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NEW WORK PRACTICES, NEW LITERACIES AND NEW IDENTITIES: A
SHIFT TOWARDS A "NEW WORK CULTURE" IN A SOFT DRINKS
FACTORY IN MAPUTO.

by

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the requirements for the degree of Master of
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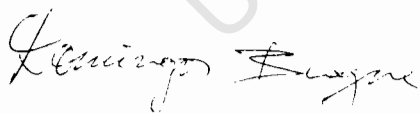
University of Cape Town

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Declaration:

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the
award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and
quotation in this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has
been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis resulted from a study of the work practices and literacy practices performed by the front-line workers of a soft drinks factory in Maputo province, in Mozambique.

The purpose of this study was to (1) identify the literacy practices attached to the work among the front-line workers on the production floor, and to (2) examine such practices in order to determine how the front-line workers respond to the demands of the work as to the literacy practices as well as the accompanying social practices and working identities related to these practices.

The study focuses on literacy at work in the light of the 'new work culture'; and it was strongly influenced by the works of Prinsloo & Scholtz (2000) on one hand, and Hull et al (1996) on the other, whose meta-categories of literate functions I use recurrently along my report.

The study was conducted in an ethnographic approach, over two months observing workers and listening to them while they were carrying out their tasks in the factory. "Work events" (Hull et al, 1996) and "literacy events" (Heath, 1983) were recorded in detailed field notes. Interviews with workers from different sectors on the shop floor were tape-recorded or registered on paper. Another source of data was the range of documents collected in the company. The information gathered was continually analyzed throughout the process of data collection. In this period, hypotheses were developed, discussed and tested, to confirm and disconfirm what was found in the workplace as to the phenomena around literacy and work.

The study shows that effects of globalisation as to workplace have reached Mozambique. Front-line workers in this particular industry are in the process of shifting to the 'new work order', as their changing work practices come along with new literacy practices and new working identities.

Chapter 1

1.1. Introduction

This report results from the ethnographic research into literacy and work conducted in a Mozambican factory devoted to soft drinks production. It informs on front-line workers involvement with literacy, on their work practices and identities when interacting in their workplace setting, which is being reconstructed in the light of the new workplace culture or 'new work order' (Gee et al, 1996), entailing workforce reconstruction as well.

The report relies on data I collected over a period of two months on the shop floor observing the literacy practices and work practices performed in the two production lines. It is situated in the wider debate whether changing workplaces demand new literacy practices and "new discursal practices" (Fairclough, 1996); and it focuses on how global changes as to workplaces are reflected at a local company recently established.

Seven chapters compose this report. The first is devoted to the Introduction; the second chapter comprises the theoretical framework and the literature I reviewed; the third presents methodological aspects within which this study was conducted; in the fourth chapter I present the background and growth of the company; I describe how I gained access to the research site, and how it is in terms of work organization. Chapter five focuses on team literacies, that is, the literacy practices performed by each small team correspondent to each sector on the production floor. Such literacy practices are shaped and constrained by the work organization. I present them following the sequence of the work in the factory in order to contextualize them in the respective work practices. I compare the literacy practices that take place in the two pallet stations of the production floor, arguing that introduction of technology demands new literacy practices from the front-line workers; I present the literacy practices around

the electronic meter as empowering the front-line workers, and I situate them in the new literacy practices of auto-surveillance and auto-regulation at work. I also refer to the texts on wallboards, which the company uses to shift workers towards a new work culture. The sixth chapter gives an overview of the workplace as a 'site of struggle' (Farrell, 1999), where there is tension between discourses, the ones of the vertical hierarchy and those of teams. In this 'site of struggle' new working identities arise moment by moment. This chapter is developed in two sections: in the first I focus on two meetings of one of the production lines, analyzing literate activities, attitudes, language and beliefs of a team leader and his team members. I also examine the literacy practices of the team leader when accomplishing other tasks inherent in his position. In the other section I focus on a worker engaged in apprenticeship learning (Lave & Wenger, 1991) through 'immersion' in a 'community of practice' (Gee et al, 1996) in order to become a multi-functional or 'multi-skilled' worker (O'Connor, 1993). I conclude the report with brief comments on my findings in the seventh chapter.

1.2. Statement of the problem

Literacy at work is a relatively recent research field. From the literature available it can be inferred that it has been gaining space since the early 1990's. This new field has arisen to question whether workplaces which are changing as result of new forms of work organization and/or the introduction of new technologies of production are productive of "new literacy practices", as described in Hull et al. (1996), Farrell (1997), and Prinsloo & Scholtz (2000). (The term 'new literacy practices' refers, broadly, to the different kinds and uses of texts, as well as changes in the technical and social relationships that accompany such changes, as I elaborate in my thesis below.)

My points of departure for this thesis are as follows: I study literacy, following the New Literacy Studies, (Street, 1984, Gee, 1996, Barton, 1994) as instances of social interaction which include aspects of reading and writing, or textual practices. From this perspective, to understand the relationship between work and literacy it is

important to understand the work practices, (i.e., the forms of action and interaction, procedures and commitments that characterise particular types of work, particular industries, and particular sites of work), and, in this light, to study the literacy practices attached to those work practices and the actors of such practices in their workplace. For that it is fundamental to observe and examine systematically what is done in specific workplaces, so as to avoid making uninformed generalizations. That is what I did in the research site, which I refer to as “Moz Soft Drinks”¹

The purpose of the investigation is to (1) identify the literacy practices attached to the work among the front-line workers at the company, and to (2) examine such practices in order to find out how the front line workers respond to the demands of the work as regards the literacy practices as well as the accompanying social practices and working identities that accompany these practices.

At the company located in Maputo province, in the South of Mozambique, there are two lines of production of soft drinks. In one of the lines, the work is almost totally automated while in the other it is semi-mechanical; that is, a considerable part of the work is done manually. Castells (1993) states that productivity and competitiveness in the contemporary global capitalist system depend increasingly on applying science and technology to the process of production. All these suggest that the workplace on the focus of my study is changing, as the almost totally mechanical process of production is replacing the semi-mechanical one to increase productivity and quality. For instance, in this company, the introduction of computerized work and mechanization could change the way the work is organized. Hence, the research question of this study is:

How do the literacy practices, the accompanying social practices and working identities, among the front-line workers, respond to the demands of the new workplace in this case?

¹ “Moz Soft Drinks” is a pseudonym that I will use to refer to the company along this report.

In order to construct useful information about these workers, not only about their performance in the accomplishment of their tasks and the respective literacy practices but also about their trajectories in the world of work and their perspectives, I seek to answer the following sub-questions :

- a) How is the work organized in the two production lines that are the focus of my study?
- b) What literacy practices are attached to the work in each production line?
- c) What characteristics do workers reveal in terms of their schooling, work experience, training and their perspectives?
- d) What perception(s) of literacy do workers have?

1.3. Rationale

My interest in literacy at work grew out of the course entitled *Literacy, work and Adult Basic Education (679x)*, offered at UCT, when several studies in this field were analyzed, e.g. Hull et al. (1996), Farrell (1997) and Prinsloo & Scholtz (2000). While Hull et al. and Prinsloo & Scholtz focus their studies on assembly factories, Farrell focuses on an automotive and industrial textiles and high performance fibres manufacturing unit, for both the local and global markets. The first two studies are conducted in developed countries (USA and Australia respectively); the latter is done in a certain South African factory. All of them focus on changing workplaces, where workers, usually in teams, are responsible for their tasks, are required to learn continually, think themselves and make decisions. They interface with technical information, such as statistical quality control devices, and sophisticated technologies, e.g. computers, robots (Gee et al. 1996: 19)

The studies of Hull and her colleagues (Hull et al 1996) and Prinsloo & Scholtz (2000) are the ones that influenced directly my investigation: the former is a very detailed and intensive ethnographic study of two worksites, but carried out in the

United States of America, in Silicon Valley, California. The latter, drawing on the research model developed by the former, focuses on an African setting, and examines the literacy practices in a factory that has been restructured as a 'new workplace'. My research site is located in Africa as well.

My concern was to carry out, in ethnographic detail, a similar study, examining the particular case of the "Moz Soft Drinks Company" in Maputo province in Mozambique, one of the poorest countries of the world. It is worth while to find out, from a case study, whether the winds of globalisation have reached these workplaces in Mozambique; put in other terms, do the workers of this company act consciously, influenced by the reshaping rhetoric of post-Fordist management discourses (Gee, Hull and Lankshear, 1996; Lankshear, 1997) assuming that they "have a part in it"? (Prinsloo & Scholtz, 2000: 2); or, even better, are the front-line workers committed 'partners' who fully understand and control their jobs, supervise themselves and actively seek to improve their performance through communicating clearly their knowledge and needs to their leaders? (Gee et al. 1996:30)

Beyond the studies above referred to, I examine this particular case in the light of other bibliographic sources on new workplaces as 'learning organizations' and 'literacy rich' environments.

I believe that the report will bring not only insights on literacy at work in Mozambique but also will contribute to changing the habit of the Mozambican academics of thinking of investigating literacy only in the context of adults classrooms or at the level of policies. Furthermore, I am not yet aware of any published study on literacy at work, focusing on what happens in Mozambique.

1.4. An Overview of the 'new workplace'

'Changing workplace', 'restructured workplace' 'global workplace', 'new work order', 'post-Fordist workplace, 'new-Capitalist workplace', 'workplace revolution'

are some expressions semantically commutable often used to express the socio-professional setting, that shifted (or are undergoing a process of shift away) from the Fordist assembly mass production jointly with its standardized products and Taylorist doctrine of work organization and discipline. In such workplaces workers are committed to their work, generally in teams. Gee et al (1996), also Lloyd (1995), refer to change at the level of language as an important strategy to get workers immersed in the new work culture; that is in the restructured workplace, a textual creation of a new Discourse with new social identities or 'new discursal practices' (Fairclough, 1996) takes place. Workers now appear as "associates", "partners" or "knowledge workers", their bosses now are the "leaders" or "coaches", the middle managers now are "team leaders"(Gee et al 1996: 26); "liberation", "empowerment", "trust", "vision", "collaboration", "teams", "self-directed learning", "quality" among others are words that embody the language of the new workplace, in management discourse (29).

Workers newly empowered might not tolerate being ordered around, unless they identify with the goals of the enterprise. They are able to engage in meaningful work, fully understand and control their jobs, supervise themselves and actively search for improving their performance by communicating their knowledge and needs. That is, control and responsibility are pushed down to the lowest possible level requiring workers who can make decisions and express what they know and need to their "leaders who coach, supply and inspire them" (Gee et al, 1996: 19).

The new work order puts stress on the necessity for continuing learning and the need "continually to adapt, change and learn new skills, very often *on site* while carrying out the job" (Gee et al, 1996: 7).

Farrell (1997: 2 - 3) points out three features of the restructured workplace:

- (i) It takes place in a globalised marketplace, where all aspects of production and trade increasingly go beyond national or states boundaries. For instance, using current forms of communication, a transnational

corporation is capable of locating its design sector on one continent, its many production centers on another, and its marketing sector on yet another, opting for placing determined areas of its operations in specific economic and political environments, and changing them as such environments change. As alternative, a transnational corporation may 'auto-source' a diversity of functions, doing business with suppliers all over the world. This development impacts on governments – some of the states controlled by governments are smaller and less complex than the transnational corporation with which they negotiate – on local enterprises, and on workers who will enjoy precarious employment within them;

(ii) The restructured workplace has fundamentally to do with change in the form in which learning and knowledge are conceived in work environments. There is a dramatic shift away from popular rhetoric arguing that workers are not sufficiently competent as learners, and that they have not enough knowledge to make their enterprises internationally competitive. Many workplaces respond to the increasing pace of technological change and the cutthroat world of global competition redefining themselves as 'learning organisations' or identifying themselves as 'high performance' workplaces, where continuing learning is the core activity of the enterprise, and new knowledge is the capital. These changes as to learning and knowledge bring implications for the workplace organization: the team – a group of workers theoretically operating as equals as they take responsibility for managing a particular aspect of their work through developing new work practices, new work knowledge and new problem solving processes – replaces the traditional authority structure of the foreman and leading hand.

(iii) The restructured workplace causes a great depth of change in workplace literacy practice; such a change goes beyond 'competence' in particular literacy practices to include changes that reach the core of what it means to work and what

it means to be a certain kind of worker; that is these changes have to do with “values and identity at least as much as they are about specific literacy skills” (Farrell,1997: 3)

Clearly, along the studies above examined, it is evident that the new workplace is equipped with workers organized in teams in a flexible relation to a fast-changing production process. They increasingly solve problems as they arise; share the goals of the company, and learn, often on site, engage in new discourses, assuming a new identity. The use of technical information; improvement of quality to guarantee competitiveness, supported by sophisticated technology; self-motivating and self-disciplining workers, together with increasing new literacy practices, are said to be some of the major concerns within the new work order.

In the paragraph above I contextualised my study according to the reasons that led me to undertake it, and I presented a portrait of the workplace along the lines of the new work culture. Now I will move on to the next chapter, which focuses on the theoretical framework and literature review that sustain my study; in this chapter I will also define the terms that I will use recurrently in the report.

Chapter 2

2.1. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

2.1.1. Theoretical Framework

The last two decades have witnessed a wave of research opposed to widespread convictions that literacy is something autonomous that leads simply and routinely to

positive social outcomes. Several studies have shown that literacy cannot be desembedded from the social context within which it occurs, as I discuss below. Thus the work of Street (1984), in anthropology, Gee (1990), in socio-linguistics; and in education, Hull et al (1996); Farrell (1997) and Farrell (1999); Prinsloo & Breier (1996) and Prinsloo & Scholtz (2000) – who focused on literacy at work – have positively influenced this study in developing a conceptual frame and in providing a theoretical language for interpreting the data.

