Books I am currently reading - *to mention a few*

WHY am I reading these and where does this need stem from?

- **Addressing barriers to learning. A South African perspective** - Landsberg

- **Educational Psychology in context** - Donald and Lazarus

- **Learner support in a diverse classroom** – Nel, Nel & Hugo

- **Special Educational Needs** – Weeks

- **Promoting learner development** - Engelbrecht and Green

- **The teacher's choice. Inclusivity in the classroom** - Walton

- **Understanding special educational needs** - Thompson

Nicole - Grade 7 – Ex Model C

I am in a normal class
and there is only clever
people and I am the only
person who is not clever and
the people laugh at me and
they make fool off me I
wish I am in a special class
Courcise then people wont make
fool off me eney more But
I relly want too go out
off this normal class I am
kind and not selfish.
I

Nicholas -
Grade 6 -
Ex Model C

want To be a mecanik

make the eal write and clean.

want to ride a nicecar
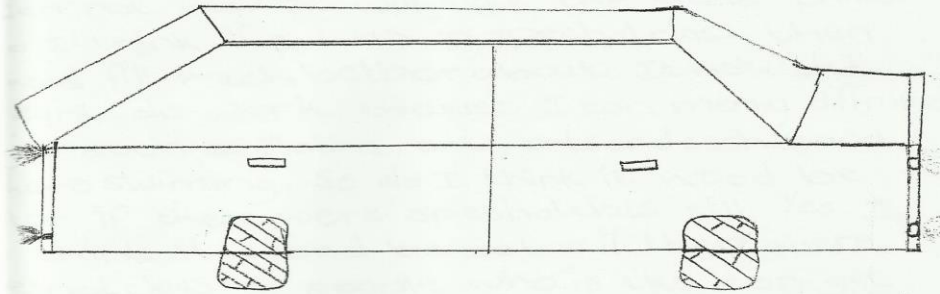
The Elephant in the room!

Is it possible that these children were <u>inclusively excluded?</u>

Capturing teachers' tacit knowledge: linking research to practice

- **Sharing the brushstrokes of my research**
  - *Bev Moore*

Paucity of studies that examine the relationship of theory and practice orientation to preparing pre-service teachers for intellectual barriers to learning.

- Many authors comment that novice teachers are not prepared for the diversities of a classroom.

- Most studies are aimed at preparing teachers to become skilled at teaching, but less emphasis on teaching learners who experience intellectual barriers in mainstream classes.

- Many studies pertain to Inclusion but very little about teaching intellectual barriers from a situational perspective.

Could one then, pose an argument that it is equally, if not more, discriminatory and oppressive if mainstream teachers are not sufficiently prepared to meet the needs of learners experiencing B2L in an inclusive classroom?

Teacher education is a difficult and complex enterprise…hence, could we learn from in-service teachers

- What is core knowledge for B2L?

- What does effective teaching of B2L look like?

- Explain the practices embraced by an effective teacher.

- How do teachers come to understand their craft-knowledge or wisdom of practice in terms of intellectual barriers.

- What must the effective teacher possess to achieve good teaching for intellectual barriers.

In academics, could it be that we are looking for microphones instead of finding hearing aids so that we can hear the voices of those in situated practice –
our teachers.

Definition of intellectual disability - variation in terminology

According to American Association on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. Also accepted in South Africa.

- Characterized by significant **limitations** in both **intellectual functioning** and in **adaptive behavior.**

- Originates before the age of **18**.

- Limited intellectual functioning in **reasoning, learning and problem-solving.**

- Adversely affect the learner's educational performance.

Prevalence of ID in South Africa

- No certainty as to the number of people with intellectual disabilities.

- 2001 census revealed that 5% of the South African population had disabilities, i.e, blind, deaf, paraplegic, etc.

- Of this percentage 12% were categorized as having intellectual disabilities

- 2014 census revealed that 6 million people in SA have variations of FAS. Now the most common birth defect in SA

- <u>In addition to the lack of reliable statistics, there is a dearth of published literature specifically on intellectual disability in SA.</u>

  - *Sourced from Fosket, K. 2014. Intellectual disability in South Africa.*

Teacher education

Donald & Lazarus (2006) recommend that pre-service teachers should:

- Bear in mind that mild intellectual difficulties can be addressed in a mainstream classroom

- Develop their knowledge of these difficulties

- Be able to identify these difficulties

- Be able to apply intervention strategies so that these learners can learn in the least restricted environment.

