

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction, Problem statement and Aim

1.1 Introduction and background to the study

During 1991, I completed a Masters Degree dissertation with the title *Die werksgelowe van jongmense in Suid-Afrika (Beliefs about work of South African youths)*. This study dealt with South African youths' beliefs and expectations about work.

The following core issues were addressed in the dissertation. First, Buchholz's Beliefs About Work Questionnaire was used to assess the beliefs about work of different South African groups including three different language groups and seven different political affiliations. Comparisons were drawn according to the five subscales of the Buchholz Questionnaire namely, Work Ethic, Marxist, Humanistic, Organisational and Leisure beliefs. Second, the implications of these differences for career counselling were discussed. Third, multi-cultural applications of available career counselling models were questioned in view of the obtained results. Conceptual differences between Afro- and Eurocentrism were used as basis for questions asked.

The 1991 thesis was concluded with a discussion on shortcomings and suggestions for further research. These shortcomings and suggestions formed the basis for the aim of this doctoral thesis. The issues raised by the Beliefs About Work study include the following. Beliefs about work were assessed but little clarity exists on what South Africans value about work. Problems with regard to the multi-cultural application of career counselling models were discussed, but few suggestions aiming at the pragmatic handling of these issues were made (Crites, 1981; Cheatham, 1990). As it seemed as if the problems raised, attacked the base of what was known as career counselling at the time, I decided to start my work at the point that is regarded as the base or core of career decision making and development processes. This led me to a mental association with the concept of values as the clarification of values is viewed as the first step in the career decision making process (Super, 1981; Savickas, 1993).

At the time, I viewed the development of a Work Values Questionnaire as a logical first step for investigating values. The reason for utilising this approach was vested in a certain rationality. Rossouw (1995a) defines rationality as “the standard that society requires for making intelligible and meaningful statements on reality”. This rationality, which will be described later, can be defined as modern.

During the initial phases of questionnaire development I focused on answering the following questions: Why can values be viewed as important? What are values? What do I understand work values to be? What methodology can I utilise in developing the questionnaire? Two separate processes impacted on the search for answers to these questions. First, in attempting to answer these questions I was exposed to literature exploring a postmodern epistemology. This included philosophical writings of Lyotard (1986) as well as psychological writings in the field of family therapy. The utilization of the work of these theorists will become clear in the rest of this chapter. The initial aim of these readings was to motivate a study of values. At first this information was used and as such, processes and methodology according to psychometric theory for questionnaire development, were followed. Further reading and conversation during this period, led to a greater understanding of postmodern epistemology. I realised that there was a rationality, that included more than what I envisaged for this study. This broader rationality could not be ignored and was an important reason for a study of values to have legitimacy.

Second, I entered the field of applied psychology working as a counselling psychologist. This resulted in an interruption of the formal academic study, but the experience gained in private practice led to the development of numerous other insights. In my development as therapist, I shifted from a behavioural-cognitive approach to postmodern approaches, including social constructionism. This development together with my readings of postmodern texts created the dilemma of how these evolutionary processes of experience and understanding could be reflected in this dissertation which was already in an advanced state, without artificially manipulating a fit between the available product and what I understood to be postmodern.

Various problems and options were generated during reading and discussions with friends and colleagues. A first option would have been to disregard these shifts and to complete the study as it was. A second possibility was to abandon the present study, opting for a topic and approach that have a better fit with postmodernism. A third option would be to produce a postmodern text in the context of a modern text and project. Before these options can be considered I have to clarify my understanding of the shift from a modern to postmodern culture.

1.1.1 The shift from a modern to postmodern culture

Whether one investigates natural or social phenomena, it is generally accepted that no shift will occur spontaneously. There must be reasons for any shift to occur and the shift from a modern to postmodern culture is no exception. Historically, dissatisfaction with a specific project would lead to a shift. A shift can be seen as a reaction to an existing project that acknowledges the failures of the previous project and proposes a new project that can address these failures. Two different forms of reaction are conceptualised in this section namely, *discontinuation* and *discontinuity*.

Both these reactions can be viewed in the context of the fuzzy principle that states, “that everything is a matter of degree” (Kosko, 1994). According to Kosko (1994) an approach of bivalence or two-valuedness can be used to solve and describe problems. This approach includes only true or false, correct or incorrect, yes or no options. Alternatively an approach of multivalence allows for the generation of even an infinite number of options as opposed to the two-option scenario. In my opinion, people’s position with regard to the shift from a modern to postmodern culture will be determined by the degree to which they believed the modern project has failed. If a person approaches this question from a bivalence stance, she will see her position as one of either-or, exact and all-or-none. This approach will lead to a reaction of discontinuation.

The approach of *discontinuation* views the shift as the end of one project and the beginning of another. According to this view, the former project should be abandoned as it has failed to such an extent that a new project should be pursued. An example of this approach is MacIntyre’s (1981) suggestions as how to deal with moral dissensus.

According to MacIntyre different projects such as Emotivism, the Enlightenment Project and Empiricist Philosophy failed. In *After Virtue* he proposes a total discontinuation of the modern project. According to this approach, all that is modern should be replaced by a different rationality. Cahoon (1995) refers to this position of MacIntyre and others such as Edmund Burke that opposes the Enlightenment as Contramodernism. Another example of this option is Antemodernism, which Cahoon (1995) describes as a radical rejection of modernity in favour of premodern principles. This position is usually marked by religious fundamentalism.

The multivalence stance accommodates the possibilities of some degree and “and” as opposed to an either-or-stance. The second approach of *discontinuity* views a shift as an attempt to address the failures of the previous project without abandoning it. The previous project serves as a developmental base for generating new options as a new project. Within the frame of discontinuity three different options arise. First, the failures of modernity can be reviewed and attempts are made to address these failures in the context of the modern project. Discontinuity is an interruption to consider and review existing aspects of the project. This process can be viewed as the development of a deeper insight into modernism. Cahoon (1995) describes five promodern positions as examples of this stance. This include Retromodernism as proponent of recapturing variant modernist traditions, Orthomodernism that propagates a return to nineteenth century modernity, Pessimodernism that views the pathological nature of modernity as unresolvable, Reformodernism that calls for a reinterpretation of the essence of modernity and Ultramodernism that proposes a futuristic utopia.