2.1.2. Literature Review

2.1.2.1. Street (1984), an anthropologist, developed an approach to the study of literacy as situated social practice which he called ‘the ideological model of literacy’, which came to challenge the popular and prevailing conceptions of literacy that consider that the acquisition of literacy by individuals and societies always leads to positive and unproblematic social outcomes. Street characterized these conceptualizations as embodying an “autonomous view”; that is, literacy is treated in technical terms, as an independent variable that can be separated from the context in which it takes place, and also in the sense that it brings social and cognitive consequences that can be derived from its distinctive and intrinsic character. Street’s ideological model of literacy, on the other hand, sees literacy as ideologically and culturally embedded in social practices. As a social practice, literacy varies in accordance with social context and it is not the same, uniform thing in each case. Literacy practices have meaning when viewed in the social context where they take place. The concept of ‘literacy practices’, according to Street (1984, 1995), focuses on the particularity of cultural practices with which uses of reading and/or writing are associated in real contexts

Street’s influence is noticeable in studies that were carried out since the early 1990’s, where literacy is treated not as simply a set of technical skills learned in formal education, but instead as a set of social practices embedded in specific contexts.

2.1.2.2. In Prinsloo & Breier (1996) various case studies developed in the SoUL (the Social Uses of Literacy) project display examples of the ways people without schooling develop informally the capacities, skills or repertoire to carry out necessary literacy-related tasks in their lives. The most fundamental characteristic of these practices is their embeddedness in particular contexts. Section One of that book is of considerable importance for this study as it has to do with literacy situated in the context of work, as I now go on to discuss.

2.1.2.3. Prinsloo & Robins (Prinsloo & Breier, 1996: 33-47) studied the 1994 South African parliamentary elections and found out that there was a significant difference between what the planners had forecast and what the events reflected during the process of voting: 'illiteracy' was not found to be the major barrier to knowing about the election and participating in the process as planners had assumed. A mass of people was thought of by some planners as a problematic 'order' whose 'illiteracy' determined not only their 'outsider' status but also presented a base for action, on the part of policy-makers, whereas the research, taking a more complex 'social' approach to literacy, instead of simplistically designating a mass of people as illiterate, showed that these same people were able to deal with the demands of modern balloting; the outcome of the voting process was less dreadful than many reporters had predicted.

2.1.2.4. Gibson carried out a study of 'literacy, knowledge, gender and power in the workplace' on three farms in the Western Cape (Prinsloo & Breier, 1996: 49-64). She found that the farm workers' literacy practices were embedded in power relationships between workers, farmers, men and women. It was in the interest of the farmer to hire male workers irrespective of degrees of 'school' literacy just to ensure a cheap and stable labour force, whose members would not easily get work in town.

Both farmer and workers often privileged 'farm' knowledge/literacy: farmers needed workers with special skills, craftsmen, builders, welders, plumbers, mechanics; workers stressed their own strengths and the highly valued skills they had to offer, despite having no 'booked learning' (52); such knowledge was inherently 'male' and could only be accessed by male workers. This emphasis, and the use of gender as the principal criterion for hiring workers, power, or training reinforced the discourse about and consequent power of the male breadwinner and the subordinate position of female workers.

Literacy and power were interrelated in different ways: on the one hand, text-related literacy and school literacy were dominant in the practices of women and had become gendered, however without empowering; for men, on the other hand, work-related competencies and knowledge were interpreted as being 'male' and served to empower; and, where text-related literacy was increasingly used in the workplace, for instance in contracts, it often legitimated gendered discourses.

Women's literacy practices encompassed a wide range of activities outside the workplace such as assistance to unschooled people and children coping with their homework, control of household finances and transactions, or reading in the public domain of religion.

Text-related or school literacy was found to be dominant in the practices of women, e.g. in the domestic domain where they used it as carers for the family,

reading to children and helping with school work, and to some extent becoming gendered just as, for men, work-related competences and knowledge such as interpretation of diagrams and plans, reading/writing of lists, reminders, notices, etc. were interpreted as being 'male' and serving to empower. On the contrary, women's literacy in itself did not automatically empower in the workplace as often it was hidden from the workplace and they almost never used it there, being labelled as lacking in 'work literacy'.

The study reveals that in the farms investigated being 'literate' is not the primary criterion for access to employment, power or training; rather being a male is.

2.1.2.5. Breier & Sait focused their study on literacy and communicative practices in a Cape factory (Prinsloo & Breiner, 1996: 65 – 84). They aimed to understand the communication gap between management and workers in a workplace that requires workers to hand-mould products out of material impregnated with *asbestos*, a substance that can cause fatal disease if inhaled over time. They found out that the personnel management's desire to introduce literacy education in order to improve communication and industrial relations in that factory reflected that workers were blamed for the problems related to management 's assumptions about skills' deficits; that management hid its own culpability for designing communications that mismatched worker's interests and communicative needs. Rather than communication, the written texts produced by management, e.g. a notice concerning workers' absences and checklists related to safety issue, were for control purposes. The notice oriented workers to present sick-notes which conveyed (1) the doctor's name, address and registration number, and (2) patient's name – which might correspond with the employee's name on the company records – the date of consultation, sickness; all this information might be stated by the doctor. The checklists contained items of management authorship for the workers to follow.

Despite the fact that many workers had difficulties in reading and writing, the complexity of their literacy practices in domains beyond their immediate work suggests that they were able to “perform quite complicated literacy – and numeracy related tasks with the help of friends and colleagues” (In Prinsloo & Breier, 1996: 82). For instance, they were able to check their weekly payslips and compare wages; they were involved in collective savings schemes whose details were documented in written form.

2.1.2.6. Watters conducted a study that investigated the relationship between literacy and the organization of work in a private church school (Prinsloo & Breier, 1996: 85 – 102). She concluded that the way work was organised as well the way space was allocated had substantially impacted on the discourses and the communicative practices that supported them.

The service or support staff at the school, including such jobs as laundry, kitchen, cleaning, operated in a 'low skill' mode, as follows: The schools' service work was fragmented and reduced to small repetitive tasks, usually without significant involvement of reading and writing, on the one hand, and workers 'fossilised' in the same positions, performing the same tasks for many years without perspective of advancement, on the other hand, resulted in the reduction of both the quality and quantity of literacy practices in that workplace. Despite being an educational institution, the routine organisation of support work meant that there was little space for reading and writing except of the most routine sort of list-making, and little space for worker initiative. The study provides support for Hull et al's argument that literacy in this setting was contained (limited) not by lack of skill on the part of workers in this work setting but rather on the lack of rights and opportunities to engage in literacy practices.

2.1.3. Hull et al. (1996) carried out ethnographic research over three years in two factories in the United States of America. They set out to identify in ethnographic detail the literacy-related skills required in changing workplaces; specifically to

compare the literacy requirements of “high performance” workplaces, where work had consciously been restructured along ‘new capitalist’ lines, in an effort to improve their competitiveness, with more traditionally organized ones, characterized by assembly line mass production, with its standardized products and Taylorist principles of work organization and discipline (Gee et al 1996: vii): in traditionally organised factories, jobs are narrowly defined and single-tasked, and the combination of supervision and control of information usually is in the hands of supervisors. Hull et al’s purpose was also to create innovative ways to introduce educators to the changing skill demands of work.

They found that: (1) both factories were awash with literacy, which provided the frame in which work got done in those workplaces. The front-line workers used reading and writing serving eighty-odd functions on the factory floors, in meetings and training sessions. The researchers grouped those functions in seven meta-categories to make sense of their data, on the basis that literacy events were linked to particular *functions* as regards getting the work done. These meta-categories of functions they identified as: *Using Literacy to Explain; Taking part in Discourse Around & about Text; Participating in Flow of Information; Problem Solving; Exercising Critical Judgment; and Using Literacy to Exercise, Acknowledge or Resist Authority*. The quantity of functions sustains the finding that there was a diversity of literate activities in both workplaces.

(2) They found that literacy in the traditionally organized factory was restricted to front-line workers, according to position: leads (workers who have leadership or facilitator roles) performed literate activities, but work was organized such that the masses of front-line workers did not. For instance, while in this factory literate functions in their analysis were associated with functions that had to do with power and authority – Using Literacy to Exercise, Acknowledge or Resist Authority, Exercise Critical Judgment, and Solving Problems – these activities were much more likely to be performed by supervisors or managers or people in traditional positions of authority than ordinary workers; on the contrary, in the

'high performance' restructured factory, these functions were performed by a wider range of workers, who found opportunities and intellectual space in team meetings.

(3) The 'high performance' company, despite its commitment to the post-Fordist discourse and rhetoric of 'flat hierarchies' and committed and empowered workers, placed considerable constraints on the exercise of literate abilities among its workers, due to the fact that it placed serious constraints on their rights and responsibilities. Although the company claimed to empower its front-line workers, it generally kept aspects of the traditional roles and relationships between workers and management. This hierarchy shaped and constrained literacy practices.

Two remarkable arguments of these researchers are:

Firstly, workers do not just need the "basics". Workers with literate identities are the ones able to dip appropriately and as needed into a wide and deep repertoire of situated ways of using written language and other forms of representation in order to carry out a work-related activity (Hull et al., 1996: 204). The narrative on a lead worker who struggled to correct an obsolete document is illustrative of this assertion. As a lead, he was expected to read manufacturing process instructions and explain them verbally to his team fellows who weren't expected to read. His work consisted of figuring out, by reading all the available documents and examining the sample board and checking the kit to determine precisely what should be done to it, with what parts, in what order. Carrying out his work, he realized, by comparing written texts with components in a certain kit, that the components did not look like what the drawing indicated they should look like, which implied some technical problems attaching them to the circuit board. He engaged in complex literate activities constructing his own drawings – just looking at a sample board, plugged into a system as he did not get permission to take it out of the system – and his own parts list on scraps of paper. He discussed his

drawings which his supervisor authorized and got authorization to put the components on according to his drawings and the earlier discussions. And he did well.

Secondly, it is important to refer to the fact that in the organization of that workplace this lead was not expected to sort out this type of discrepancies; rather it was the engineer's responsibility to update old assembly drawings (68). Although this worker demonstrated competence in creating valid documents within his area, he was not authorized to alter existing texts, irrespective of their obsolete or even erroneous status (74). So participating in literate activities is not so much a question of ability, then, as it is a question of rights and opportunities. Patterns of literacy use appear generally tied to structures of authority, which means that skills undergo changes when authority changes (205).

2.1.4. Farrell (1997) explored the relationships between literacy and work in order to provide a base from which people might consider what it might mean to teach literacy for the workplace. The study focused on Mary, a woman working in the mending room as supervisor.

The following lines are a review of Mary's story, as presented by Farrell. I present it in some detail because it offers a clear illustration of some features that characterize the 'new workplace' in terms of its social organization, literacy demands, discourse and construction of a new identity.

There were no formal competencies for mending and no specific training at this work-site. Mary used an appropriate discourse to teach new menders, whose responsibility is to detect and mend faults on fabric, on how to proceed as to their task. As there were no formal manuals for mending, she prepared one herself, containing explanations of different types of 'fault' (e.g. wrong colour thread woven in the fabric, knots of fibres) and the respective procedures for mending. Mary not only introduced information about each roll in the computer database, but also kept a more complete handwritten record of the mending process,

recording the time a roll arrived in the room, and the time it left, the condition of the fabric, the name of the mender assigned to it and the time taken to mend it. That is, she performed literacy-rich tasks while carrying out her work.

The company Mary worked for was implementing a team-based work re-organization to respond to the pressure of its international clients, concerned with quality and performance. Mary had to join a team made up of fifteen supervisors whose long-term task was to develop a problem-solving manual. While a 'fault' was a unit of work for menders, implying always a mend, that is action towards elimination of the defect, in the discourse of the new workplace it meant an event in the dying, creeling and weaving processes. As an event, rather than a characteristic of the fabric, a 'fault' was documented on a fault sheet, quantified in an audit, and filed, and never mended (Farrell, 1997: 8). So as to be a successful team member, Mary might agree to transform herself, to stop acting as a mender and become a problem solver, by talking about faults in terms of systems and processes; and this is not about learning new literacy skills; rather it is mostly about negotiating work values and working identity (9).

Farrell describes the workplace revolution, which is about changing the literacy practices of workplaces, embracing the values, attitudes and overall commitment of employees to their workplace (4), as happening in a globalised marketplace, where all aspects of production and trade are increasingly unlikely to be restricted by national or state boundaries. According to her, the workplace revolution has to do with changes in the way in which learning and knowledge are understood in different working environment. It entails a significant change in workplace literacy practices; such change goes beyond 'competence' in specific literacy practices to include changes that reach the core of what it means to be a certain kind of worker.

She states that workplace literacy practices are changing rapidly, and quite independently of any changes that might be made to the school curriculum; and recommends that literacy educators who look at a part of their responsibility as

being to help their students engage critically in the literacy practices of their workplaces, then such educators must be prepared to learn more about the multiple discourses within which those literacy practices are embedded.

2.1.5. Farrell (1999) conducted a study focused on Sally's narratives on the workplace. Sally is an enterprise-based teacher working for an Australian Fabric Manufacturers.

She argues that textualisation of work practice and work organization that comes together with globalisation brings for enterprise-based literacy teachers a paradoxical and contradictory world within which they may be multi-functional, acting, at any time, as a teacher, a facilitator, a team leader, a worker, a director, a supervisor, a literacy broker, an advocate, an interpreter, even a *de facto* member of management (16). When enterprise-based literacy educators write their own stories and insert their own 'speaking parts' in collective narratives like Qualitative Management, for instance, they construct their own working knowledges and identities, that must be respected as ephemeral accommodations of on going struggles and tensions.

Although I am not going to focus on any enterprise-based teacher, I find this study significant to my thesis as it stresses that workers in the restructured workplaces are invited to construct and reconstruct themselves in order to accompany the pace of 'fast capitalism'. Thus they assume ephemeral identities as long as they act as simple workers, as supervisors, and to some extent as managers in the workplace.

2.1.6. Prinsloo & Scholtz (2000) carried out research in a shock absorber production and assembly factory, a 'new workplace' under the pressure of international competition. They found out that the company was concerned with empowerment of its workforce, and it set workers into small cooperating, responsible and competitive units. The assembly work is carried out by machines to specification, operated by workers in a silent and solitary routine while the

literacy practice related to it was that of regular checks to determine whether the products were within specification. The use of computers for checks was general, easy and untrained; team's non-work space (or green space) – complete with clothing lockers, tables and chairs and kitchen electric appliances such as kettle and microwave oven – and team's meetings were literacy-rich environments: charts, information concerning the cell's production performances, production targets, employee attendance, etc were on the walls of the green area. There were three types of meetings:

- (i) Meetings assembling all the team members. These meetings had a set agenda, which was permanently printed on the board to which specific time limits were accorded for interaction on a given topic;
- (ii) Focus Group meetings, comprising all the key support personnel that a cell has access to and a member of that cell on the focus of the meeting. These meetings took place at two chalkboards which conveyed information on work in progress. Thus production and other problems experienced by a certain cell could be identified and addressed; and
- (iii) Employee Initiative meetings, which were geared to encourage workers to put forward suggestions for improving production.