For me, the last bullet is the crunch which has led me to question what does this mean for initial teacher education with specific reference to intellectual barriers.

Teacher education – policy document

Minimum requirements for teacher education qualifications (MRTEQ)

- Disciplinary learning

- Pedagogical learning

- Fundamental learning

- Practical learning

- Situational learning

"*Foundation Phase teachers must be skilled in identifying and addressing barriers to learning in the early years of schooling, as well as in curriculum differentiation for multiple learning levels within a grade*". (MRTEQ, 2015. Pg. 29)

It raises the following questions in relation to the theory – practice divide???

- What is feasible in a Foundation Phase course?
- How do pre-service teachers receive authentic opportunity for practical learning in terms of B2L, more specifically – intellectual disabilities.

How do I seek a potential solution?

- By establishing what learning mechanisms teachers use to become self-assured in supporting learners with intellectual barriers.

- By exploring how teachers accommodate intellectual barriers in mainstream classes.

- By investigating teaching strategies in-service teachers use.

- By enquiring what content knowledge teachers consider as essential in respect of supporting intellectual barriers.

Drawn to theory of social learning - Ettienne Wenger's concept of CoP.
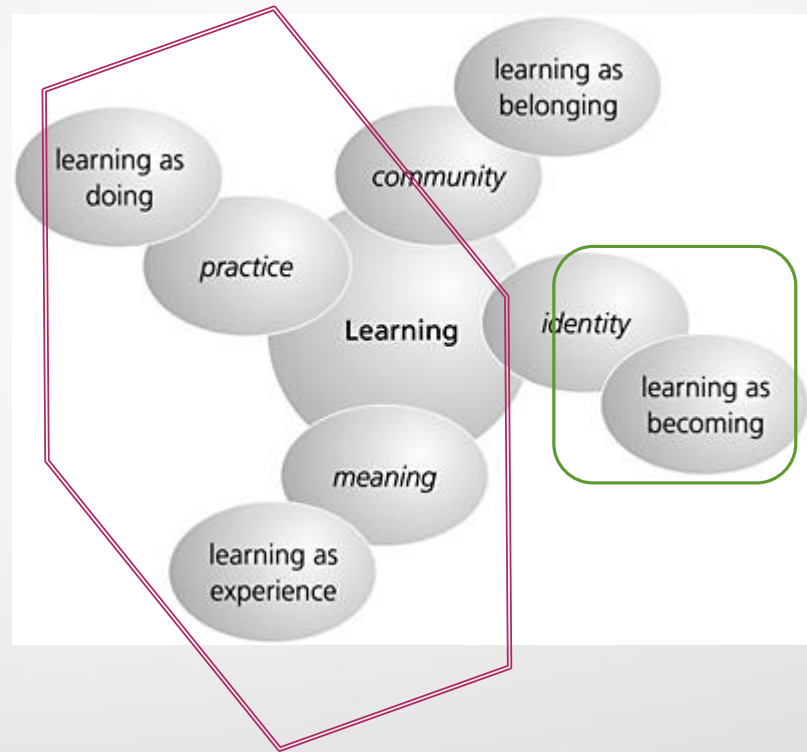
Suggests various components of learning, namely:

Community (learning as belonging);
Identity (learning as becoming);
Meaning (learning as experience);
Practice (learning as doing).

Why social theory of learning?