Second, discontinuity can be described as a generation of critique on the modern project without offering alternatives to address failures of the modern project. The work of Derrida, who has also been referred to as a Socratic figure, can be seen as an example of this form of discontinuity. Woods (1992) refers to Derrida’s position in a discourse as “non-positionality” and “discourse-provisionality”. These are also positions that Derrida elicits from readers of his work.

Third, the failures of modernity can be reviewed and a position of discontinuity, interruption or self-distancing from modern culture and a call for the introduction of a broader rationality. This rationality will include aspects that address failures of the

modern project. Cahoone (1995) views postmodernism as a new discontinuity between the present and Eurocentric “modern” that resembles the discontinuity between the premodern and Eurocentric “modern”. He describes postmodernism as a process of self-distancing from that what is described as modern, in order to illuminate the limitations of what is described as Eurocentric “modern”. Rossouw (1995a) views the shift from modern to postmodern culture as “simultaneously a product of modern culture and a reaction against it.”

At this stage it might be appropriate and necessary to distinguish between evolutionary and discontinuous change. Stephen Jay Gould (1996) illustrated the difference between evolutionary and discontinuous change as follows. In discussing the results of three different studies in natural history, Gould (1996) concludes that these findings contradict the traditional notion of evolution as a slow and gradual process of adaptation that takes a similar course in all species. Instead these finding support rapid, uncoordinated, unpredictable and discontinuous processes of change which allows for historical individuality and diversity across species. From a traditional perspective, evolutionary change could be described as predictable, gradual and paced change. Discontinuous change could be rapid, unpredictable, idiosyncratic, temporal and moving along any possible pathway (Gould, 1996).

Nadler and Tushman (1995) distinguish between incremental and discontinuous change. Incremental change is associated with focused and bounded changes. Adaptation and enhancing the fit between strategy and organization are examples of incremental changes. Discontinuous change is associated with radical change, reorientation marked by redefinition and re-creation marked by speed and drastic shifts in the core values of organizations (Nadler & Tushman, 1995). George and Jones (2000) uses job stress to describe the difference between incremental and discontinuous change. Incremental job stress could be associated with a gradual increase in stressors, where a layoff could result in a discontinuous increase in job stress.

For the purpose of this study I will use the constructs of *continuous change* and *discontinuous change*. Continuous change could fit the descriptions of either evolutionary or incremental change. Evolutionary change and incremental change

could be described as characteristic of a modern rationality and discontinuous change is included as one characteristic of a postmodern rationality. The shift from a modern to a postmodern culture could be viewed as a discontinuous change in rationality due to dissatisfaction with the modern project.

In the following two paragraphs I clarify my understanding of modern culture and I give an overview of my understanding of postmodern culture.

1.1.2 What is modern?

This section describes modern culture by reviewing the premodern principles of medieval rationality. A description of my understanding of modern rationality, science and society is presented. The impact of modern rationality on psychology is discussed.

Modern culture is associated with a specific standard of rationality, as well as an understanding of the self and the world. This rationality in the modern era was preceded by medieval rationality. During the medieval era, the church acted as the determinator of rationality (Rossouw, 1995b). Murphy (1989) explains this position according to four statements that can be viewed as the basis for medieval rationality. First, it was believed that God created the world and all man. Second, the world is organised according to a plan of God. Third, God can be viewed as the ontological justification for all forms of existence and fourth, knowledge of this reality can only be obtained in an indirect manner. According to this perspective, no person can obtain any insights without the help of God (Murphy, 1989). Medieval man relied on justification from the church by means of adhering to God-inspired laws (Murphy, 1989; Kirsten, 1988).

The modern era followed the medieval era. Rossouw (1995b) explains that modern rationality is not determined by approval of the church but can rather be seen as based on individual rational activity where reality can only be communicated in a value-free context (Murphy, 1989). Rossouw (1995a) identifies two criteria for statements to be rational. First, another independent, rational person can verify the truth of a statement through empirically investigation. Second, any deductions made should be made in

such a manner that the process could be repeated according to logical procedures. This results in a rational orderliness to the modern world.

This rational orderliness manifests itself in, for example the practice of science and psychology. The modern scientific understanding of the world defines the aim of science as understanding, prediction and control of the physical world. It relies on the rules set out by Newtonian Physics, the Cartesian framework and other forms of linear causality (Macgregor, 1993). Apart from the assumption of linear causality, Newtonian thinking assumed that phenomena can be reduced to the most basic of elements and that a neutral objectivity exists (Moore, Meyer & Viljoen, 1997). Lyotard (1986) confines his arguments of what modern and postmodern is to the sphere of scientific knowledge. Modern scientific knowledge relies on a metadiscourse or grand narrative to legitimise itself. Macgregor (1993) describes adherence to empirical verification through the prescribed scientific method and logical analysis, as the legitimisation of science.

Lyotard (1986) explains knowledge cannot be removed from the society it functions in and describes modern society in Parsonian terms as a self-regulating system or in Marxist terms as marked by acceptance of “the principle of class struggle and dialectics as duality operating in society”. The modern culture is marked by fragmentation or classical dividing lines into specialised domains, led by people in expert positions such as scientists, economists, artists, therapists and clergy.

The impact of the modern rationality on psychology can be described as follows. Psychology developed from the natural sciences during the modern era. In comparison with other disciplines, psychology is a young discipline. The formal establishment of psychology was preceded by philosophical discourse on the body-soul question. Physiologists such as Wilhelm Wundt, founder of the first physiology laboratory, initiated further developments in experimental psychology during 1879. According to Jordaan and Jordaan (1987) this led to efforts of legitimisation of psychology as a science, through empiricism marked by the use of statistics, within a modern world. Huysamen (1997) describes the hallmark of psychological research during this era as verifiability and objectivity. The practice of psychology during this era was based on fragmented theories of causality and determination as proposed by

the Behaviorists, Psychoanalysts and Humanists (Macgregor, 1993). The impact of postmodern rationality on psychology is discussed in paragraph 1.1.3.