What stands out in this research is the attitude of a female team leader, who created a working identity suitable for the ideal of a 'new workplace'. She was at the center of problem-solving, despite the fact that management did not collaborate with her: as an example, one of the machines was producing products that were falling out of specification; a senior engineer told her to ignore the fault but she refused to continue. She challenged the routinisation of hierarchies of responsibility that were practiced through the 'signing off' of defective products, refusing to continue working out of specifications. She printed a copy of the specifications from the computer and attached it to the printout of the product using a highlighter. Then she highlighted the problematic measurements for the product and submitted her comparative analysis of data to the senior engineer, who divided the machine into sections for analysis by four workers, including herself.

She had to cope with the piston section of the machine: she downloaded from the computer all the data specifications related to the piston machine; together with her foreman, she represented and labeled the piston section of the machine on the whiteboard. Then all the measurements of the different machine parts were taken with a vernier caliper; those measurements were firstly put in parallel to the standard specifications and thereafter registered on the whiteboard. Measurements within specifications were distinguished from those measurements outside of specifications by using different coloured pen: green for the former measurements and red for the latter. The process of recording measurements took two days to complete. The study was then discussed with the senior engineer at the whiteboard. The difference between the two sets of measurements was not too critical. So the problem they were experiencing did not reside in the piston section, but in the valve seating edges, which were not sufficiently “rumbled”, that is, they had rough edges, which were allowing oil to leak out.

When engaged in this trouble shooting process, she performed literacy-rich tasks of an analytic and investigative character and carried out complicated measurement activities that were different from her usual routine work.

This study reveals important characteristics of the ‘new workplace’ in a South African shock absorber factory. The story makes visible a strong working identity and a strong literate identity of its protagonist: by her assuming that ‘she has a part in it’; she defied her superiors refusing to continue working with a machine that produced products out of specifications, which certainly could have impacted on quality patterns. In the process of searching for the solution, she dipped adequately and as needed into a wide and deep repertoire of situated ways of using written language and other forms of representation (Hull et al 1996: 204). Other characteristics of the ‘new workplace’ were pointed out along the review of this study, e.g. the different meetings and the respective literacy practices that took place on the production floor, which altogether sought to improve quality and competitiveness of the company, through workers’ auto-surveillance. I will draw

on this study to find out whether this ‘new fashion’ reached the other side of the border (Mozambique) and to what extent it reached there.

The literature reviewed above, demonstrates that literacy practices are social practices varying according to the real contexts within which they take place. The results of the research carried out in the selected workplace in Maputo will serve to confirm that literacy practices are social practices embedded in specific context. A global issue – literacy at work – is dealt with in a local context, the Moz Soft Drinks Company.

Among the studies above reviewed, only Hull et al (1996), Farrell (1997), Farrell (1999) and Prinsloo and Scholtz (2000) focus on literacy in the ‘new workplace’; others are an illustration of literacy as situated practice; in the present case, literacy in the workplace.

2.1.7. Learning, Discourse and Identity

Gee et al (1996: 4) states that viewing literacy in a socio-cultural approach, implies a model of cognition as being located not in the individual mind, but as distributed and located in, e.g., school practices and work practices, which are the focus of my study. Following this approach to literacy, the focus of learning is on human lives seen as trajectories through a multiplicity of social practices in diverse social institutions.

In the new workplace, learning appears efficacious, as it is done ‘inside’ social practices of a Discourse. This means that workers, as learners are immersed in such practices, take on perspectives, adopt a worldview, accept a set of core values, and master an identity (Gee et al, 1996: 13), “Learning is a process of [workers’] entry into and participation in a Discourse” and this process is not without conflict among Discourses, for instance, the conflict between the

traditional 'American individualism' and the 'team work' of the restructured workplace. (15)

Lave & Wenger (1991) criticise the concept of learning as internalization of knowledge, which establishes a sharp dichotomy between inside and outside, suggesting that knowledge is largely cerebral, and takes the individual as the non problematic unit of analysis. They point out that conceiving of learning as internalization is an easy way to construct learning as an unproblematic process of absorbing the given, as a matter of transmission and assimilation (47).

Following on Vygotsky (1978), who established that learning takes place when learners move within the 'zone of proximal development', they stress that learning as increasing participation in communities of practice regards the whole person acting in the world. These authors argue that participation in social practice suggests a very explicit focus on the person, but as a person in-the-world, as a member of a socio-cultural community; such a focus in turn promotes a view of knowing as activity by particular people in particular circumstances (52).

Gee et al (1996: 66), relatively to the community of practice, state that people, within such communities, develop 'tacit knowledge', which is not "stateable". Accordingly, this type of knowledge allows workers to add value to their workplace and to continually re-create communities of practice that can apprentice newcomers through immersion in the community of practice. Gee (1990:25) describes 'immersion' as being the sine qua non of efficacious learning, either inside school or outside school.

Involving the whole person, learning, as an aspect of social practice, does not imply only a relation to specific activities, but also a relation to social communities: it implies to be a full participant, a member, a kind of person (Lave & Wenger, 1991: 53). In the light of this approach, only partially and often incidentally, learning implies becoming able to be involved in new activities, to

perform new tasks and functions, to master new understandings. This is because such activities, tasks, functions, and understandings are a constitutive part of wider systems of relations within which they are meaningful: they do not exist in isolation. These systems of relations are generated out of and are reproduced and developed within social communities, which in part are systems of relations among persons. Thus learning implicates becoming a different person relative to the possibilities enabled by these systems of relations; and to ignore this aspect of learning means to overlook the fact that learning involves the construction of identities. They conceive of identities as long-term, living relations between persons and their place and participation in communities of practice and conclude: “identity, knowing, and social membership entail one another” . Gee et al (1996: 10) in their turn, suggest that people assume different identities in accordance with their different social roles: “We are all capable of being different kinds of people in different Discourses”, which are innumerable in modern societies, for instance, there are diverse types of street gangs, academic disciplines and their sub-specialities, genders, [I add workers], etc. Each Discourse consists of some set of related social practices and social identities (or positions).

Lave & Wenger (op. cit: 57) suggest a type of learning in form of apprenticeship, within which there is tension between the newcomers and the old-timers. In these contexts, succeeding generations of participants originate a triadic set of relations as the community of practice is composed of apprentices, young masters with apprentices, and masters some of whose apprentices have themselves become masters. Central to this kind of community of practices is the existence of near-peers in the circulation of knowledgeable skill and the existence of diversified field of relations among old-timers and newcomers in and across the various cycles.

The problematic character of processes of learning and cycles of social reproduction, as well as the relations between the two are some of the insights that can be gained from the social perspective on learning. The cycles emerge from the

contradictions and struggles inherent in social practice and the formation of identities: new comers and old-timers are in contradiction in the meaning of increasing participation by the former; the centripetal development into the status of full participant, and with it the successful formation of a community of practice, involves the replacement of old-timers. Lave and Wenger point out two implications of the inherently problematic character of the social reproduction of communities of practice: the sustained participation of newcomers, becoming old-timers, must implicate conflict between the forces that support processes of learning and those that work against them; Learning is never simply viewed as a process of transference and assimilation, seeing that learning, transformation, and change are all the while implicated in one another (57).

From the above discussion, it becomes clear that learning, discourse and identity are coexistent in the workplace setting. Learning involves, in this case, entrance of workers into and their engagement in a Discourse, which encompasses the ways they talk, listen, read, write, act, interact, believe, value, and use tools and objects, at specific times, in order to display or to recognize a social identity. Becoming a certain kind of worker implies 'learning' to be a member of a community of practice; this implies the assumption of an identity, which is in accordance with the Discourse in force in the workplace.

2.1.8. Definition of terms

In this section I present some definitions of terms that I will use recurrently along the presentation and analysis of my data. To some extent, some of the definitions are a summary of the literature above reviewed.

Technology: I use this word to refer to electronic machinery such as robots, computers, and the devices that select bottles to be filled with soft drink in the process of production.

The notion of 'practice' indexes a meta-theory in anthropology, sociology, linguistics, education and other areas of study. It marks a change of attitudes as to fetishizing culture, language, literacy and other social phenomena: these processes are not any longer distilled from social life and perceived as self-perpetuating essences capable of animating human actors. Rather, the phrase 'in practice' is used to refer to pragmatics and a core of factors using cultural resources – which themselves are in a process of transformation – towards some culturally given purpose, always immersed in the flow of social life (Bartlett & Holland 2002)

Having this notion of practice as starting point, 'literacy', 'literacy practice' and 'work practice' must not be seen as practices that can be extracted from the social context within they take place. On the contrary, these practices must be viewed as social practices shaped by the socio-cultural structure wherein they occur.

Literacy: it is a "short hand for the social practices of reading and writing" (Street, 1984: 1)

Literacy practice and literacy event: according to Street (1988: 61), 'Literacy practice' as a unit of ethnographic study, corresponds to a "broader concept than that of 'literacy event', used by Heath (1983) to study instances of social interaction that are literacy-based or in some way incorporate literacy. 'Literacy practice' is pitched at a higher level of abstraction and referring to both behaviour and conceptualisations related to the use of reading and/or writing"

Work practices: social interactions that imply regulated, socially constructed forms of being [and acting, I suggest] in the workplace; they produce goods and services, but produce and reproduce identities as well. The exercise of control is most effective in the workplace where work practices regulate the identity of workers than their actions, when work practices control how employees see themselves and experience their working lives. (Farrell no date: 3)

Work event: This is a unit of analysis that Hull et al (1996) built up based on Heath's (1982) construct of a 'literacy event'. According to these researchers (11), 'work event' corresponds to the moment in which the smooth flow of work is interrupted and problems have to be solved in order to set it in motion again, including the texts and social interactions that comprise it, along with the rules and strategies that govern such interactions. Typically a 'work event' has a literacy component.

Identity: discursively constructed in social practice, it implies sets of beliefs, values and orientations, the knowledges and the capabilities, that are available to a person in his/her social setting, moment by moment (Farrell, no date: 7) Bearing in mind that my focus is on the workplace, 'identity' has to do with being a certain kind of worker. Identities are not static; they are continuously revised, ... dynamic, conflictual and contradictory.

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Chapter 3

3.1. Research Design

This is a qualitative study and it is predominantly conducted within an ethnographic approach, as its nature has to do with ‘qualities’ of the work, workers and their literacy practices, identities and perspectives. The aim in this approach is to construct an ethnography, which can be described as the data of cultural anthropology that is derived from the direct observation of behaviour in a particular society. The making, reporting and evaluation of these observations are the tasks of the researcher (Babbie & Mouton, 2001), who rather than studying people, learns from them, as the field work for an ethnography involves the disciplined study of what the world is like to people who have learned to see, hear, speak, think and act in ways that are different (Spradley, quoted by Babbie and Mouton, 2001:279)

3.2. Data Collection

This ethnography is informed by a triangular approach; it resorted to multiple data-collecting procedures, aiming to reveal ‘different aspects of empirical reality’ (Denzin, 1978: 28). The data were gathered using a combination of methodological approaches – direct observation, taped and written unstructured and structured interviews, and analysis of documents available at the Human Resources Department of the enterprise in study. Observations and interviews were recorded in detailed field notes and transcripts respectively.

Unstructured interviews were used in the early stage of the project. They provided a general overview of the workplace in study. Afterwards the other type of interviews were applied in order to construct a more detailed view on the phenomena of work, literacy and identities at the Moz Soft Drinks company.

3.3. Sampling

I set out to observe all the front-line workers when engaged in their tasks. Due to time constraints it was not possible to interview all of them. Thus, interviews were done with around 1/3 of the total of workers, who are about eighty (around sixty bottle inspectors; the remaining workers are machines operators and lift truck operators). It is thought that this number is representative for the purpose of this study: four machines operators from the Line A and five from the Line B, two forklift truck drivers, one from each line, and eighteen bottle inspectors, six from the Line A and twelve from the Line B, were interviewed. The selection was based on two criteria. The first pre-requisite was the individual had to be a front-line worker interested in sharing his/her own work-related information with the researcher, willingly. The other was to collect information from workers of all the lines sectors, as the intention was to cover the lines in all their extension.

3.4. Specific Procedures

3.4.1. Research ethics

Informally, when I had access to the research site there was an oral agreement between me and the Human Resources Director of the company in the Southern region of Mozambique. In April I formalized my intention to study that workplace by submitting a letter requesting permission, which was provided by CALSSA, in the Department of Education at the UCT.

All workers were informed of the purpose of the researcher via team leaders. None was forced to participate in the research as interviewee; and none is identified through his/her real name throughout the report. I resort to pseudonyms.

3.4.2. Data

3.4.2.1. The process of collecting data began in January (last fortnight). Those days allowed me an exploratory study, which made me decide to carry out the research in the company. As I had to attend a course at the University in February and March, in April I went back to the research site and remained there till late in May.

3.4.2.2. Most of the original data (interviews, field notes, documents found in the company) are in Portuguese. Audio-taped interviews were recorded in transcripts, and shared with the interviewees to confirm their accuracy. Then they were translated into English. Texts in the two languages were read in parallel to avoid considerable loss of information. Although I found it difficult to translate from Portuguese into English, I think that the 'spirit' of the original documents remains in the texts in English. I include the Portuguese originals of the interviews in the endnotes where I quote from this data. As regards the texts I present or I refer to throughout the report, the respective Portuguese originals are in the annexures.

3.5. Limitations of the research design

The main limitation of the study is located with reference to the debates over the lack of generalisability from ethnographic case studies. The representativeness of the 1/3 of the total of workers who were interviewed is debatable. However, like similar ethnographic research, the importance in this work is the development of a 'telling' case study, which sheds light on particular theoretical concerns. The data collection, translation from Portuguese into English and its analysis were time-consuming.

