 shows the answers to both the before and after survey.

Again, when asked directly, students reported that they thought they had not learned as much as they expected to from the course. Yet, both academically and particularly in terms of personal growth, students believe that they have learned from and grown through their participation in the course.

4.3. Reflective journals

From the reflections, three main themes emerged: methods; group dynamics; and process, which speak to the themes that emerged throughout the service-learning course. These will be presented separately and according to groups. 'Methods' refers to any methods or techniques that the honours students

mentioned in their reflections, such as games and forming small groups, as well as facilitation insights, participatory approaches or techniques. These methods speak directly to the academic goals. **Figure 3** presents the methods mentioned by group.

Figure 3: 'Methods' themes

On improving his/her facilitation skills, one student pointed out:

"The process requires us as facilitators of this initiative to be attentive and allow the learners to equal contribution information on how they plan to achieve sustainable development at their school. This whole process is improving my listening skills."

'Process' refers to the analysis the honours students made of the process, if they were able to relate it to their academic learning and/or the social and political context, and their acknowledgement that this was a learning experience. This is intimately related to both academic and personal growth goals. **Figure 4** illustrates these sub-themes.

Figure 4: Process

Students recognised the importance of the service-learning component in providing a space for them to witness some of the issues they had learned in the classroom, as illustrated in the quotes below:

"This theme ties in with the module I am currently learning; it was interesting for me to see it being demonstrated as I have only learned about it through academic readings and conversations."

"Interesting to note is how if not dealt with especially water problems these can serve as barriers to pupils' learning experience. Although some studies have documented this, this programme gave me a chance to witness this first-hand."

One journal entry demonstrates how the course triggered students to reflect upon their own experience:

"My school had many tools for recycling and using resources efficiently in place; however, the values of the children did not match these as they did not care. In contrast to this, the children that we visited did not have access to recycling systems or resources as well as having very little access to information regarding environmental issues. They, however, seem interested in learning and broadening their horizons in this regard. I was reminded of my privilege."

Under group dynamics, both honours groups stressed similar issues but on different scales. The lower level of participation of female learners in comparison to the male learners was more noticeable to Group 1, as was the will of learners

to learn, illustrated in **Figure 5**. On the other hand, the presence of disruptive learners in the meetings stood out more for Group 2 students, as did the careless attitudes of learners and the school itself. This suggests that the group that went less often, Group 2, focused on the negative aspects of the challenges they faced.

Figure 5: Group dynamics

One student pointed out the low level of female participants in the group participation:

"I was surprised at how female students [learners] were significantly more quiet than the males and contributed very little. I am interested to see the contribution/ initiative of female participants throughout the programme and how this may or may not increase."

Results of this case study reveal that the honours students did in fact gain academic knowledge during the year-long course and experienced personal growth. **Figure 4** shows that students were able to relate their experience to subjects they learned at their university, a career or to broader contexts 44 times, and **Figure 3** illustrates how the students opened their minds to other ways of engaging with people. Learning of skills was mentioned 24 times, which would imply that learning did take place.

5. Discussion

Results suggest that students have actually learned and grown as citizens, thus these goals were achieved. However, two issues require more attention: the difference between what students think they have learned and what they have actually learned; and the process of achieving these goals, which speaks to the role of the lecturer and implementing aspects of such courses that, at least in this case, played a crucial role in reaching those goals.

5.1 *Perception versus reality*

The results from the reflections and from the surveys reveal different pictures of the same course. If one were to only look at the answers in the questionnaire and reflections throughout the year, one would conclude that the project did reach its academic goals. Upon a closer look, however, it is evident that the honours' students have not realised exactly what kind of learning took place.

The disparity between the responses from the questionnaires and the reflection journals brings into question the type of knowledge that students are exposed to and their ability to realise that learning took place effectively. The questionnaire, a more quantitative and superficial method with its Likert-scale, revealed that the students felt that they did not learn as much as they would hoped for in the beginning of the year. In other words, their perception was that they did not learn much from the experience. The reflection journal entries, on the other hand, revealed that they did in fact acquire precisely the skills they claimed they did not have, as outlined by them in the questionnaires: organisational skills, analytical skills and methods.