1.1.3 What is postmodern?

In similar fashion as medieval rationality preceded modern rationality, modern rationality preceded postmodern rationality. This section investigates reasons for the shift from a modern to postmodern culture, as well as, clarifies my understanding of postmodernity. A description of my understanding of postmodern rationality, science, society and the impact of this rationality on psychology are discussed.

Three reasons for the shift from a modern to postmodern culture will be investigated in this section namely, the challenge to the general paradigm of progress, resistance towards the modern rationality and the use of grand narratives.

The first reason for the shift from a modern to postmodern culture can be explained by Lyotard's challenge of the general paradigm of progress. Lyotard (1986) explains that technological transformations impacted greatly on knowledge. He argues that these transformations should not necessarily be viewed as progress as scientists experience alienation and exploitation with regard to their knowledge, which leads to demoralisation and a decrease in scientific productivity. Rossouw (1995a) refers to this situation as disillusionment with modern rationality. According to Rossouw (1995a) people become more aware of the fact that progress represented by physical, social and economical engineering resulted in human alienation and destruction of the natural and social environment. Modern rationality excludes aspects such as ethics and values, which needs to be included in order to address the problems created by a modern rationality.

The second reason for the shift from a modern to a postmodern culture is embedded in challenges to the underlying premises of modern rationality. In this respect Lyotard (1986) argues that science for instance is not legitimising itself by means of maximal performance but concerns itself with locally determined, unpredictable, language games generating new ideas and dissensus. From a different angle, this can be viewed as resistance towards the notion of legitimisation through a grand narrative. These

new challenges to legitimisation contributed to the development of a broader rationality.

The postmodern culture refers to the acceptance of a new understanding of the self and the world that includes a broader rationality. According to Rossouw (1995a) this broader rationality advocates the inclusion of concepts such as probability, coincidence and chaos as elements of the physical world as well as values, ends and meaning. Lyotard (1986) states that knowledge cannot be equated to science and that other forms of knowledge such as narrative knowledge co-exists with scientific knowledge. The dominant position of scientific knowledge is exchanged for a position where science is viewed as knowledge “in addition to, and in competition and conflict with ... narrative knowledge”. Lyotard (1986) defines postmodern “as incredulity towards metanarratives.” This poses the question of how knowledge can be legitimised outside the ambit of the grand narrative. According to Lyotard (1986), the answer to this crisis was presented by Wittgenstein’s proposal of legitimisation not based on a position of authority (performativity) or expertise. In the postmodern world, legitimisation can only spring from people’s own linguistic practice and communicative interaction based on sensitivity towards difference. Lyotard (1986) further states that paralogy acts as base for legitimisation. The role of paralogical activity is to illuminate metaprescriptives and blind spots used in arguments.

Postmodern science makes use of ideas put forward in Einstein’s Theory of Relativity, Heisenberg’s Uncertainty Principle, Quantum Theory and Gödel’s Theorem (Lyotard, 1986). According to Lyotard (1986), it “is theorising its own evolution as discontinuous, catastrophic, nonrectifiable and paradoxical.” According to Moore et al. (1997) these theories challenged the idea of an objective reality and introduced the concept of a relative reality. The classical dividing lines between different fields of knowledge become more diffuse and new fields are emerging. Knowledge has monetary and political value.

Society can be described in terms of the language games that exist in this society. There is a new pre-occupation with language as social relations are determined in terms of language (Lyotard, 1986).

The impact of the postmodern culture on psychology can briefly be illustrated by referring to the topics of research and applied psychology. The grand narrative or dominant theme of quantitative research that played a dominant role in psychological research has been toppled. Research projects are quantitative and qualitative and in some projects these research methodologies are interlinked (Neuman, 2000). With regard to applied psychology, the popularity of postmodern perspectives such as second order cybernetics, narrative therapy and social constructionism are on the increase. The growth of the field of community psychology also indicates a greater emphasis on language, culture and interrelatedness.

1.1.4 This text and postmodernity

This dissertation cannot be described as a postmodern work. The nature of the study, as well as the methodology used in this study is modern. Therefore, my goal is not to pretend that I was working from a postmodern perspective, what I can offer the reader is commentary on the processes underlying this work, from a postmodern perspective. Taking into account that this is modern study in nature and methodology, the reader can be confused by the writing style that seems to be more postmodern.

After discussing my ideas on modernism, postmodernism, as well as the shift from a modern to postmodern culture, I am now in a position to return to the dilemma I described at the beginning of this chapter. This is the dilemma of the reflecting the epistemological shift that I experienced during the years since completing my Masters degree dissertation. I am also in a position to provide the reader with a description of what to expect from the rest of this text.

In deciding my own stance with regard to the shift from a modern to postmodern culture, I considered two aspects. First, the question of the matter of degree and second the issue of separation of different spheres of life such as technology, applied science, culture, social life, society, state power, economy and politics. With regard to the question of degree, I view a bivalent stance as a limiting and unsatisfying approach to describe and solve problems, including a description of the shift from a modern to postmodern culture. The modern project has not failed to a degree of totality in all spheres of life. I, further, agree with proponents of the idea that it is

practically impossible to implement a discontinuation of, for example, the modern culture. I find it difficult to conceptualise the extraction of elements from one culture or parts thereof, for placement within a new culture without residual elements of the previous culture, such as the modern, to be present. The second aspect of the separation of different spheres of life refers to what Lyotard calls the “incrudibility towards metanarratives”. It is not possible to apply the same form of discontinuity to all spheres of life. Even within one specific life sphere such as for example social life different localities will call for a variation in the application of discontinuity.

I support the ideas of multivalence, continuation as well as discontinuity. One can take two general positions in support of this stance. First, theorists, such as Habermas (Chambers, 1995), have come to a conclusion as to what extent the modern project has failed in different spheres of life and has suggested ways of addressing these failures. Second, theorists such as Lyotard (1986) prefer a stance of temporal locality, which requires sensitivity to the effect that, the failure of the modern project has in a specific context and sphere. This reflection results in a temporary discontinuity to describe this other side of the present context. The latter is the position that I will take during this study.