3.6. Analysis of Data

The data analysis consists of interpretations of field notes, transcripts of interviews, and documents gathered in the company, in order to identify and determine convergences and divergences, which would enhance validity and reliability (Babbie & Monton, 2001). Information collected through different methods – direct observation, interviews, and analysis of documents – was handled ‘triangularly’: it was recurrently confronted and interpreted.

The data analysis was ongoing throughout the data collection period; within this period, I developed, discussed and tested hypotheses about what I was finding in the workplace. This option allowed me not only the construction of a better understanding of the phenomena around literacy and work in the selected workplace, but also a confident formal analysis of the data after the process of its collection.

3.7. Presentation of the results

According to the nature of the study, which focuses on human beings with specific literacy practices, work practices, knowledges, beliefs and desires, the findings are predominantly presented in the form of narratives. In fact, workers tell stories about themselves as social actors interacting in a community of practice – the workplace. I comment on worker’s stories with reference to the literature I review and the theoretical perspective that I develop. This is the model of presentation found in Hull et al (1996) and Prinsloo & Scholtz (2000), which have influenced my methodology.

Chapter 4

4.1. Background and growth of the company

The Moz Soft Drinks started officially its activity on May 11, 1993 having as shareholders a South African company devoted to soft drinks production and the Mozambican state. The former holds 60% of the capital and the latter the remaining 40%, which corresponds with the value of the premises of the company.

The headquarter of this company is located in a suburban area in Maputo province, where the main factory works on premises, where another company produced alcoholic and soft drinks. In the beginning of its activity the factory had only some fifty-five workers, who had worked for the previous company.

In order to guarantee a profitable performance of the company it was necessary to make, in the initial stage, big investments in the rehabilitation and upgrading of the factory. Thus between 1993 and 1994 US\$ 4,6million were injected for the acquisition of new industrial equipment, trucks for distribution of the product, cases and empty bottles.

On the May 6th, 1994, the company produced the first bottle of soft drink in Mozambique. It is important to point out that the brand of the soft drinks produced in this factory is an internationally known one, as it is produced and appreciated around the world. The factory was officially inaugurated on 25th May in an event witnessed by many senior officials from the shareholder company and the Mozambican government.

In addition to the factory that constituted my research site, there are another two daughter factories, one in Chimoio, in the central region of Mozambique, another one in Nampula, in the northern region.

In 2000 the enterprise was placed amongst the best ten companies in the ranking of Mozambican enterprises; according to studies presented by a prestigious consulting enterprise, the company registered a business volume equivalent to US\$ 47million in 2000, which represents a growth of 14,8% compared with the results of 1999. (Informative bulletin for internal circulation at the Moz Soft Drinks, 2002: 2)

Although the sector within which this company is placed faces diverse constraints, like illegal concurrency – for instance, thousands of cans of the same soft drink brand enter the country illegally to be sold in the informal market – the enterprise has nonetheless been a dynamic one, as a result of technological modernization and territorial expansion.

The Administrator-Delegate in the editorial from which I collected the preceding data, states that the business is led by the demands of the consumer and directed towards the total satisfaction of the customers (see annexure 1):

Daily we auto-direct to provide our customers with best services, investing at the same time in continuing training of our staff.

In our daily actions, we are motivated by the seven values of the enterprise:

- Integrity
- Individual initiative
- Importance of the customer
- Team-based work
- Staff training
- Mutual respect and confidence
- Commitment to our activities

As a team, the destiny is in our hands. We have developed our strategies and plans which will lead us to the future. It is from this perspective that I assume the obligation of materializing these actions together with each one of you

4. 2. Access to the research site

In order to carry out the study in the company, I had to obtain permission from the Human Resources Director for the southern region, as the factory is located in south of Mozambique. I went to his office in January 16th, and I informed him of my purpose. He just needed some time to consult the Director of Production. We agreed that I had to formalize my request by submitting a letter from the University. He said that I should call him the following day in the afternoon to know about the decision of the Director of Production, which I did and fortunately I was told that I had been given the green light to carry out my research in the factory.

On Monday, 20th I visited the factory. The guard at the gate wanted to know what I was there for. I told him that I was there to meet the Director of Production. He phoned to the Human Resources office on the spot and someone told him to let me in. The guard asked for my identity card, which I left with him; on the other hand I received a form, which had written information on the time I entered the factory, as well as the sector I intended to visit. He filled in a form with my personal data; and told me that I might be asked for the signature of the Director of Production before getting out. "If the guard engages in literacy practices at the gate, inside the factory I will see lots of literacy practices", I thought.

Inside the huge factory, the deafening noise almost made me change my idea of studying the front-line workers. A worker from the Human Resources showed me the way to the secretary of the Director of Production. She asked me about the purpose of my visit and I told her. Some minutes later I was in the office of the Director. He received me openly and encouraged me to do what I intended to do, and said that the team leaders already had information on my purpose. We agreed that the following day I could start my study.

On the next day one of the Human Resources workers showed me the diverse sections of the factory: warehouses, logistics, water treatment station, laboratory, maintenance, and the lines of production, where the respective team leaders took me on a walk introducing me to the sectors; almost everybody I talked to in the lines knew about my purposes on the spot. The team leaders had already informed their team members in their meetings about me, although they did not yet know me. Thus it can be said that I had been granted access to the factory and to the workers with very little restrictions or limits set by the management.

A brief overview of the production floor

The two production lines are placed side by side, and they occupy half of the huge factory. The noise of the machines is deafening. Individualization and fragmentation of work is visible: machine operators, usually isolated and in silence, engage in routine work. Apart from the workers temporally attached to the Bottle Inspection sector, who accomplish their tasks seated during twenty minutes an hour, the work is got done standing the entire shift.

4.3. Work organization

I decided to present this section of my study before entering the realm of literacy, as I believe that literacy does not exist in a vacuum or in isolation. I follow on the voices of the 'new literacy studies' (Street, 1984; Barton, 1994; Gee et al, 1996) that advocate the study of literacy as instances of social interaction which include aspects of reading and writing, or textual practices. Thus, insights into the work organization will facilitate the perception of the literacy practices that take place among the front-line workers at the Moz Soft Drinks. The work organization in force at the company one way or another will shape the literacy practices among the front-line workers, as I will show later in the report.

Comparing my observations on the spot with the information gathered through interviews with front line workers, there is no doubt that the enterprise implements team-based work in its process of production. All my interviewees were able to recognize that they work in teams. Some front line workers not only pointed out the team-based work but also described it. Pedro is one of them.

He is thirty years old, married and has got five children. He entered the company as a casual worker nine years ago but two years after he started working he was already operating the packing machine in the Line B. He has completed the first year out of three at the basic level of accountancy, which is correspondent to the eighth year of school attendance. His strong will is to finish accountancy, as he believes that it would allow him a better job.

When I asked him about the organization of the work, he said:

The work here is team based. All of us constitute a big team but there are small teams of two, three or five; it depends on each case ... Just to give you an idea of what I say, the workers who are dealing with empty cases if they see, for example, a bottle fallen on the conveyor, they will not wait for the workers who are working there to put the bottle up ... Even the Industrial Director, when he comes here and finds one bottle fallen he puts it up ... The team spirit is important not only to get the work done but also to get the bonusⁱ

Excerpt of a written interview on January 23, 2002 at 9:00 am

Emilio is twenty-two years old. He is single, and an auto-didactical learner. He is preparing himself to attend examinations for grade 12 as an external student. For him by studying he can have a professional career in the company; he aims to become a director of any sector in the enterprise, where he has been working for three years, and operating the filler machine of the Line B for two years.

As regards the work organization, he reacted as follows:

We work in teams. I depend directly on them [he points at his colleagues working with the Electronic Bottle Inspection] they depend on the other guys ... there is interconnectivity amongst us ... whether we want to or not we have to work as a team ... our work is team-basedⁱⁱ

Excerpt of a taped interview on April 1, at 10:25 am

Along the same line of thought as Emilio I place Ramiro, a casual worker positioned right after the ‘mouth’ of the ‘despalatizadora’¹ checking the cases, taking out bottles with cracks, bottles of other brands different from the ones being filled, and opening bottles with crowns. He is in the company for “one week more or less”, according to him by the time of the interview in the Line B; his answer is:

We work jointly ... I depend on the despaletizadora operator ... he depends on the fork lift truck driver ... the unpacking machine depends on me and so forthⁱⁱⁱ

Excerpt of a written interview on January 21, 10:00 am

The front line workers make it clear that the work is done by teams; their concept of team corresponds either to the totality of the workers on the line of production or to the small groups of workers attached to specific activities; responsibility for work is not confined to workers performing a specific task; everyone has responsibility for the work, even the Industrial Director is obliged to put up bottles fallen on the conveyor. Interdependence or interconnectivity is a feature they display in their understanding of the way they get the work done.

¹ The term comes from the Portuguese verb (neologism) ‘paletizar’; it is formed by adding the agentive suffix [- dor], [- a] marks the feminine gender. Thus ‘paletizadora’ is the machine used to organize cases in pallets. The prefix [des-] confers opposite meaning to ‘paletizadora’; That is the ‘despaletizadora’ undoes pallets.

Another important characteristic of the workplace I investigated is the fact that the frontline workers are not attached to a unique and unchanging activity during the workday. The exception is that of the permanent machine operators who remain working the whole shift on the same machines, although they have some help when, for example, they have to go to the refectory for their meals or go to the toilet; other team members move from activity to activity, which is in harmony with what the new work order or new capitalism requires: flexible and multi-skilled workers (O'Connor 1993).

Manuel was busy undoing a pallet, in the pallet station of the Line A, when I asked him if he could talk to me while working. He accepted cordially.

He has worked for the enterprise for four years. He is twenty-six years old, and he is a single man. He holds the grade 3 qualification – tenth year of school attendance – from the Industrial School, where he graduated as a civilian building foreman. He is currently enrolled in a distance-learning programme at the Monitor International School, studying Electronics. Besides he is having private lessons in English and Portuguese. His dream is to finish Electronics, as he thinks that he will have a chance to work in the maintenance sector.

In relation to workers' mobility on the production floor, he said:

... We alternate ... we are at the bottle inspection station for twenty minutes ... during another twenty minutes we are here at the pallet station ... and for another twenty minutes we are at the machine [he refers to the packing and unpacking machines]^{iv}

Excerpt of a taped interview on April 3

Salvador is a frontline worker I observed operating the 'despaletizadora' and the 'paletizadora' as the permanent operator had gone to the refectory to his breakfast.

(see field notes taken on January 22)^v. He introduces himself as an “apprentice” and a “jack of all trades but without depreciation”. When I asked him about the meaning of the expression “jack of all trades” he said:

Let me talk about myself: shortly before I was dealing with those machines [‘despaletizadora’ and ‘paletizadora’] ... before that I had been tying pallets to be driven to the warehouse by the fork lift truck ... and also I cleaned the area where we receive the pallets as sometimes the cases slide and some bottles get broken ... You must be ready for any activity

Salvador clearly is a worker engaged in a ‘learning organization’, where workers, in order to become multi-skilled actors, engage in the ‘community of practice’, often learning by doing, or as Gee et al (1996:7) point out, workers continually learn new skills carrying out their jobs.

We will return to Salvador when discussing the process of learning in the company (see 6.1.2. of chapter 6)

Vertical approach to problems

Texts on the ‘post-Fordist production’ describe the new workplaces as ‘new enchanted workplaces’ where hierarchy is gone and workers, now ‘partners’, engage in meaningful, although often fast-paced and stressful, work. Partners interact in a collaborative environment of reciprocal commitment and trust (Gee et al, 1996: 25) However, the reality on the spot tells a different story. Below, I present a case that contrasts the ‘enchantment’ noticed on fast-capitalist texts with this example of the workplace I studied.

In terms of hierarchy the Industrial Director constitutes the top of the plant over the Director of Production, Director of Control and quality, Director of the warehouse, and Director of Maintenance. With regard to the Director of

Production he is the one who transmits orientations to the team leaders, and these in their turn transmit them to the team members.

The Director of Production is, in the literature of internal circulation, the *coach* [“treinador” is the equivalent Portuguese term used on the documents] of the three big teams existing in the production floor. And the Industrial Director is their *coach-master* [“treinador-chefe” as it is written].

Strategically, as coach and Director of Production, he has much power over the team leaders and team members. Most of the time he is in his office doing bureaucratic work, while the team leaders are the ones who have constant contact with the team members, having a real perception of what happens during the process of production.

On April 11 I witnessed the exercise of power by the Director of production. I had decided to follow the team leader of the line B for the duration of the entire shift, and he and I were nearby the conveyor that takes empty bottles to the washing machine when the Director of Production showed up and claimed that there were not enough bottles on the conveyor, and said:

Tell the men that today ... irrespective of everything ... they must produce 24000 cases [this was the target of the two shifts] ... Just tell them that ... they are lazy ... if they cannot ... they will work on Sunday...

The team leader tried to explain that there was a problem with the ‘despaletizadora’ but he did not accept this justification and said:

tell them that there are people longing to work outside of the factory... we will replace them one by one... just tell them that^{vi}

Surprising is the fact that the company has forms that document breakdowns (see annexure 2). If the Director of Production wanted to confirm the information told by the team leader he could have found it. Instead he unfolded himself in a threatening discourse over the team leader. Fortunately the team leader did not follow the 'orders' of his coach.

Conclusion

The workplace in study already denotes some of the features of the post-Fordist work organization: team-based work; flexible, collaborative, learning, and responsible workforce. However, the authoritarian power of the old capitalist workplace is still there: management is still bullying workers in subordinate positions.

With the perception that the workplace in this study is ambivalent or hybrid in terms of its work organization, I will move on now to the team's literacies.

Chapter 5

5.1. Teams and their literacies

In this section I aim to examine the literacy practices that take place on the production floor at the Moz Soft Drinks Company. Fundamentally, I will identify and describe practices that constitute literacy practices in each team¹.

I will resort to the tool – meta-categories of literate functions – developed by Hull et al (1996) to make sense of their data collected in the factories of Silicon Valley (see annexure 3), aiming to answer the following questions:

- What documents are workers required to read and write on the production floor?
- For what purposes and on which occasions are such documents read and written?
- How do workers react to such documents?