Social learning theories take social interactions into account, but still consider a psychological perspective. They place the emphasis on interpersonal relations involving imitation and modelling by which observation can become a source of learning
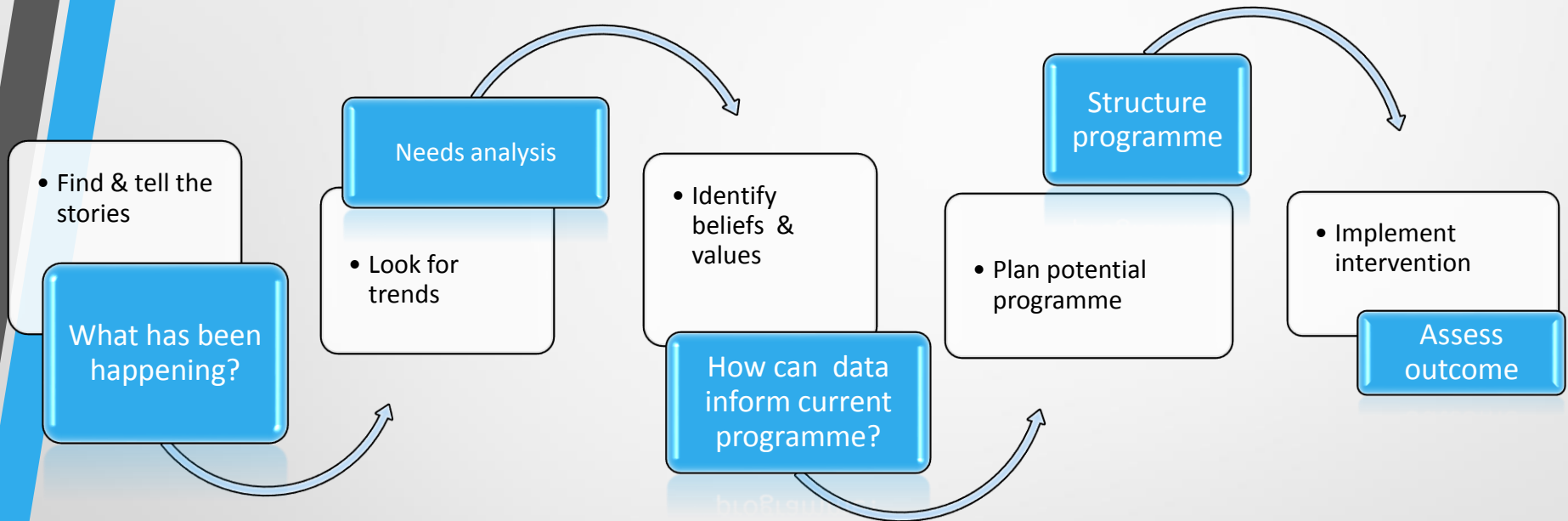
Why Wenger's theory of social learning?

- Communities of practices (CoP) offers a broader perspective to learning.

- Learning is never a 'stand alone' idea.

- It enables the discussion of shared experiences.

- The ability to experience gives reasoning and meaning to activities.