I take a stance that modern culture is not replaced by postmodern culture but that postmodernity can be viewed as a discontinuous process, during which limitations of modern culture are constantly illuminated and addressed. In this process the blind spots are highlighted and the non-dominant voices are amplified in an attempt to address the failures of the modern project. In terms of my definition of postmodern, I will attempt to write a postmodern text, but maintain that this research project can be described as modern methodology. Psychologists like Hoffman (1993) refer to this process in a chapter titled, *Trying to write a postmodern text*, as introducing the voices of others and in order to allow readers to construct their own meanings. The format of the text will be interrupting, self-distancing and discontinuous. A reader should prepare herself or himself for inserts throughout the text that will fulfil this purpose.

The rest of this chapter is structured to address the influence that the shift from a modern to postmodern culture has on career psychology. This discussion will form

the basis to formulate a problem description and aim to the study. Last, an overview of the following chapters is presented.

1.2 The influence of the shift from a modern to postmodern culture on career psychology

A shift from a modern to postmodern culture has implications for views on our understanding of science, art, politics, theology, morality, economy and the world of work (Rossouw, 1995a). These shifts led to discussions in psychology, and more specifically in the field of family therapy, about the nature of therapy and change, as well as the goals of therapy and the role of the therapist. Hardy (1993) discussed three movements that represent an epistemological transformation of family therapy from structuralism and positivism to postmodernism and relativism. These movements are the feminist movement, radical constructivism or social constructionism and the cultural relativism movement.

A similar epistemological shift is evident in literature on career psychology. According to Richardson (1993), career psychology was slow in following fields such as personality and developmental psychology during the epistemological transformation. This resulted in a gap between the epistemology of these different psychological fields. In discussing the shift from a modern to postmodern culture on the field of career psychology, I will focus on two specific topics, which in my opinion can be viewed as important strands of this field. First, I discuss shifts in the world of work in an effort to paint a backdrop for the discussion on shifts in career development.

1.2.1 The modern world of work and career psychology

According to Savickas (1993), the modern world of work came into being as nineteenth century workers turned their vocational dreams into empires, which resulted in the development of industrial centers. People exchanged self-employment for structured careers in large organisations. These objective careers consisted of occupational titles, job descriptions and clarity on the hierarchy of the corporate ladder. Workers' titles placed them in an organisational hierarchy and provided them

with social identities. In other words, hierarchy and structure within the organisation regulated social relations. The work ethic was determined by authoritarian interpretation by dominant cultures and powers within the organisation.

With regard to career counselling, Brown and Brooks (1990) indicate that the majority of career counselling models used logical positivism as a philosophical base. A number of assumptions made by career counsellors support this statement. First, it is assumed that human behaviour is objectively observable and measurable and cause and effect can therefore be established on a linear basis. Second, the scientific method is the acceptable paradigm according to which human behaviour can be analysed. Third, the focus of investigations should be considered as observable behaviour. From the assumptions the career counsellor will be in a position to explain, predict and control the career counselling process (Brown & Brooks, 1990). This approach left limited space for a discourse on values.

Career Psychology was geared towards the person-environment fit, primarily by means of the use of inventories measuring interests, values and abilities (Savickas, 1993; Brown & Brooks, 1990). The initial focus of the field was white male clients. The civil and women's rights movements during the 1960 - 1970's lead to an awareness of the vocational needs of other groups (Brown & Brooks, 1990). An example would be the acknowledgement of how motherhood impacts on women's careers.

During the middle of this century, Donald Super was the first theorist who guided career psychologists to the contextual setting of career development as an ongoing process as opposed to making a singular occupational choice (Nel, 1993). Super (1980) uses the metaphor of the enactment of certain roles within theatres to describe the roles people enter, maintain and exit in the life-space they occupy. These roles are choreographed against the backdrop of the Life-Career Rainbow that gives an overview of nine life roles in schematic life space and the relative importance that each individual gives to a specific role during a specific time. Super (Nel, 1993) conceptualised the role of values in this process as follows. Values are the feelings that people have with regard to the satisfaction they experience in pursuing their

goals. Twenty-two of these values were identified. This view resulted in the conclusion that peoples' values will change as they are exchanging roles and theatres.

Apart from Super a number of other theorists are proponents of viewing the ongoing relationship with the world of work as divisible into phases (Schein, 1968; Emmett, 1988; Russell, 1991). Specific psychological issues and work-related tasks were associated with each one of these phases.

1.2.2 Shifting towards a postmodern world of work

The post-industrial and information age is marked by innovation and rapid, discontinuous change. (Boyett & Boyett, 2001). Olson and Eoyang (2001) list globalization, high-speed communications, technical innovations and increased diversity in the workforce as examples of transformation in the business environment. The linear perspective of one objectively suitable career, which promises entrance, promotion and retirement, dissolves into a shift towards perspectivity (Savickas, 1993). The postmodern world of work is marked by a tendency to eliminate dominance. This position rejects the acceptance of the grandnarrative of the objective career, and focuses on the exploration of multiple subjective realities regarding the world of work.

Savickas (1993) explains the structural changes that organisations and bureaucracies experience. In this process the downsizing of organisations and re-engineering of companies can be regarded as buzz words. Olson and Eoyang (2001) describe changes from a machine-like organizational structure to that of a complex adaptive system. The challenge to the general paradigm of progress is also felt in the world of work. According to Savickas (1993), people are less willing to center their existence on their careers. The emphasis is on teamwork, a commitment towards culture and community, success through co-operation and contribution as well as the development of your own values. In the post-industrial age individuals take responsibility for self-development and act as creators of their own career within a social context where language produces reality (Savickas, 1993). Workers are negotiating the re-engineering, multi-careering and lateral shifts in organisations as opposed to corporate ladder climbing (Popcorn, 1996).

In a discussion on career psychology's position in a postmodern world of work Richardson (1993) identifies the following blind spots (alternate realities). First, the middle class bias of the field of career psychology excluded and marginalised the work done outside the context of a certain occupational structure. Second, a study of the individual in one occupational context only, can be viewed as a limited perspective for the purposes of counselling psychology. Third, the social value of work is ignored. Mark Savickas took the lead in conceptualising the role of the career psychologist. In the rest of this section these views will be aligned with contemporary thinking in family therapy.