My starting point in this section is the argument that existing hierarchy in the company, constrains and shapes the literacy practices among the front-line workers. Most of the front-line workers perform literacy practices situated in the category of 'basic literate function'. That work is getting done in teams was well documented in the previous section. These workers might engage in literate activities that have to do with power and authority, because teams of the new workplace, supposedly, are empowered to participate in 'group discussion and

¹ I use the term following on worker's notion of 'team' which corresponds to each small group of workers attached to a specific activity on the production floor. These teams vary in size: some consist of one member, e.g., most of the machines at the diverse stages of the production process are operated by the same worker the entire shift. Others, consist of more members, for instance, the pallet station of the Line A is composed of six members.

decision-making' (Fairclough, 1996: 75) being self-directed, which should be reflected in their respective literacy practices.

I will examine the literacy practices performed by the front-line workers following the sequence of work. I think that this is the best way to answer the above questions, as simultaneously I will be dealing with the literacy practices performed by the different teams (identifying the documents, their purposes and occasions on which they are used) providing an overview of the work practices performed by the front-line workers in this particular industry. Obviously, I will be dealing with literacy not as a set of decontextualized skills, but rather as social practices embedded in this particular social context, which constitutes the focus of my study.

The sequence of work is similar in the two lines, although the lines have differences as to their size and *modus operandi*. The line A is smaller. While in the pallet station of this line work is done manually, in the other line machines do it. These differences are crucial, as different ways of work determine different literacy practices. I will focus on this issue in detail, in 5.2., comparing the literacy practices of the two pallet stations.

I examine the teams literacy practices drawing on my field notes taken on April 08:

The fork lift truck driver supplies the line with cases full of bottles to be filled with the product. The driver leaves a pallet in the pallet station. It is opportune to point out that the meaning of pallet [*paleta* is the equivalent word in Portuguese] among the front line workers is not restricted to the 'wood portable platform for lifting and stacking goods'. More than that the term gained semantic extension and means a certain quantity of cases: 40 (forty) cases among the Line A frontline workers and 65 (sixty-five) among the Line B frontline workers. This has to do with the fact that when front-line workers talk about production targets they refer

to the quantity of full cases produced. That is, the measure of productivity is the case, and not the pallet. This semantic extension reveals workers' engagement in a creation of an appropriate language to their work and tools (Gee et al 1996: 21).

The forklift truck drivers record on a form the quantity of cases they supply the lines with and the quantity of cases they transfer from the line to the warehouse. Their literate activities while accomplishing their tasks are confined to *Performing Basic Literate Functions*, as they do nothing more than recording quantities.

(i) Pallet station

A worker unties the pallet. While in the Line A a group of workers lift, manually, the cases and place them, one by one, on the conveyor. On the other line a worker operates the 'despaletizadora', which lifts a layer of thirteen cases at once; then the machine puts them on a metallic table, which feeds the conveyor with the cases. While operating the machines, the worker interfaces with texts displayed by the machines. Later on I will discuss the literacy practices implicated at the pallet stations of the two lines. Now I will focus on to the next team.

(ii) Packing and unpacking station

The cases are transported to the unpacking machine. In the Line A, the same operator works with that machine and the packing one simultaneously, while in the other line, most of the time, each machine has its operator, as a consequence of their technical problems, as I was informed by the operators¹.

At the packing and unpacking station there are few literacy practices performed by the operators. They write when they have to ask for rubbers to apply onto the machines, which is not regular, or read when they have to fill in the form that

¹ Operators say these two machines need to be replaced as they "are tired" [*estão cansadas*]. Indeed I could see that the machines often caused the bottles breakages. The machines did not grab bottles efficiently, consequently the bottles fell and broke.

notices breakdowns. These workers perform literate activities situated in the category of *Performing Basic Literate Functions* as they just complete forms.

(iii) Bottles washing station

The bottles are washed at the washing machine. Beyond operating the machine, the worker must be attentive to bottles avoiding that they enter the baskets through the basis instead of the neck. He uses a wire hook to put up fallen bottles on the table of the machine.

At the washing machines the operators read manometers of temperature, texts of procedures (annexure 4), which are glued above the machines. See the following texts I designate TEXT 1 and TEXT 2:

TEXT 1

AT THE STARTING OF THE LINE:

1. DO NOT LEAVE THE MACHINE RUNNING WITHOUT BOTTLES
2. SWITCH ON **ONLY** TWO PUMPS OF SODA TO SHAKE CAUSTIC SODA!

SAVE WATER!!!

TEXT 2

ATTENTION, WASHING MACHINE OPERATORS

The washing machine must only be operated when the temperature is between 65 and 70 degrees in the bathes 1 and 2.

Some operators' notion of reading comprises interpretation of schemes. This is the case of Jorge, who has worked for the company since 1996. He was Line A team leader in 2002 and now is a permanent washing machine operator. When I asked him about his literacy practices when working, he said:

Nothing can be done without reading ... I have to read these temperature manometers ... do you see this scheme¹? First ... the bottle is washed with soda in here [he points at the scheme] ... second ... it is washed with water here ... third ... here it is washed with water ... soda and soap ... fourth ... here it is washed with hot water at the temperature of 65-70 degrees ... and you have these procedures [he points at the two above texts] ... if you do not read you will act against them and you can damage the machine...^{vii}

It is clear that Jorge' notion of reading is broader, as he did not hesitate to consider the scheme a type of text, which has to be read during the work. While explaining the scheme, showing-and-telling, Jorge performed literate tasks that I place in the meta-category of *Using Literacy to Explain*. It is important to point out that the machine, in case of problems during the bottle washing process, signals the

¹ The scheme is printed on the machine, and represents the different stages of the washing process.

problem in the scheme through red lamps. Jorge resorts to the luminous signal in a certain point of the scheme to identify the problem and to describe it to the maintenance engineers.

Nevertheless his writing is confined to the recording of the quantity of bottles that get broken in the machine, and filling in of the breakdown form when the machine has problems. Thus at the level of writing, his literate activities, 'recording' and 'completing forms' are confined to *Performing Basic Literate Functions*.

Contrasting Jorge's position relatively to the importance of reading to accomplish the work, Daniel, who is an operator in the Line B and works for the company since 1997, said:

I think that the condition to operate this machine is to follow the instructions... if someone explains to you how to operate the machine you can do it^{viii}

I asked him about the manometers, to which he answered:

This is a manometer... I can explain to the person that if the pointer goes beyond this frontier he must do this or that ... relatively to the texts ... I think that the written information can simply be spoken ... it is easy like this ... there is no complication here...you just must be attentive to your work ... I believe that people who can't read can operate this machine^{ix}

Excerpt of a written interview on April 4, 3:30 pm

Whether Daniel is right or wrong the fact is that he expressed his convictions as to the requirements to operate the washing machine. However there are operators in the enterprise that said they learnt working with machines following practices of

retired workers who could not read nor write.

(iv) Bottles Inspection station

On the other side of the washing machine¹, the bottles are inspected, firstly with the naked eye by inspectors, ordinary workers who attended bottle inspection training; then bottles enter the Electronic Bottle Inspector, a device that is programmed by engineers of the maintenance sector to reject all bottles falling out of specifications: dirty bottles, bottles with cracks, bottles containing strange objects. Rejected bottles are conveyed to the returning station, which is located nearby the washing machine but in the packing room; and the approved ones are conducted to the filling machine.

At the Bottle Inspection station, the front line workers have to fill in a form on which they write the time they start inspecting bottles, their full name, their signature and observations if is the case (see annexure 5).

Most of the workers do not interpret the filling in of the form as simply writing their name and the time they work in the Bottle Inspection Station. Their feeling is that by filling in the form, they provide the control and quality sector with information that could be used to identify them in case of problems with the product.

With regard to this matter, Manuel said: [the form] *is to know who was working at the Bottle Inspection from x time to x time...*” and in another stage of the interview he said: *The objective is ... if for example... something happens in the market [related to the product] they [the control and quality staff and the Director of Production] will know who has worked at the Bottle Inspection through the code [on the bottle in conjunction with the information in the form]*^x.

¹ The washing machine in each line marks the frontier between the packing room and the filling room. The bottles enter the machines at the packing room and exit at the filling room already washed.

Manuel's explanation reveals his understanding of the functionality of the literate activity he performs when fills in the form. His reference to the form in his explanation is situated in the category *Using Literacy to Explain*.

It is clear here that the company is worried about increasing quality of performance, which is one of the features of the new workplace. Thus workers who subscribe to the values of the company will interpret the form as an instrument to control their engagement in quality issue, and everybody will know those who do not respect the rules.

Indeed I found a text (see annexure 6) displayed from the window of the Production Director's office. It was in a print version, and all its columns have been filled in. I will reproduce it in a simple way as follows:

TEXT 3

Taste	Code	Line/Time	Date of Production	Team leader	Name of The Bottle Inspectors

This text serves to instill discipline amongst the frontline workers. No team leader will feel comfortable knowing that his name is displayed to all workers, as he is expected to ensure that his team members work with accuracy to ensure quality; likewise, no worker will feel comfortable seeing his name on the window of the Director of Production office. Its location is quite strategic: It is as if the Director of Production was saying "Be careful! I see you through my window". In fact, looking through it he has a partial view of the lines. These texts read in conjunction with the following text (see annexure 7), reinforce that management is seriously worried about quality.

TEXT 4

Subject: Strange objects or dirty bottles containing product

Dear colleagues

It has come to knowledge that our customers have complained of dirt or strange objects inside bottles filled with the product.

As guarantee that our product will get out of the factory with quality, the following procedures shall be respected with immediate effects:

1. Whenever the Electronic Bottle Inspector has a breakdown, stop the production and call maintenance immediately!
2. It will be considered a disciplinary offense if an inspector leaves his work-post without being replaced or leaves it without stopping the motion of the bottles.

We count on everyone's collaboration!

Together we will succeed.

It seems that 'devolution of responsibility' to the front-line workers and 'trust' (Gee 1996: 74) that are preached in texts constructed along the lines of the new work order is somewhat 'cloudy' in this particular workplace. The manager uses texts as reins to pull workers into its concerns with quality, resorting even to veiled threats. See, for example, 2. in the text above. That is, if a worker does not respect the procedures conveyed by the above text, he will end up with his name displayed from the window of the production director after having been heard and reprimanded by the manager, as is usual in the company.

I situate workers literacy practices of this sector in the category of *Basic Literate Functions* as they just fill in forms and read instructions or procedures.

(v) Bottles filling station

The bottles are filled with the product in the filling machine, where they describe a circular movement. A worker is there to stop the machine in case of bottle burst or other cases. The machines work almost always in high rotation and in auto mode.

At the filling machine the operators have to write when recording the quantity of bottles broken during the filling process, or when filling in the breakdown form; they have a text on procedures (annexure 8), which is glued on the machine. See text below:

TEXT 5

PROCEDURES AFTER BOTTLES BURST AT THE FILLING MACHINE

1. Press the spray button
2. Stop the filler
3. Open the valve where the burst took place to blow and then close it
4. Wash the valve with treated water
5. Replace the gasket by another one previously dipped into chlorine and rinsed with treated water
6. Take out two bottles before and after the valve where the burst has occurred
7. Take out five bottles from the valve where the burst has occurred in the five consecutive rounds of the machine; total: nine bottles.

However, the question is whether workers ever read or make use of such notices. Armando is a filling machine operator since 1996 and he is working for the line A. When I asked him about his literacy practices while working, his answer gave me the sensation that he was not right. He said that he had not to read nor write anything. I asked him about the above text and his answer was *I know these procedures...*^{xi}

Just to confirm his answer, I asked him to tell me what he should do if a bottle burst. He recited the procedures although using his own language.

I stop the machine ... I wash the glass ... after that I take out the glass to check whether it is damaged or not ... then I blow the machine ... do you see those bottles fragments? [the fragments were in a basket on the floor nearby the machine] (...) then I take out two bottles in front and two bottles behind [in relation to the valve or 'glass' where the burst happened] ... and five times I take out the bottles from the glass where the burst occurred^{xii}

Armando gave me the same information but in his way. Such information denotes that he has internalized the content of the text on procedures as he followed the steps many times in solving the problem of bottles burst, which occurs frequently. Indeed I was not happy only with his reciting of procedures. So I waited watching him till I heard a burst. Armando followed the steps in his problem resolution.

Prinsloo & Scholtz (2000: 4) notice that a literacy-linked feature of the routine production process at the shock absorber assembly factory was that of regular checks during the process as to whether the products were within specifications. Workers hardly recognized that their routine work of measuring and checking against listed specs involved 'reading and writing'. Armando's position as to his routine work is similar to that of the workers observed by Prinsloo & Scholtz. He does not assume that his work involves reading of procedures. However, what is

interesting in Armando's explanation is his capacity to verbalize the actions he takes when he faces bottles burst, reciting the text on procedures. If he reads it, he performs a literate activity situated in the category *Performing Basic Literate Functions*.

The bottles are capsulated and coded electronically. At this stage, since the machines are switched on they do not demand constant human intervention; they work in auto mode in the rhythm of the filling machine.

The bottles, now with the product, pass successively by the bottle inspection station, packing and unpacking station and finally they reach the pallet station. Relative to the literacy practices that take place in these sectors, I refer to the ones already described in (ii) and (iv) of this section.

In the case of the Line B, the cases pass by a sensor, which counts them electronically before reaching the 'paletizadora'.

The 'paletizadora' stores sixty-five cases in five layers; each layer has thirteen cases, which enter the machine in three sets of five, three, five. Each set is pushed onto the grouping station. When the thirteen cases are grouped, they are pushed onto the 'lid of the car', which lowers and stores them till the pallet completes. The pallet exits the 'paletizadora' through a railway, which describes a kind of U, from the machine to the terminal. A worker ties the pallet.

Workers of the Line A are deprived of this technology. They do the work manually. They lift the cases from the conveyors and organize them in pallets.

The forklift truck drivers collect the pallets and take them to the warehouse.

5.2. Changing ways of doing, changing literacy practices –The case of the pallet stations

In this section I will make a comparative analysis of the literacy practices that take place at the pallet stations of the two lines. I argue that the introduction of technology demands new literacy practices among the front-line workers. Along this section I will show also how workforce surveillance and regulation, with the respective literacy practices, are shaped by the way work is getting done.