The contrast between what they think they learned and what they showed they have learned through their reflections, we would argue, speaks to different types of knowledge. Students are more familiar with declarative knowledge, which is how traditionally knowledge is 'acquired' in classroom set-ups. Procedural knowledge, which is closely related to experiences, is acquired without people necessarily realising that they are learning and that they have acquired knowledge. There are two issues that emerge from this situation. The first is that students are not equipped to recognise the full extent of procedural knowledge, which highlights the importance of the role of the lecturer. The changing role of the learners in their learning (from individual to collective, from private to public) and the different stages (which include resistance) that students can go through in these spaces demand patience and perseverance from the lecturer (Howard, 1998). The change from a 'traditional' course to a service-learning course also affects the lecturer, who is no longer the sole expert (Howard, 1998;

Osman & Petersen, 2013). This change in role, coupled with the difficult and complex discussions that emerge in service-learning courses, precisely because of their counternormative and transformational stance, begs the question of how prepared the lecturers are to respond to that (Jones, 2002).

The second issue, more closely related to the conceptual discussion about tertiary education, is the type of learning that takes place at universities. Service-learning strives for the learning that takes place when students derive meaning from what they learn, in other words, it strives for engaged learning (Mayaba, Ralarala & Angu, 2018). This, however, is not necessarily the case throughout HE institutions. The standard approach is the 'banking model', in which students are passive and faculty members are the experts (Butin, 2006).

This also brings into question what type of knowledge is more present and valued by academia in general and what is being taught to the students – tensions that are at the surface of service-learning courses (Howard, 1998). One important aspect of this discussion is how students are going to use their knowledge in the real world. This discussion speaks to the dormant knowledge that students acquire in the classroom that can only be accessed through cues, the 'inert' knowledge (Eyler & Giles Jr., 1999). With this type of knowledge, students are unable to relate and apply their learning to the real world without these cues.

Thus, although learning happened, the ability of the students to recognise it opens up different discussions about knowledge, knowledge recognition, accepted and recognised ways of learning as well as students' role in their own learning.

5.2 *The service-learning process*

The difference between personal and academic goals is also a difficult subject for students. The subjective nature of personal growth makes it even more difficult for students to recognise any change in this area themselves. Difficulty in identifying knowledge that is acquired through a different process, as well as the difficulty in differentiating between academic and personal goals, highlight the key role of the lecturer in guiding the process. Moving from a 'traditional' to a service-learning course implies a change in the role of the lecturer and in the role of the student. Rather than preparing lecture notes, the lecturer will build on the readings and the experiences of the service to guide discussions (Howard, 1998), which means that the role of the lecturer is that of a facilitator rather than an expert. Led by the lecturer, the student moves from a passive role in his/her learning to a more active one. This change is likely to be uncomfortable for the student and it will require patience from the lecturer (Howard, 1998).

Interesting to see is that what students thought they were going to learn – and what they in fact did learn – is part of the critical cross-field learning outcomes in the South Africa National Education Strategy. The goals identified by SAQA are part of the skills that the students did not realise that they had learned, which also raises the question of how to teach such skills in a manner that students will recognise that they have learned.

Students from Group 1, who took the trip more often than the students in Group 2, showed to be more aware of the social and local issues, and the learning of cross-cutting outcomes was very obvious in their reflections. This highlights the importance of the time spent at the community sight as well as the consistency of the trips. This statement indicates that, in order to reach their goals, service-learning courses should run for longer, regular periods and require that more time is spent at a community site. This means that lecturers and departments where such courses are run would need to invest a great amount of time on this, since they would have to prepare for longer and more time-consuming courses, which in turn would impact the department's organisations and division of courses through semesters/terms. Furthermore, consistent visits to community sites also result in increased transport costs (if needed) and the need for more resources. An advantage of consistent visits, however, is that it confirms commitment and helps build/strengthen relationships with community members.

The bottom line is that this is really about how invested lecturers and their departments are in offering service-learning courses that will yield the desired goals. Given the challenges of service-learning, this is no simple question and one that requires much thought from lecturers, departments and their institutions.

6. Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to investigate the impact of a service-learning course on honours level at a university in South Africa, focusing on the learning as well as personal growth aspects of the course. Pre- and post-course surveys and reflection journal entries indicate that students did reflect on their discipline and its applicability and on social injustices in their country and reached cross-cutting outcomes. What this case study also reveals is a need to discuss the type of knowledge that students are used to, as well as their ability to recognise learning. Service-learning courses challenge the students, the lecturers and the institutions, and, while reaching academic and service goals is important, it is not the only determinant of success of such courses.

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