A postmodern perspective to career psychology is geared towards the constructs of the subjective career, self-development and meaning making determined by usefulness. Brown and Brooks (1990) discuss the phenomenological perspective as an alternative to logical positivism. According to this perspective, there are no absolute rules and principals with regard to human functioning. Human behaviour has to be seen within a context. The subjective frame of reference of each individual is the only credible source of information. In this process, by means of discourse the counsellor and client create meaningful perceptions with regard to the client's environment and career (Brown & Brooks, 1990). Savickas (1993) takes this process one step further as a proponent of perspectivity and discourse. He views career counselling as an interpretative discipline and urges counsellors to take cognizance of processes such as career development as meaning making, life themes in career development, career as story, constructivism, the narrative construction of a career and career-style-counselling (Savickas, 1993). The value discourse is integral to this approach.

Savickas (1993) states that the distinction between career counselling and psychotherapy is disappearing. He describes the career counselling process as a social co-construction of meaning. According to the theory of social constructionism, no objective reality exists. The development of knowledge and our ideas about the world are co-constructed during interactions between people and more specifically through language and social discourse (Hoffman, 1990; Real, 1990). During the social interventions numerous meanings are generated in the form of constantly changing narratives (Hoffman, 1990). Dare (1995) refers to this reality as consensual reality of

meaning. This position refers to the non-expert position of the therapist, description of the problem, the central role of language, as well as instruments used by counsellors. The rest of this section deals with the application of these developments in the field of family therapy in the field of career psychology.

Anderson and Goolishian implemented social constructivism in family therapy (Hardy, 1993). They are proponents of viewing the therapeutic system as a linguistic, problem organising and problem “dis-solving system” (Anderson & Goolishian, 1988). The therapeutic system is created by the problem, involving everybody who is “in-language” about the problem. The process of therapy is seen as a context or space, in which those who are in-language about the problem can explore new meanings and understanding through dialogue. Through conversation the problem is “dis-solved” and therefore the problem-organising system dissolves (Anderson & Goolishian, 1988). The role of the therapist is described with analogies such as the “master conversational artist” or the “architect of dialogue”. The role of the therapist shifts from an objective observer to that of an active participant who creates, facilitates, observes and manages the therapeutic conversation. The therapist co-constructs new meanings, understanding, new narratives and descriptions, themes and plots. The therapist has openness to the validity of the ideologies, values and views of their clients and themselves (Anderson & Goolishian, 1988). Hoffman (1993) refers to this position of Anderson and Goolishian as the non-expert position. Hoffman (1993) goes as far as describing the hallmark of the Galveston group (of which Anderson and Goolishian were part) as deliberate ignorance.

Savickas (1993) explains how career counsellors accepted a non-expert position. This implies that counsellors remove themselves from directive modern practices such as assuming the role of career information source and inventory analyst. He joins a group of people like Hoffman (1990) and Anderson and Goolishian (1988) who are proponents of creating a space where clients can speak and act for themselves (Savickas, 1993).

Anderson and Goolishian (1988) are proponents of viewing the problem as creator of the system, as opposed to viewing the system as creator of the problem. It follows that

from this perspective a change in the description of the problem can bring about change within the system.

An application of this concept is reflected in Savickas' (1993) ideas on rewriting the grandnarrative. He emphasises the contextual limitations in usefulness of theories, including those on occupational roles. Savickas (1993) proposes an alternative description to the problem of counselling. Clients tend to move towards the need for a life design reflecting an interrelation between work, interpersonal relationships, children and the community.

With regard to the use of instruments developed in typical modern fashion, Savickas (1993) explains the historical origin and legitimacy for the use of inventories. He ascribes the need for these instruments to the need to find a fit between the person and environment on an objective basis. Typical postmodern ways to approach career counselling would for example include applications of narrative therapy. He predicts that the popularity and emphasis on the use of modern instruments will decline (Savickas, 1993).

1.2.3 Shifting towards a postmodern perspective of career process

In the postmodern literature the use of the construct development is unpopular as it implies a progressive, evolutionary and predicted outcome, negating the possibility and occurrence of discontinuous processes. In light of this, I propose the use of the construct career process as oppose to career development. Career process allows for continuous and discontinuous processes in working life.

I decided to describe the shift from a modern to a postmodern perspective on career process according to three arguments that I believe constitute the nature of the shift. First, I argue that an emphasis on sensitivity towards diversity exposed blind spots in modern reasoning on normative development, including career development. Second, the notion of the objective self has to share a platform with notions of the subjective self. Third, the challenge to the general paradigm of progress, marked by explicit stages of advancement on the career ladder, is extrapolated to the sphere of career

development theory. These three arguments will be discussed in the rest of section 1.2.3.

1.2.3.1 Sensitivity towards diversity

The new sensitivity towards diversity includes issues of gender and culture, as well as, an exposé of blind spots in modern thinking on normative development. According to modern developmental psychologists, during the ages of sixteen to nineteen years individuals consolidate their life history with social factors in order to be in a position to make a number of important decisions (Banks, Bates, Breakwell, Bynner, Emler, Jamieson & Roberts, 1992). Furnham and Stacey (1991) identify eight developmental tasks for the adolescent. This includes, an adjustment to a new body image, adjustment to changing cognitive abilities and demands, development of a personal identity, establishment of psychological independence from one's parents, development of stable friendship- and sexual relationships, integration of sexual identity within the self concept, development of increased impulse control and lowered levels of aggression, the acceptance of an integrated and functional value and moral system as behavioural guide as well as the establishment of mature career goals and realistic planning to achieve these goals. According to this description a career choice, home and school leaving, career preparation and -entrance can be described as successive, normative life tasks. These normative processes happens within a social, cultural, class, gender, ethnic and family context (Banks et al., 1992).

Other life processes associated with this age group are the postponement of financial independence, marriage and having a family, as a result of career preparation. Henry (in Banks et al., 1992) is the only source that describes adjustment to unemployment as a normative developmental task in late adolescence. Currently it is not uncommon for a phase of unemployment, as result of economical factors described earlier, to precede career entrance.