Castells (1993), quoted by Gee et al (1996: 36), argues that productivity in the new capitalism depends increasingly on applying science and technology to the processes of production, distribution and change. The workplace that constitutes the focus of my study is in the process of introducing technology in the production process: the pallet station of the line B is equipped with robots ('despaletizadora' and 'paletizadora') and electronic meters. The robots lift either cases with empty bottles or cases with full bottles; the electronic meter displays the production that is underway. The other line does not have this equipment.

The literacy practices that take place at the pallet station of the Line A are echoes of the ones noticed by Heath (1983: 234). Accordingly, Trackton residents in her study of literacy across three local communities, read aloud to anyone who wanted to listen, and the meaning of whatever was read was interpreted jointly and socially. Along these lines, the forklift driver is the unique worker who holds written documents, the ones with his records on the quantity of pallets produced and the quantity of empty pallets he delivers to the line. He reads his own records, the ones related to the production in course, to his colleagues on the line, who need to be informed on their performance, to know whether they are in time to reach the targeted production or to gain their bet with the company or not. They discuss the meaning of the texts exposed to them by the forklift driver by calculating the quantity of missing pallets to reach the targets and to gain the bonus. As Heath

points out, 'what does it mean?' becomes 'what does it say about me (...) and what do I do?'. Indeed the forklift driver's reports are crucial to the rhythm of the work amongst the whole team, but mostly amongst the small team temporally attached to the activity of lifting cases, either with empty bottles or with bottles filled with the product of the day.

Without any doubt, reading here involves a 'talk component' (Heath, 1983), or put another way, when the front-line workers of this pallet station cite forklift driver's texts, reflect on them in order to take action they are *Taking part in Discourse Around & About Text*. Workers' engagement in literate practices that are linked to work monitoring can be seen in the example of the form (see annexure 9) created by one of the forklift drivers of this line, I will call him Inacio, to facilitate his work, according to his explanation. Inacio worked for another company before coming to Moz Soft Drinks. He says that in the previous company he just drove the forklift; that the roll of activities he engages in currently demands more writing.

Front-line workers' literate activities at the pallet station are embedded in practices of auto-surveillance and auto-regulation, which is in accordance with the new workplaces characteristics (Gee et al, 1996: 30). The literacy practices in this pallet station illustrate that the front-line workers already found meaning in their work and bought the 'vision' of the enterprise: they work *to be the best worldwide bottlers*, answering to the visionary statement of the company, which states *We will be the best bottler in the world* ["Nós vamos ser o melhor engarrafador no mundo"] (see annexure11). They know that the individual members of the team are rewarded or penalized in accordance with the team's performance. Thus the concept of 'self surveillance' affects not only the individual worker but also the team as a whole, and it appears embedded in the new literacy practices of the workplace.

Although the forklift driver of the Line B records the quantity of 'empties' he supplies the line with and the quantity of full ones he transfers to the warehouse, he does not extend his literacy practices to his colleagues, unless the electronic meter gets broken, which did not happen during my presence in the company. Technology in this particular case brings changes as to forklift drivers' literacy practices. The forklift driver of the Line B do not 'socialize' through literacy practices, which fall in the category of *Basic Literate Functions*, with his colleagues during the production process.

In contrast to the workers of the Line A, the operator of the three machines at the pallet station of the Line B is required to read continually the texts displayed on the screen of the 'despaletizadora' and the 'paletizadora'. He interacts with the machines, acting accordingly to the messages they display to him. Whenever the fluidity of the production stops at the pallet station, he finds the cause on the screens and he solves the problem accordingly to the information and his working 'know how'.

The work event below reflects clearly that the operator engages in more literacy practices than his colleagues. Here I am not referring only to the workers of the pallet station in the Line A. I am referring to the front-line workers on the production floor. That is, technology, in this particular case, demands new and more literacy practices from the 'paletizadora' and 'despaletizadora' operator. In this particular case, patterns of literacy use are linked to how work is getting done: workers skills change when ways of getting work done change.

In this work event, I observed the operator during the entire morning, and I recorded the texts displayed by those two machines and the action taken by the operator (see annexure 10):

TEXT 6

MESSAGES DISPLAYED BY THE 'DESPALETIZADORA'

- Accumulation of cases: conveyor

The operator shouts at the worker who watches the cases on the conveyor to get them unstuck.

- Failure – cases – exit (table)

The operator goes down, opens the machine's door and puts the cases in the proper way. Once he opens the door, the screen displays the following message:

- Safety area – Exit station

When he comes up he explains that the machine cannot work while the above information is still displayed. He commands the machine to proceed.

MESSAGES DISPLAYED BY THE PALETIZADORA

- Lack of cases

The cases are not in sufficient quantity as the packer machine has stopped temporarily to solve the problem of bottles that fallen out of the cases.

- Cases automatic conveyor – switched off

- Safety area 2 – door blocked

The operator was inside the machine to align cases that had enter the machine wrongly.

- Waiting time – Frequency converter

The operator says that he just has to wait until the machine is ready to work again.

- Number of pallets: 54

The operator wants to show me that the machine records information on real production.

Although the operator is alone operating three machines in his sector, he is not indifferent to the information displayed by the machines about his colleagues work. For instance, when the 'despaletizadora' displayed *Accumulation of cases: conveyor*, he reacted by shouting at his colleague who was temporally watching cases on the conveyor, but also temporally distracted, to set the cases in motion again. He shouted at him not as a signal of authority, but because the machines in rotation make such noise that they make difficult oral communication¹. He is a privileged worker as technology allows him to have access to other workers' performance, being thus able to supervise them not as a boss, rather as member of the whole team, who like the front-line workers of the other pallet station, identifies himself with the values, goals and vision of the enterprise.

When I asked the operator, who I will call Nhantumbo, in an interview conducted on January 22, about his literacy practices while working with the machines, he said:

I read a lot ... I told you that the machines let me know what is happening through these screens ... I can get information on yesterday's production, on the actual production, how many cases we produced till now, what is the correspondent total in bottles and so on, since I command it properly ... as

¹ Workers have developed and resort to gestural communication as consequence of the noise in their work environment

you can see, there are a lot of buttons on the panels ... these machines are authentic computers ... often I have to dialogue with them^{xiii}

In fact, my observation on April 14, illustrated with the above field notes, convinced me that Nhantumbo is required to dialogue with the machines, reading their texts and answering them by acting accordingly, drawing on his working knowledge. Clearly this workplace entails work practices increasingly textually mediated. Nevertheless, in the realm of writing, Nhantumbo just has to fill in the 'breakdowns' form.

It is important to note that the literacy practices amongst the front-line workers at the two pallet stations conformed to the work *modus operandi*. That is, on Line A, although the workers are not directly coding or decoding the written records of the forklift driver, they participate in the literacy/work event, hearing the written records through the words of the forklift driver, and extending them, discussing/calculating missing pallets needed to reach the target stipulated by the company. On the other hand, in the Line B, only the machines operator engages in *de facto* reading activities.

Having to determine whether the introduction of technology demands new literacy practices, in this particular case, I would assert "Yes": The operator draws on literate resources (texts displayed by the machines) and in conjunction with his working knowledge constructs a strategy. In terms of Hull et al (1996)'s list of Literacy Functions, he engages in *Problem Solving* as a category of literate functions. But when he looks up information on production, e.g. *Number of pallets: 54*, his literate activity falls in the category of *Basic Literate Functions*.

As operator, he must be equipped with skills not only to simply read the messages but also to find their meaning in the context of his work, in order to sort out actual problems. On the contrary workers deprived of technology have not this

opportunity to 'see' written texts while working; they 'hear' texts, the ones written and subsequently told to them by the forklift driver. Even in the realm of writing they write nothing, as they have no machine to inform on its breakdowns.

5.2.1. Literacy around the electronic meter – Empowering literacy

Becoming a professional, the 'right' kind of worker, involves a commitment to 'a solid grounding in the discipline', developing 'a characteristic style of thinking' and 'having the right kind of temperament' one that includes 'self motivation and discipline', 'sincerity and enthusiasm' and 'tenacity'

Hammer quoted by Farrell (no date: 3)

In this section I will examine the literacy practices that take place at the electronic meter, a device that completes the equipment that furnish the Line B. I will show that such literacy practices empower front-line workers, and that they are deeply embedded in the literacy practices of the new work culture, wherein newly empowered workers, as partners, do not need bosses' orders; they engage in meaningful work, fully understand and control their jobs, supervise themselves; continually seek for improving their performance (Gee et al: 1996: 30), disciplining and motivating themselves, while working with enthusiasm. I apply the term 'literacy' here to refer to workers' literate activities of looking up numbers related to the production in course, of sharing such numbers, and of doing calculations to evaluate the performance.

During the shift day it is usual to see one or two workers at the electronic meter, which is located right after the 'mouth' of the 'despaletizadora', in the corridor that allows access to the line B. Workers reach the electronic meter by their own initiative or they are sent by their colleagues to check the level of production. Workers are always interested in finding out whether they are in time to reach the target stipulated by the management or not. It is in their interest also to see whether, in case of reaching the target, they are in time to catch the higher bonus.

Like in the workplace studied by Scholtz (2000), at the Moz Soft Drinks, workers' practices around the electronic meter, suggest a blend of self-regulating, self-monitoring and surveillance practices, which reflect the new workplace as a site of 'oscillating tensions' between 'strategies of empowerment' and 'trust' together with management tactics whose purpose is to promote workers self-disciplining, and to turn them into monitors of their own performance.

Front-line workers' literacy practices at the electronic meter are a strong indication that Moz Soft Drinks workers are acquiring the sensibilities to operate as a team responding to the goals, values and vision of the company. The constant reading of numbers on the production under way not only shows that they are accustomed to 'auto-regulation' practices, taking advantage of the technology available to them, but also indicates that they conceptualize their work differently, as they include as part of their work their understanding of goals, calculations and all the literate practices these activities entail. In other words, they conceive of themselves not just as front-line workers who simply engage in their routine physical work as soft drinks producers, but also as thinking members of a community of practice, who monitor their actual performance and reflect on it. They act as if the team leader was not there, which denotes that they are a self-directing team that knows what to do during the production process. Without doubt, these workers "have a part in it" (Prinsloo & Scholtz 2000) in the sense that they are concerned to monitor and regulate their own work practices.

The reading of the electronic meter is of great importance amongst the frontline workers of the Line B, as it determines their rhythm of work and state of spirit although sometimes they face the opposition of the machines, which under-perform or simply break during the process of production. Literature on the 'new workplace', for instance, Gee et al (1996: 25) suggests that the new workers engage in meaningful but stressful work. The workplace I studied is not any exception: at the end of the shift the front-line workers are required to have

reached the production target although the means they use do not always help them that much.

I will rely on my field notes taken on April 1 at the electronic meter to illustrate how the front-line workers have developed literacy practices together with working discipline, and auto-surveillance practices, embedded in the literacy practices of the restructured workplace; and how their heart pulses according to the events during the production process: with tenacity and enthusiasm when they get the production targeted; with unhappiness when the machinery does not correspond to their tenacity.

9:30 am: workers are agitated and worried, as they have not produced yet half of the 1200 cases correspondent to the bet with the company. From time to time, one, two or three workers from different sectors come to the electronic meter to find out whether they are in time to gain the bet. At 10:00 am they have produced only 609 cases. The packer machine was not performing accordingly.

Although these front-line workers are subject to management's pressure and threats as well (see section 4.3), which can influence their attitude as regards the work, they still portray signs of identifying themselves with the goals of the company. Since they feel bad when they read the electronic meter and realize that they will not reach the production targeted, they share in the risks and potential losses of the company (Gee et al, 1996) Indeed they are partners. They show their loyalty and commitment to corporate culture, the one in implementation in the company.

However, at 10:50 am, the state of the souls of the workers was different. The meter was displaying 905 cases and one of the two workers who had showed up, when I asked whether they would gain the bet, said: *in ten minutes, if a breakdown does not occur any, we can fill up 300 cases*^{xiv} The crowd, when

informed of the possibility to reach the 1200 cases obtaining the incentive correspondent to the objective 1, which is equivalent to more or less US\$0.2 (about R1.46), unfolded in a uproar. Whistles, shouts at colleagues demanding speed and the machinery in high rotation turned the environment deafening. At 11:00 am, they have gained the higher incentive (doubling the amount above referred to) as they have produced 1310 cases.

What I have described above is evidence of how self-surveillance or self-regulation, supported by technology in this particular case, involves engagement not only of the individual worker but also of the team as a whole. That is, by reading the numbers the front-line workers concur to answer the seven values of the company already pointed out on the section 4.1. The team leader is aware of this benefit as he never is against the act of 'reading' the numbers at the electronic meter during the production process; workers know what they have to do, as most of them made it clear during the interviews. At least these workers attitudes as to literacy practices linked to auto-surveillance or auto-regulation show that they are empowered enough to take control of their actions during the production process; or put another terms, the literacy practices around the meter electronic empower the front-line workers.

Scholtz (2000: 33) noticed similar facts in a South African factory, where the computer terminals found in every cell constituted another 'icon of worker empowerment'. Such terminals are described as being linked to a central server from which all the relevant technical data and drawings for all their products could be accessed; and all employees were encouraged to search for information they needed instead of asking their fellow cell member.

Reading the numbers is a stimulus amongst the workers to get the production stipulated by the company, being consequently rewarded; engaging in these practices workers present themselves as certain kind of persons, the ones whose

literacy practices embrace the values, attitudes and overall commitment to their work (Farrell 1997: 4)

Conclusion

The way work is getting done in the pallet stations shapes and determines the literacy practices performed by the front-line workers. While working manually, workers do not have direct access to written texts. Someone else (the forklift truck driver) functions as mediator between them and texts. Then they make meaning of such texts jointly and socially (Heath 1983). On the other hand, the technology used in the pallet station of the Line B allows that the operator has direct access to written texts, which gives him the clues to accomplish his tasks. He uses such clues in conjunction with his working knowledge to engage in troubleshooting processes or even to avoid problems, for instance, when the machine displays *Frequency converter – waiting time*, he knows that he must wait until the machine is ready to be working again. If he contradicts the information, he will be creating a problem in the production process. The operator often engages in literate activities at the level of *Problem Solving*, while the workers of the other pallet station often perform literate activities that involve their *Taking Part in Discourse Around & About Text*.