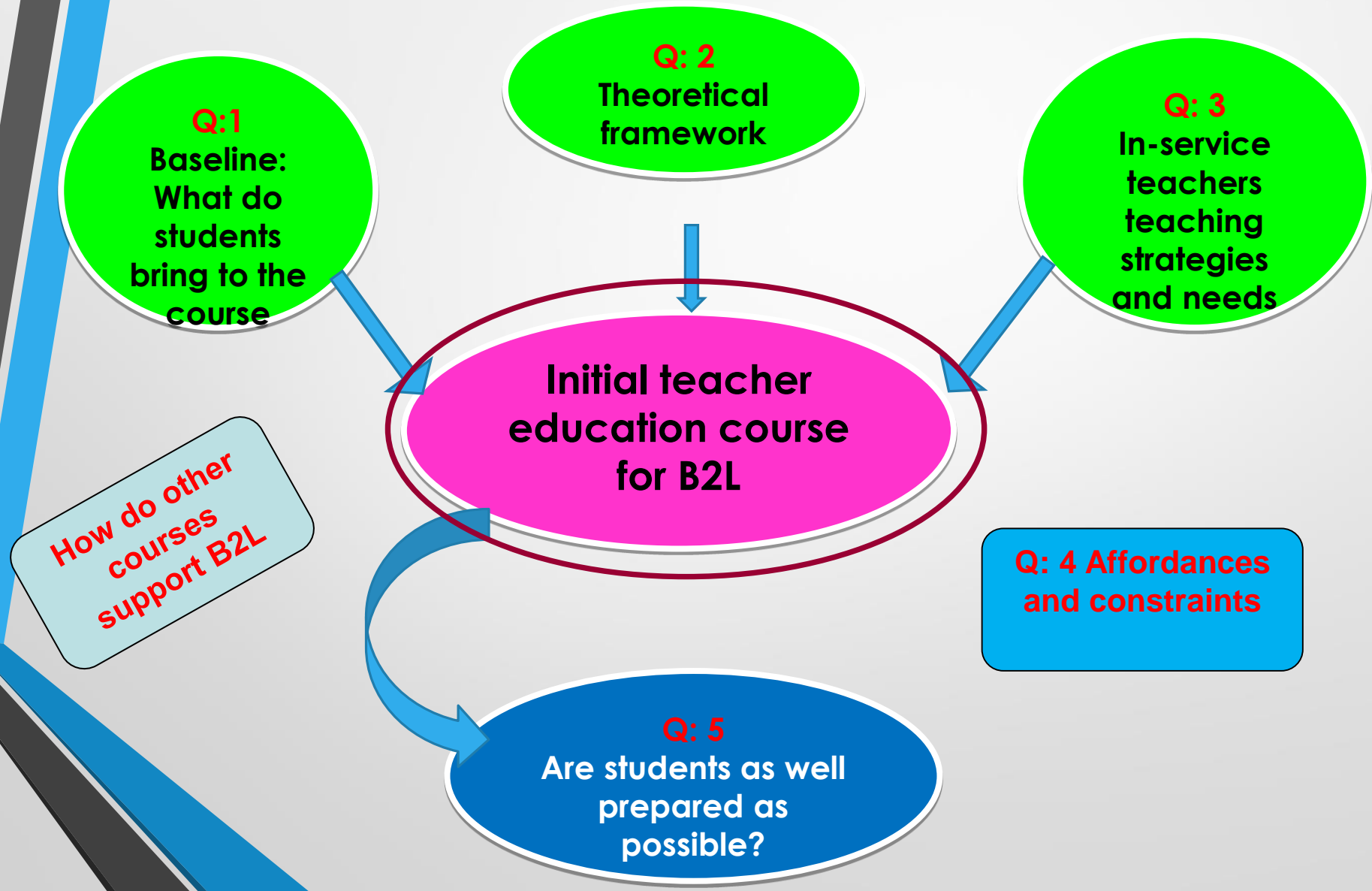- This meaning produces learning.

Continued…

- Considers the process of active participation.

- Focus on participation in authentic (practice), context-related activities.

- Wenger places a "fresh look" on learning.

- Using the CoP concept provides analytical tools with respect to knowledge and practice.

Educational Design Research Approach

- Find & tell the stories
- What has been happening?
- Needs analysis
- Look for trends
- Identify beliefs & values
- How can data inform current programme?
- Structure programme
- Plan potential programme
- Implement intervention
- Assess outcome

- Addresses complex problems in real contexts.
- Goes beyond narrow measures of learning.

A VISUAL SNAP SHOT OF THE RESEARCH

Q:1
Baseline: What do students bring to the course

Q: 2
Theoretical framework

Q: 3
In-service teachers teaching strategies and needs

How do other courses support B2L

Initial teacher education course for B2L

Q: 4 Affordances and constraints

Q: 5
Are students as well prepared as possible?

Capturing teachers' knowledge from a situated experience perspective

Data from different school settings – Independent; Ex Model C; Township/rural.

- The knowledge for meaning and professional understanding (domain specific)

- Knowledge for 'rules' towards practice

- Knowledge for teaching sensibility

- Knowledge for awareness, subsequently for intervention options

- Constraints and affordances

Tseke – 2016 PGCE student

- *"Going into the school I never thought I would be faced with so many children who have barriers to learning. It brings joy to my heart to know that I am able to assist some of the learners. On the other hand it saddens me deeply that I am unable to assist the ones I believe are the reason I went into education in the first place."*

Conclude with the perceptive words of Mao Tse Tung

"*Go to the practical people, learn from them, then synthesize their experiences into principles and theories, and then return to the practical people and call upon them to put these principles and methods into practice, so as to solve their problems*"

Thank you for your time and patience. All assistance and feedback will be greatly appreciated.