Arnett (2000) presents a theory of development from the late teens through the twenties in which he refers to this period as emerging adulthood. He argues that this stage of development can be punctuated as different from adolescence and young adulthood. The characteristics of this stage of development are frequent changes and

exploration of life directions in love, work and worldviews. Arnett (2000) explains that emerging adults experience a subjective sense of being between the developmental stages of adolescence and young adulthood. With regard to their working roles, emerging adults most frequently find themselves in part-time employment that will not necessarily relate to their future occupations. They explore identity issues with regard to their future working role. In essence this period should be viewed as a time of exploration and preparation. Arnett (2000) contextualises his views on this developmental stage by referring to differences in cultures as well as individual differences that can not be ignored.

After entering a career, the person has to establish herself in the career. Progressive advancement towards seniority and the ability to mentor others in the process are seen as the next stage in the career cycle. Middle livelihood is associated with change. These changes are instigated by personal change. The discontinuity in females' working lives is acknowledged. The last phase that is described by normative models is preparation for retirement and retirement (Gerdes, 1988).

The postmodern position challenges this grandnarrative of development. Gergen (in Hoffman, 1993) warns that the idea of a normal life span trajectory is deficient in explaining the infinite number of developmental forms that are possible. This perspective is highlighted by the work of authors such as Gilligan and Brown (1992) in the field of women's psychology. They refer to differences in the developmental positions of women and men. With their research, they attempt to amplify the impact of voices other than those portraying androcentric and patriarchal norms, values and societal structures. They also report on asymmetries that they discovered in the development of men and women (Gilligan & Brown, 1992). The social constructionist position with regard to gender indicates that these roles should not be rigidly defined but should rather be considered as contextual and flexible.

In the South African context sensitivity towards cultural diversity can be viewed as particularly relevant. Richardson (1993) points to the fact that cultural diversity is under-represented in career literature, which contributes to the creation of blind spots. This statement is significant in light of the importance that cultural diversity has in the South African context. Savickas (1993) explains that the modernist approach to

diversity would be to integrate individuals by means of socialisation processes into the mainstream culture, this was popularly referred to as the cultural melting pot. According to Savickas (1993) this metaphor was exchanged for the salad bowl metaphor where diversity is valued in a mixed context. He emphasises that individuals should be encouraged to draw up their own life plans. Therefore career psychologists should participate in enabling clients to do this (Savickas, 1993).

As explained earlier in this chapter, I am favouring a position of discontinuity in the modern-postmodern-shift-debate. In light of this position, I take a stance for my own use of re-framing the modern developmental stages as tasks as one course that the life story of an individual can follow at any specific age. Therefore there will be contexts of work where people follow the predicted trajectory of “normative” development. This course should not be viewed as the only course of development and should be complemented by a position of temporal locality that includes sensitivity towards the failures of the modern normative position.

1.2.3.2 The subjective self



Modern rationality aimed at objectifying the self. In this process the self was equated to objective behaviour, cognitive or physiological processes. These views about the objective self matched those for the objective career. Through positivistic scientific processes it would have been possible to find a fit between a person and a career. A person was selected to fit a career and an organisation. Personal values were of little consequence in the modern approach.

The postmodern notion of the self challenges this one-sided description of a person. According to Lyotard (1986) the self has little value or significance in the isolated sense. He emphasises the position of the self in complex and mobile relations that can also be viewed as communication circuits.

This postmodern construction is echoed by theorists such as Jacques Lacan, James Hillman and social constructionists (Moore et al., 1997). In Lacan and Hillman’s respective deconstructionist perspectives on Freud and Jung’s theories, they both emphasise the role of contact with others. Lacan describes any form of self-awareness

not based on interrelations as blinding and narcissistic. According to him, an own identity can only be obtained in language (in other words through discourse within the language community). Turkle (in Moore et al., 1997, p.244) illustrates this construct as follows: "... it is language that constitutes man as a subject ... and at the same time society is discovered within the individual."

The subjective self creates in interaction with others, the subjective career that emphasises a position where individuals take responsibility for their own career processes in a postmodern culture. Hall and Mirvis (1995) refer to this process as the protean career. During this process the individual shapes his career according to his or her own needs and values rather than those of the organisation. The uniqueness of this career is compared to the uniqueness of a fingerprint. This position also proposes the enlargement of career space according to which a number of other life issues can be included in this space. This implies a shift, from viewing a career as relating to the career ladder to viewing a career as based on individual processes.

1.2.3.3 The challenge to the general paradigm of progress

Lyotard (1986, p.7) used the phrase "the challenge to the general paradigm of progress" in the context of science and technology. He describes progress as synonymous with growth, expansion of power and accumulation. As explained earlier in this chapter, progress created problems that could not be dealt with by modern rationality. In modern theories of career development the general paradigm of progress can be represented by the orderly and structured climbing of the corporate ladder associated with growth, expansion of power and accumulation. It can also be represented by the phases of career development set out by theorists such as Super (1980), Schein (1968) and Emmett (1988). Gladwell (2001) explains that the expectation exists that input in transactions, relationships and systems equates to a directly related outcome in terms of intensity and dimension. He refers to this as the "approximation between cause and effect". In the new world of work discontinuity results in rapid changes with disproportional relations between cause and effect.

With the structural change of work (Hall & Mirvis, 1995) as well as the re-engineering of organisations into flat structures, the construct of the corporate ladder

and set career paths are dissolving. Lateral and even downward shifts are common in organisations (Russell, 1991). This poses a challenge to the general paradigm of progress as constructed by modern views on career progress.

A more useful approach to career process can be to utilise a modern-biased description of Russell (1991), who introduces the constructs of the early-career phase, middle-career phase and late-career phase. The temporality associated with each of these phases could be incremental or discontinuous (George & Jones, 2000). This aspect is influenced by changes in work and workplace, which now incorporate key words such as portable skills, serial employment, transitions, strategic reskilling, contingency work, temporary work and unpaid work (Hoyt & Wickwire, 2001).

(1) The early stages of working life

In typical modern fashion Russell (1991) describes establishment and achievement, as the two major tasks employees have to complete during the early-career period. Dix and Savickas (1995) study the coping responses of fifty workers who successfully coped with the developmental tasks of this stage. They list Super and Crites' conceptualisation of these developmental tasks as the following: adaptation to organisational culture, achievement of satisfactory position performance, relating effectively to co-workers, maintaining productive work habits, moving towards the next promotion and planning future career moves (Dix & Savickas, 1995). A number of coping strategies can be mediated by the values of the individual. Dix and Savickas (1995) list examples of coping skills such as keeping current in the field, networking with colleagues and respecting co-workers as people.