Workers of the Line B also engage in literate activities situated in this category, as those who read the electronic meter – almost always the same minority – refer to numbers displayed by that device when they inform their colleagues on the production in course. However, when they look up such information, their literate activity is situated in *Performing Basic Literate Functions*. It was sufficiently demonstrated that the literacy practices that take place at the electronic meter not only empower the front-line workers but also make them self-disciplined, self-regulated and monitors of their performance, working with enthusiasm and tenacity, although sometimes the machines appear as their opponents.

Looking at the literacy practices that take place in the two pallet stations, without any shadow of doubt, technology demands new literacy practices from the front-line workers, specially, at the pallet station.

5.3. The Wallboards

In this section I focus on the existing wallboards on the factory attempting to identify their functionality amongst the frontline workers in the light of the discourses on the new workplace, where literacy is increasingly seen as being linked not only to the process of monitoring the work but also to the process of inducting workers into the new work culture.

Some studies on changing workplaces describe the boards ('chalkboards', 'white boards') as a place where workers engage in literate activities related to their work in progress, or reflect on their performance (e.g. Prinsloo & Scholtz, 2000) Basically, I will look at the wallboards to examine whose documents are glued on them and with which purpose.

There are five wallboards on the production floor: Two are placed right after the entry on the left to who enters. These wallboards are where the meetings of the teams of the Line B occur; the third is some meters after, glued on the wall of the first office on the opposite side relative to the first two. This wallboard displays regular information: notices, circulars and so on. The other two wallboards are in the other extreme of the production sector opposite to the entrance: one is glued on the wall close to the Director's of Production office. The team of the Line A has its meetings nearby this wallboard; the last wallboard is in the corridor that allows access to some offices and toilets. It belongs to the Line A as well.

What do teams' wallboards convey?

Information on the teams' wallboards suggests that they have a double function. On the one hand, most of the information posted there comes from a superior hierarchical source whose interests, I suggest, it serves. The texts are on A4 sheets of paper and they display the vision of the company *to be the best bottler of the world*; the values and mission of the company (see annexure 11); information concerned with quality; charts of costs, speed, and moral & safety; composition of the teams and their missions in the small business scheme mounted in the company, where the different sectors of the company (Production, Maintenance, Quality and Control, Warehouse) are either suppliers or customers.

On the other hand, information produced by the frontline workers takes place on a single A4 sheet of paper with handwritten suggestions entitled *NOVAS IDEIAS* [NEW IDEAS](see annexure 12) The so-called "new ideas" appeared to be just claims, according to the demanding modality of the sentences used (see text below):

TEXT 7

- Buy [the addressee is the management] new trolleys as the existing ones are damaged
- Replace the Bottle Inspectors' chairs
- We request staff for cleaning up the toilets in the weekends we have to produce
- In case of extra work, we request that the Direction informs us in advance
- In the night shift the boss of the line must have a determined time to cut the line
- In case of illness, the boss of the line must release the worker immediately

At least this information remained on the board since April till late in May when I finished the process of data collection. Workers were still waiting for new chairs for the bottle inspection station, and trolleys.

These boards are different from the chalkboards reported by Prinsloo & Scholtz (2000) in the sense that they do not inform on work in progress or shift production targets. Rather they convey texts on the values, mission and goals of the company aiming to manipulate workers in order to orientate them into a new workplace culture on the one hand, and, on the other, workers' claims in the form of 'new ideas'. Workers, at the wallboards, need to read than to write. I assert confidently that the company is still in the process of promoting the discourse of the new-capitalist workplace among its workforce.

The chalkboards reported by Prinsloo & Scholtz (2000) have their replica in two wallboards, one for each line, that are in the production sector just to show that once upon a time daily information was provided writing on them with chalk. They present a table with the following columns: planned production, cases produced, cases rejected, cases insulated, quantity of bottles broken, efficiency of the line, cleaning up, percentage of syrup and caustic soda, breakdown timing, planned run time, absences. Now the foremen are the persons responsible for collecting such information on the daily bottling map (see annexure 13) for submission to management.

There is one more wallboard, the one that is placed some meters after the factory entry, on the right side to whom is entering, on the wall of the first office. It conveys notices, circulars and other documents of importance for workers. It is the one workers run to when they arrive in the factory to read new information and talk about. In doing so they can be said to be performing literate activities that I situate in the category *Taking Part in Discourse Around & About Text*, drawing on Hull et al (1996).

Clearly, the quantity of documents produced by management and made available to workers on the wallboards is in harmony with the existing vertical hierarchy, and with the purpose of divulging the 'new workplace culture' among the front-line workers: information flows in a descending direction, from management to workers.

Workers rarely read or talk about the information displayed through the wallboards, with the exception of the wallboard for regular information. However, curiously, daily team meetings take place nearby the respective wallboards, which confirms that, in the past, the boards were used for literacy practices related to daily performance.

Beyond the texts on boards there are other ones glued on the walls of the production sector exhorting workers (or whoever reads them) to respect the rulers of hygiene and safety. For example, on the external wall of the filling room there are the following texts (see annexure 14):

TEXT 8

Maintain your
workplace clean and neat

No Eating, drinking or
smocking allowed

Obligatory to use
protection hat

The front-line workers identify themselves with these texts as they find them linked to quality issues. They explain that a dirty workplace is not recommended to them as it may interfere negatively with their product. In fact if they did not have housekeeping as one of their activities during the shift, the floor would be full of water and bottles fragments; they explain that for evident reasons they do not

eat nor smoke when on the production floor because residues of food and cigarettes could fall inside empty or full bottles; and they do not drink because used bottles could be mixed up with bottles to be filled with the product. They give importance to the paper hats or caps they use, because, they say, they prevent hair from falling inside bottles.

Since such texts have meaning in the context of their work, as they make it explicit through their explanations, once again, workers show that they have found meaning in their work, and position themselves as 'partners', worried about quality in the workplace.

All the texts above referred to locate workers as being situated in a literacy rich environment. Such texts serve to encourage workers to conform to the work context that management thinks ideal for its workforce. Put in other words, the texts together contribute to create a Discourse wherein workers may interact as certain kind of workers.

Chapter 6

6.1. Discourse and working identities

I construct this chapter to analyze different actors when engaged in activities demanded by the company. I aim to examine their language, attitudes, along with their literate activities in the light of the Discourse made available to and reflected by them in their work setting.

I use the term 'discourse' following on Fairclough's (1996: 71) notion of 'discourse'. Accordingly, 'discourse' refers to 'any spoken or written language use conceived as social practice'; and I use the phrase 'working identities' following on Farrell (no date: 7), who states that 'working identities' are discursively constructed in social practice, like other identities, implying 'sets of beliefs, values and orientations, the knowledges and the capabilities' made available to people in their social setting, moment by moment. My point of departure is the assumption that the Moz Soft Drinks undertakes a process of workplace restructuring, to which workers respond in terms of dynamic processes of identity formation. The previous section provided some insights in the workplace's efforts to instill in its workforce the new work culture through particular texts (e.g., the texts that I referred to in section 5.3., on missions, values, and goals of the company). It is worth finding out how workers respond to such texts, or discourse.

Thus, I will develop this chapter in two sections: in the first one I will focus on a team leader, who I will call Augusto, when leading meetings and when engaged in other activities inherent in his position. I will show, on the one hand, how his literacy practices are constrained and shaped by the vertical hierarchy in force in the enterprise, and how he manages his identity as a mediator between management and workers and, on the other hand, how his team members are struggling to participate in the process of decision-making. In the second section, I will focus on a front-line worker engaged in the process of learning in order to

become a multi-skilled worker; and I will demonstrate how profoundly his apprenticeship is embedded in a 'community of practice' (Lave & Wenger, 1991), wherein newcomers learn through immersion, while carrying out their work, often on the spot (Gee et al, 1996).

6.1.1. Literacy practices and identities

I will develop this section attempting to answer the following questions:

What do the meetings suggest as to the identities the team leader and his team members are constructing?

What social practices – patterns of talking, acting, and valuing – are present in these meetings?

How does one describe the literate demands of such meetings? And how do workers react to such demands?

Hull et al (1996:121)

How does the team leader respond to the literate demands of his activities on the production floor?

For now, I will introduce Augusto.

Augusto is in his early thirties. He just has finished his university studies in Electronics and has graduated as an engineer. He intends to continue studying but in the area of Administration and Management of Enterprises, not only to perform his activities in the company better, but also to get a better job. His contact with the company started when he had to write his dissertation and he chose the

company as his research site. During his research, management suggested to him that he works for the enterprise after his graduation. He has been in the company since earlier this year and he was appointed to be one of the team leaders of the production sector, leading about thirty workers each shift.

Hull et al (1996: 195-198) described a meeting in which rich-literacy practices flourished, as workers engaged in a wide range of literate activities related to literate functions that are situated above the basics. It is my concern here to examine to what extent workers at the Moz Soft Drinks engage in literate activities, considering the fact that they interact in a work environment governed by top-down hierarchy; and to describe the identities that transpire from such meetings.

I present the following field notes with some extension, to provide a view of how the meetings, in which workers were supposed to deal with problems that could have arisen during the production process, finding or suggesting solutions, end up in discussions on administrative measures.

At the meetings

Meeting 1

The leader greeted the team and announced that the meeting would be about two topics he brought from management: (1) Meeting time and (2) Absenteeism

Looking at his notes taken in the meeting with management, Augusto announced that meetings since the following day would take place at 7: 45 am, instead of 7:50am, as was usual. Relative to the second topic, he said a worker might not have more than two unjustified absences, as he could be fired. As usual, asked for suggestions. The reactions was as follows^{xv}

Danilo: *Everyday I'll have to be here at 7:45am ... I start working at 8:00 am ... it means that I'll spend 15 minutes a day in the factory without payment ... during a week ... how much time will I lose in favor of the company?*

Bernardo: *15 times 5 is 65 minutes ... it's an hour and 5 minutes*

Orlando: *You are wrong, 75 minutes: 5 times 5 is 25 ... so you have 5 and 2 is out ... 5 times 1 is 5 ... plus 2 you get 7*

Danilo: *Whatever the result is it's clear that during a week I'll spend about 1 hour without payment...how much time will I spend during the month?*

Orlando: *Let's clarify the numbers ... 75 minutes correspond to 1 hour and 15 minutes ... let's multiply 15 minutes by 4 weeks ... you know that a month has 4 weeks ... ok ... it's 60 minutes or 1 hour ... plus 4 hours of each week*

Workers in chorus: *5 hours ... it's a lot of time*

Augusto: *The meeting is an important moment of preparation for the workday ... You must attend the meetings in order to participate actively in the regulation of our work ... It is important to know what we are going to do ...*

Orlando: *Do you know whether labor law supports this new decision?*

Augusto: *This is an orientation coming from the top¹ ... I function as a transmission vehicle of such orientation ... I suggest you organize a document with your opinions and address them to the direction via trade union² ... with regard to the absences ... the notice will be posted on the board today ... you must justify your absences ... if you do not justify them you will be contributing to your own loss of credibility in the eyes of the direction ... the machinery you work with can produce up to 2000 cases per hour when in auto mode ... if the machinery was replaced by new ones ... believe me ... more than half of you could become unemployed ... and you are here for money ... the compensations that are given to workers are nothing if we look at the actual wages ... is there any suggestion?*

Nobody answered.

Field notes taken on 10/04

Meeting 2

The meeting started at 7:50 am. The team leader greeted the team members and informed them on the production of the previous day – 5500 cases against the planned 24000. He explained that during the shift night the machinery was not working from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm. He reads his notes on his note pad and informs his colleagues that there was a necessity of working during the weekend, from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm as the production targeted had not been reached. Workers corrected him in chorus: from 8:00 am to 6:00 pm. They had read the information shortly before the meeting. He asked whether there was

¹ 'la de cima' is the Portuguese phrase Augusto used to designate management, and perhaps to distance himself from the decision.

² The representative of the trade union is an operator machine, who, I suggest, does not escape to the scope of management power.

any absent worker, and a worker told him that three colleagues had not come. He registered the names of the absent workers. After that he asked whether there was any suggestion for that day. In response a worker asked for the holidays plan. The team leader answered that the plan was being developed and that as soon as it was ready it would be displayed on the wallboard. Then he asked whether there was anything else and as nobody reacted, he sent his team members to work.

Field notes taken on 11/04

First of all, I think it best to examine the meetings with regard to their form and function, as well as the social relationships that govern them, along with the literate activities and identities present in such moments.

The teams members have daily meetings, standing nearby their boards. However I never noticed any meeting in which a team utilized the respective board. Contrary to some meetings noticed by Hull et al (1996), in which the positions of team leader and minute taker are rotating (164), at the Moz Soft Drinks, there is a tacit agreement (no written document exists) in that the team leaders should be the ones leading meetings, acting as minute taker as well. The topics of the agenda have not specific allotted time, thus the meetings sometimes surpass the time reserved to them, for instance, the meeting on the April 10th went on till 8:10 am, as consequence of the discussions around the new management decisions.

I infer from my observations that the meetings have a formula, although the sequence is not rigidly followed. Also it happened that some days, for instance, workers were not briefed on the previous day's work. However, in most of the meetings I attended, the team leaders (i) greeted the team and took attendance; (ii) informed the team on the production of the previous day; (iii) presented problems

that had arisen the day before; (iv) asked for suggestions; (v) got the team informed on management decisions as to the taste¹ of the soft drink to be produced, and as to other kind of decisions.