Schein (1968) describes socialisation within the organisation as pivotal during this early-phase. During the socialisation process the individual develops awareness of the organisational value system and integrates this system with his or her own. Schein (1968) explains that socialisation is a recurrent process that an individual encounters during each shift in his or her career. According to Schein (1968), people react differently to this socialisation process. Some people accept all organisational values, others only identify with core values and others reject associated organisational values. A number of career development programmes are used by organisations to

assist their new employees in coping with this stage. Examples of these programmes include anticipatory socialisation programmes and employee orientation programmes (Russell, 1991).

Other forms of the early stages of working life outside the parameters of the modern organisation should be considered. The demands in establishing these alternative careers will differ from those set out by Russell (1991), Dix and Savickas (1995) and Schein (1968). Examples of other career processes include self-employment, temporary employment or working in the virtual organisation. Alternatively lateral movement within one organisation as result of multiskilling, innovation, continuous improvement, transferability and repositioning of work could result in entering an subsequent early phase in another job (Hoyt & Wickwire, 2001).

(2) The middle stages of working life

According to Russell (1991) this is a neglected stage of career process as a greater focus rests on the initial and late stages. Theorists list the work-related tasks facing people in this stage as follows. Workers evaluate their current position in accordance with earlier decisions and goals while maintaining productivity. Some workers are faced with the challenge of applying their skills in a more generalised manner as opposed to specialised applications (Russell, 1991).

Others face becoming plateaued or obsolescent (Russell, 1991). This is especially true in countries facing economic recessions as described by Suzuki (1996). According to Suzuki (1996) middle-aged and elderly workers are framed as scapegoats to overcome difficult economical situations in Japanese companies. These Japanese workers have absorbed the skills and values which made them acceptable to the company and which would make it difficult to adapt in a new company. In Japanese corporate society it is uncommon for a person to change employment to another company (Suzuki, 1996).

Apart from these tasks people also face the psychological issues that are traditionally associated with this phase (Russell, 1991). Baltes, Reese and Lipsit (in Sterns & Miklos, 1995) report an increase in individual differences as people grow older. Sterns and Miklos (1995) ascribe this to the fact that younger persons' options are

more limited than those of older people. A young person needs to enter a career. An older person can decide on continuing with a career, to start a new career, modify a career or retirement. Sterns and Miklos (1995) state that older people have a different perspective on their work with regard to preferences and what they view as important. From this statement it can be extrapolated that this would include views on a shift in value perspectives. Organisations offer career development interventions such as job rotation, downward moves and developmental programmes in order to assist persons in the middle-career phase (Russell, 1991).

In the new world of work the middle phase of a career is marked by ongoing change. The duration of the middle stage is flexible. Hoyt and Wickwire (2001) emphasize the need to equip persons with general employability, adaptability and skills that will assist them in promoting themselves. These skills are necessary on a world of work marked by constant discontinuous change that results in the displacement of workers. An awareness of their own work values could facilitate transitions during this stage of working life (Hoyt & Wickwire, 2001).

(3) The late stages of working life

The late-career phase has to be viewed in the context of the specific individual's position. According to Russell (1991) a small number of persons have to prepare themselves for advancement to senior leadership roles. Sterns and Miklos (1995) explain that ageing affects people differently and the challenges and attitudes that they will have towards the world of work will differ. It seems as if the needs and position of the older worker are cast into ambivalence by organisations. On the one hand organisations acknowledge the resources these people have and on the other hand they are marginalised in certain processes (Sterns & Miklos, 1995; Hall & Mirvis, 1995).

The majority of people have to maintain productivity whilst preparing for retirement (Russell, 1991). Suzuki (1996) explains that the manner in which a person enters retirement will impact on their views of the meaning that their lives had. Economic realities dictate the date of retirement for a great number of people. In other words people can only retire when they can afford to do so (Sterns & Miklos, 1995). Interventions aimed at assisting the late-career phase worker include workshops on

older worker issues, retirement programmes, incentives for early retirement and flexible working patterns (Russell, 1991).

Viewed from a position of temporal locality the late stage of working life could be referred to as the end of a specific stage, which will demand from the person to take steps in preparing for a subsequent early stage of working life. The end of this cycle is seen as part of a continuous life-death–life cycle (Nadler & Tushman, 1994). Constructs such as self-management, planning and decision making, serial employment and goal setting might be appropriate during this stage of working life (Hoyt & Wickwire, 2001).

(4) Discussion

After discussing the three arguments impacting on the shift from a modern to postmodern perspective on career process, I return to explain my view on career process in a postmodern culture.

Although a great number of people's careers follow a predictable, so-called normative development that fit the general paradigm of progress, it is acknowledged in literature that many individuals do not follow such a simple trajectory. Discontinuous changes which impact on working life can be made at any stage (Sterns & Miklos, 1995). The view of a career as career stages spanning a lifetime is exchanged for the view of numerous shorter learning cycles over a lifetime (Hall & Mirvis, 1995). Individuals subjectively create careers in a working context in relation to their co-workers.

1.2.4 The position of career psychology in a postmodern world

In shifting from a modern to a postmodern perspective, career psychologists have to abandon the comfort of an expert domain. Career psychologists are working in a contextual space where life design and multiple roles are on an equal footing.

In similar fashion that other careers faced re-engineering and transformation as result of the shift from a modern to postmodern culture, the career psychologist finds herself without the structural comfort of the modern world of work and modern career

development. Two issues pertaining to the role of the career psychologists in the postmodern world, namely meaning making and decision making, is discussed in this section.

It becomes evident that career psychologists need to shift to a position of temporal locality. This entails taking a non-expert stance embedded in sensitivity towards diversity. As participant-observers they join clients in rewriting the grandnarrative. In drafting their own life plans, clients can decide on the relation between their working and other roles (Savickas, 1993). Savickas (1993) describes this career process as one of making meaning. A construct that relates to the meaning that people invest in work is that of work values. From a subjective perspective he describes values as “general goals or expressions in meaning making”. He predicts that this position will lead to the measuring of work values becoming increasingly popular.

This career process of making meaning (based on values) is interlinked with a position of temporal locality in career processes through ongoing processes of decision making. A subjective career, created by individuals in constant interaction with others, is formed through ongoing processes of decision making.

It seems as if values influence all decisions whether it is to decide whom to trust, which requests to render, as well as, how to spend your time and energy. Because of the strong influence with regard to all actions, it plays a central role in understanding human behaviour (Schmidt & Posner, 1982). According to Leidtka (1989) the value of values as influence on human behaviour is in the role it plays as criterium for decision making. Behaviour (including decision making) cannot be viewed in the context of the role that a singular value plays but should rather be viewed as the role that a cluster of values plays (Leidtka, 1989). Decision making can also be affected by conflicts in values (Moulder, 1988, 1989; Stocker, 1990).

The career psychologist is “in-language” with clients about their subjective experiences in the context of the work role. One aspect that cannot be eliminated from this process is the values of the psychologist and the client. During their interaction they co-construct a reality of what is valuable to both of them. Decisions will be based on this co-constructed reality. During this value discourse the psychologist as

participant-observer co-constructs new meanings, understandings, new narratives and descriptions, themes and plots (Anderson & Goolishian, 1998).

1.3 Problem description

At first, the problem description of the study was to obtain greater clarity about the structure of work values of South Africans that formed part of a developmental stage described as emerging adulthood.

After reviewing the impact of the shift from a modern to postmodern culture from the position I described at the beginning of this chapter, I came to the conclusion that a career psychologist is involved in two processes namely ongoing decision making and making meaning in career process. One useful construct that can be utilised during these career processes would be an exploration and clarification of values. This can be done in any way that the psychologist and client can legitimise. It should further incorporate sensitivity towards diversity, which led me to reconsider the notion of emerging adulthood with the implicit epistemological meaning attached to distinct developmental phases. I decide to opt for an exploration of a structure of work values of persons during an early stage of career process.

My contribution to addressing this specific problem description is to explore a useful structure of work values during an early stage of career process in the South African context. Developing a Work Values Questionnaire is one way of achieving this aim. This contribution seems to be a modern insertion into a postmodern world. Any quantitative measurement has its origin in modern psychology. The application of the questionnaire will determine whether it could be useful in a modern or postmodernly defined context. This does not erode the possible usefulness that quantitative instruments can have in a postmodern culture (Neuman, 2000). The criterion for the usefulness of such an instrument is the legitimisation of the use of the instrument. The application of a questionnaire can be on a subjective or objective level. On a subjective level, a work-value questionnaire is one possible source that can assist in the co-construction of meaning between client and psychologist. On a momentarily objective level, (which has not been abolished by the shift from a modern to postmodern culture) a work value questionnaire can be used to compare the

position of the person with that of a specific group. The usefulness of the information will determine the legitimacy of using such a procedure.

1.4 The aim of the study

Initially the aim of the study was to investigate the structure of work values during emerging adulthood by developing a work value questionnaire. After an introduction to postmodern rationality the aim of this study could be twofold. On a broader level, it is the aim of this study to enter a discourse on values and specifically work values against the backdrop of a shift from a modern to postmodern epistemology. Specifically, it is the aim of this study to formulate and investigate the validity of a structure of work values during an early stage of career process by developing a Work Values Questionnaire.

1.5 Outline of the following chapters

Chapter Two provides a description of values as construct. The usefulness of the description will be determined by the transformation of this description into pragmatic use in developing the Work Values Questionnaire. The chapter discusses different theoretical perspectives on values, the linguistic perspective, a cognitive perspective, an emotive perspective, and a perspective of values as needs and the social co-construction of values. Theoretical perspectives are discussed against the backdrop of shifts from a modern to a postmodern rationality. The chapter is concluded with an illustration of how these theoretical perspectives can be utilised in writing items for the Work Values Questionnaire.

Two primary sources are utilised in developing a theoretical framework for the work value structure. The first of these sources is the conceptual framework of Rogene Buchholz that forms the basis for his beliefs about work questionnaire. The theoretical perspective of Buchholz is set out in Chapter Three and his five scales, namely, the Work Ethic, Organisational, Marxist-related, Humanistic and Leisure Ethics scales are described. The results of the factor analysis that was done with the results obtained in the Master's Degree Thesis of Engelbrecht (1991) are used to propose possible scales

to be included in the Work Values Questionnaire. Three proposed scales are generated at the end of this chapter to be included in the Work Values Questionnaire.

Chapter Four deals with the work-related values perspectives of Hofstede. In this chapter the four dimensions of Hofstede's work value scale, namely, Power Distance, Uncertainty Avoidance, Individualism versus Collectivism, Masculinity versus Femininity are discussed.

Chapter Five presents the five proposed scales for the Work Values Questionnaire. The five scales derived from the theoretical basis established by Buchholz and Hofstede are Collectivity, Uncertainty Avoidance, Power Distance, Individualism and Humanist Values

Chapter Six discusses the methodology utilised in the development in the Work Values Questionnaire. Aspects with regard to the construction of the questionnaire, the format of the questionnaire and items are discussed. The methodology of factor analysis and more specifically exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis is discussed. The steps in the factor analysis are set out. These steps include the division of the sample, the use of communalities, rotation, analysis of rotated factors, as well as, the interpretation of the factors. With regard to the confirmatory factor analysis, the use of the four different Indices of Fit are discussed, namely, the chi-square statistic, the Goodness of Fit Index, the Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index and the Steiger Lind Root Mean Square Error of Approximation Index.

Chapter Seven contains the results of the study. It reports the result of both the exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses. The psychological meaningfulness of the results is discussed.

Chapter Eight presents the conclusion of the study. The chapter provides an overview of the study and critical questions relating to the aim of the study are discussed. These questions include the following. What factors are extracted? Is the validity of the Work Values Questionnaire supported? In which manner can this structure be useful for workers and employers? The differences between the theoretically postulated and

obtained results are discussed. The chapter is concluded with a discussion of the limitations of the study and recommendations for further research.