The meetings at the Moz Soft Drinks are oriented to keep workers informed on the performance of the shifts, and on problems that could have arisen during the production process; the meetings also might serve as a moment to discuss and find solutions to problems identified by workers. However workers hardly ever engage in search for solutions to their problems. For elucidation, the two meetings took place when the machines had serious problems. However, whenever workers were invited to present suggestions, they presented problems that had to do with administrative issues, which suggests a lack of an appropriate forum to deal with workers problems. One could erroneously label these workers as 'dead- minds' (Scholtz, 2000) as they never present suggestions or solutions to the technical problems of their machines. Nevertheless, they simply confine themselves to the organization of their work: for instance, no machine operator is a mechanic or an electrician. In case of breakdowns, engineers who work for the maintenance department are called to repair the machines. In other words, the front-line workers just have to deal with machines as far as operating them, but they are not 'allowed' to solve or get involved in technical problems of such machines, or make suggestions for the re-organisation of routines of work (See, for example, *I. of Text 4, section 5.1. (iv)*) Although technical problems on the machines affect the front-line workers, as they cannot reach the production target, that is not their problem to discuss in meetings; rather it is a maintenance problem. The team leader's reference above to the possibility of more than half of the front-line workers being at risk of losing their job in case of replacement of the machines by new ones denotes clearly that workers had suggested acquisition of new means of production.

¹ This decision is taken in accordance with customers' demands.

With regard to the literacy practices performed in team meetings, the team leader is the one who is expected to read and write: he reads, to his team members, the notes on the previous day production and the problems faced by the shifts; the notes he has taken in the meeting with management. He takes notes on absent workers, and workers' contributions during the meeting. Clearly he engages in a range of literate activities: when he takes notes related to workers' absences or workers contributions during the meeting, he performs *Basic Literate Functions*. When he informs his colleagues either of problems or on the production of the day before (based on reports left by the team leader of the previous shift), he has to reference texts he has in hands, he engages in literate activities that fall in the category of *Taking Part in Discourse Around & About Text*. When he invokes management decisions as to meeting time, limit of unjustified absences, and necessity of working during the weekend, he performs literate activities that have to do with *Flow of Information*. But when he proposes to his colleagues that they create a document with their ideas as regards their disagreement with the management, he uses *Literacy to Exercise, Acknowledge or Resist Authority*. His proposition had a clear objective: to put a full stop on the discussion. His colleagues in following his suggestion would be engaging in literate activity to *Resist (management's) Authority*.

The team leader made it clear that he was a medium of transmission between management and the team members. He is tactfully not subscribing to management's decision, but at the same time he does not want to assume that he takes team members' side. He appears with a dual personality, a reminder of what Scholtz (2002) refers to when he states that people engaging in the new work processes are also undergoing a process of personal change, some even experiencing 'identity problems' as a result of these personal changes (44). This is one of the consequences of the co-existence of Tayloristic hierarchy and teams which do not yet have space in decision-making forums.

Augusto confessed some days after that workers were right; that he could not unfortunately join the team members in their struggle, so as to avoid being labeled as an agitator by management. It was after another management decision, which he had to transmit to his team: that the machines would not be switched off anymore during the lunchtime; part of the workers would take their lunch during 30 minutes, while another part would be working, and vice-versa. This management measurement, accordingly, was to guarantee that the planed production was reached.

The front-line workers responded by not taking lunch during some days. However they continued working, during the lunchtime, probably to show their 'bosses' that they were not the problem; that the problem was the machinery that was not performing accordingly. Although they did not succeed, they expressed their claim as to be included in the process of decision making, as a worker said:

Things are changing rapidly...these days management decisions multiply like mushrooms...and we are not consulted...but we are the ones who do the work^{xvi}

Relative to the team members' literate activities, it is evident that, in the first meeting, when Danilo, Bernardo and Orlando, and to some extent the whole team (as they had all been in agreement), reacted to the new meeting time, they embarked on calculations to find out the quantity of hours they would work for the company without compensation and to best understand the new rule. They performed literacy practices that fall under the category of *Using Literacy to Exercise, Acknowledge or Resist Authority*. On the other hand, in the second meeting, when they corrected the team leader in relation to the timetable for the weekend, their literate activity falls in the category of *Performing Basic Literate Functions*.

After the meeting

Right after the meeting on the April 11th, Augusto went to the production floor with his men to guarantee the beginning of the production process. He had a quick walk through the line with his note pad in hands. Afterwards, he went to his office, where, invariably, there is a paper to fill in.

Augusto's literacy practices are constrained and shaped by the limits imposed by the context. To illustrate this, I turn to my field notes:

Augusto had registered on his pad the absence of three workers. He had to hire three casual workers to replace the absent ones. He used the telephone of his office to call the production Director and asked for authorization to admit three men. After having received the green light from the director, he pulled out a form (see annexure 15) and wrote the names of the absent workers in it. I asked him why he had to get authorization from the production director to admit casual workers. He just pointed to a notice glued on the wall of his office, addressed to the team leaders. The notice stressed the requirement that he informs the production management of any intention to hire casual workers. And said:

Everyday I have to know who is absent... I write down the names on a proper form... then I send the form to the production director, who signs and sends it to the human resources department^{xvii}

Although distant, the director of production is always there represented by the notice exerting his power above the team leaders.

Augusto pulled another form (see annexure 16) and started filling it in. It was a memorandum in duplicate, which then he took to the security headquarters

in the factory. There the form was read and stamped by a security guard. Afterwards, Augusto took it to the guard at the gate, who kept a copy. He finally could hire three men, among many of those that were outside the factory, hoping to get a temporary contract.

I asked Augusto about the reasons for such bureaucracy. He said that he was assuming responsibility for the three men, in case they created any kind of problem (theft, damages or any other kind of scandal), he would carry responsibility for that. Otherwise, if the men had access to the factory without his permission, the security guards would be solely the persons in charge.

Augusto filled in another two memoranda: one to the person responsible for the refectory, informing on the presence of the three casual workers; another one to the Human Resources Department for payment effects.

The literacy practices performed by Augusto, clearly, involved many people, occupying diverse positions in the factory; in such practices Augusto performed literate activities that run a gamut of functions. Transferring the names of the absent workers from his pad to the formal form, to inform his Director of Production on the absences, Augusto engaged in literate activities that fell in the category of *Basic Literate Functions*, as he just copied information and completed the form. His memoranda had a double literate function: (i) Augusto protected himself. Nobody could blame him for having acted against the rulers established by the company, as he documented the action he took to hire the three casual workers – he had the original of the three memoranda he addressed respectively to the security staff, to the refectory and to the Human Resources Department, all of them acknowledged by each one of the addressees; (ii) at the same time, his memoranda requested action from his addressees – the guard at the gate had to let in the three workers; the responsible for the refectory had to provide them with food (breakfast and lunch); the Human Resources Department had to pay them according to the time they worked.

After his engagement with documents, Augusto decided to occupy a post left by a worker, who had gone to the toilet. He took out remaining crowns from empty bottles in cases released by the 'despaletizadora'. He said:

This worker is not aware of how he is prejudicing the production sector ... he left without being replaced ... cracked bottles pass by his post ... then the bottles will be counted as if they were broken in our sector while they come from the warehouse with cracks ... thus we will use money from our sector to replace cracked bottles instead of buying gloves, masks, ear-protectors ... a complete case costs a little more than two American dollars ... if at the end of the shift ten cases escape it's a lot of money which will be taken out from our budget ... almost US\$250^{xviii}

When the worker came back Augusto repeated, visibly annoyed, the same discourse to the worker.

It is without doubt that Augusto, probably, influenced by his position as team leader, is seriously worried about losses in his sector. He did not want to suffer the consequences of another's sector inefficiency. He considered the production sector's losses as his own. The simple calculations he did, and his annoyance with the worker who left his post, revealed his strong working identity. Augusto imagined himself as a business man and acted as if he was the business (Kalantzis and Cope in O'Connor, 1994). Indeed he is simply making sense of one of the visionary statements of the company, which states that *we will be the best bottler of the world: the best in volume growth and in returning of the capital applied.*

Augusto, on the production floor, appears adjusted to the requirements of the new workplace, where workers identify themselves with the values of the company, and reveal consciously commitment to the enterprise they work for. By doing the activity he did in the absence of the worker, Augusto demonstrated high sense of

responsibility for the work, not as team leader, rather as member of the whole team. Actually, in the Moz Soft Drinks the team leaders are not supposed to do the work of the ordinary front-line workers; they are required to coach the work; to keep themselves informed on the events during the production process, guaranteeing production fluidity.

That the company is serious about control and quality is reinforced by the forms (see annexure 17) Augusto had to complete at the end of the shift, resorting to different sources: forms filled-in by workers responsible for recording the quantity of bottles (empty or full) with problems (see annexure 18); a form filled-in by the forklift truck driver (see annexure 19) as well as his own notes, (during the shift he carries a pad on which he writes down useful information on the production process). These forms did not require complex literate activities from Augusto; he just had to find out the total of filled bottles that did not fulfill the specifications; the total of cases produced, of bottles counted, of rejected cases, of cases taken to the laboratory, of cases produced according to the electronic meter. Completing this form, Augusto performed literate activities that are situated in the category of *Basic Literate Functions*.

While Augusto reveals a plurality of identities according to the particular work context he interacts with (considering his attitudes in meetings and on the production floor), team members' identity shows that they fit better in the new work order than their management. Their resistance to management's impositions is a struggle for participation in the process of decision-making. One of the values of the company is *Integrity*, which means *to be honest, open, and sincere*, according to the literature made available to workers in the company. Resisting management decisions, workers are simply making sense of the values quoted above. They are making sense of the discourse made available to them by the company. They are demonstrating that they are becoming workers of the new workplace, who fully understand their work and also long to be included in decision-making. It is clear here that the company is still a 'site of struggle' around

the formation of working identities, and also a 'site of struggles' between discourses: the discourse of the old work fashion, characterized by 'bosses' and the discourse of the new work order characterized by teams.

6.1.2. Learning process on the production floor

In this section I recall Salvador, the worker we met in section 4.3. replacing the permanent operator of the 'paletizadora' and 'despaletizadora', and he introduced himself as an 'apprentice' and a 'jack of all trades, but without depreciation'. He is twenty-three years old, and he is in the company since last year as a bottle inspector. He has got grade 11, and he is struggling to finish grade 12 as an external student, in order to enter the university. It is his will to pursue Economics, as he thinks that educated people, like his cousin, who holds a diploma in Economics, succeed in their life. Salvador is working to pay his studies.

During my presence in the company I did not notice any training session offered to front-line workers¹. However, I was informed that every six months the bottle inspectors have training programs, which confirms one of the values of the company – *human resources development: maximization of the human resources potential through training and professional development*. Furthermore, most of the front-line workers I interviewed said they have attended training programs offered by the company. My interest is in the informal learning that takes place on the shop floor, where newcomers into a particular sector of the production line learn carrying out the work, helped by old-timers. This is the case of Salvador, who is from the Bottle Inspection sector, but was learning how to operate the 'paletizadora' and 'despaletizadora' machines.

Salvador appears as a member of a 'community of practice' engaged in 'apprenticeship learning' (Lave and Wenger, 1991) through 'immersion' (Gee et

¹ An English course run, but front-line workers did not attend due to timetable constraints as their work is shift-based.

all, 1996); he is struggling to become an effective member of the community. When he was engaged in his work, as substitute for the permanent operator, he faced some difficulties, as he had not yet mastered the solving of problems in this work. Although he could read the messages displayed by the machines, for instance, he was not yet fast enough to go down or up to align cases in the 'despaletizadora' and 'paletizadora' respectively, and to come back to set the machines in motion again. Consequently, his colleagues whistled and shouted at him in an effort to get him working faster. To some extent, he created a kind of tension on the production floor: the community was afraid of not reaching the target, compromising the production plan, and therefore losing the bonus. To avoid that, another worker who was temporally attached to the packing machine as helper, joined Salvador and together they guaranteed the normal fluidity of the production process: while Salvador dealt with the machines, his colleague dealt with cases containing either empty bottles (in the 'despaletizadora') or the full ones (in the 'paletizadora'). Salvador reproduced the texts displayed by the machines (see for elucidation annexure 10) to his colleague, who acted accordingly.

It is worth pointing out that reading only was not enough for Salvador being effective in his community of practice. He was required to associate his working know-how, which was still in construction, to the reading of the texts displayed by the machines. Salvador was aware of that, as he said:

... When I have a chance I come here [pallet station] for 10 or 15 minutes and I learn how to deal with the machines ... even if that implies to miss my breakfast...^{xix}

That old-timers have a central role in circulation of 'tacit knowledge' (Gee et al, 1996) within the community of practice is evident in the short dialogue that took place after the permanent machines operator came back and asked whether everything had went well. The worker who had joined Salvador, joking, said:

Your learner is not ready yet... it was a big mess right after you left^{xx}

The permanent machines operator reacted in these terms:

You also had the same problem ... you cannot master the use of machines in your first contact with them ... it is a process ... it takes time^{xxi}

Clearly, the front-line workers at the Moz Soft Drinks constitute an active 'learning organization', whose members I characterize as followers of the doctrine preached in fast-capitalist texts as to the new workplace. For example, Salvador makes himself available to continually learn new skills, on spot while carrying out his work (Gee et al, 1996: 6); Salvador's apprenticeship learning takes place within a community of practice where workers supervise themselves, and work collaboratively (30). The front-line workers at the Moz Soft Drinks are being multi-functional on the production floor, in the sense that they act at any time as team leaders (they supervise themselves), as teachers (old-timers facilitate recreation of knowledge), as learners (e.g., Salvador is learning new skills). This has to do with construction of 'working knowledge and identities', or put another terms, front-line workers engage in a discourse, which is about becoming certain kind of workers like Manuel, a worker who we met in section 4., in the Line A. On April 15th, in less than an hour, he operated the unpacking machine, he worked in the pallet station organizing cases in pallets and he drove the forklift truck, either supplying the line with cases containing empty bottles, or transferring the product to the warehouse, while the permanent driver went to take his breakfast. Most of the front-line workers are engaged in this apprenticeship learning within their community of practice to become 'multi-skilled' (O'Connor, 1993).

One of the purposes of this study was to characterize workers in terms of their schooling, work experience, perspectives and to sketch their perception of literacy. Along the report I provided information on these aspects. To meet this purpose I

supplied the workers' personal information as I introduced them throughout the report. However I think that it is opportune now to connect workers' disposition to learn to their perspectives and to some extent to their perception of literacy: most of the front-line workers said that they would like to pursue their studies while still working, and learn more about their field of work, in order to either occupy a better position in the company or to get a better job in another company. Here there are re-echoes of the 'autonomous' model of literacy, as workers believe that with more knowledge they can access a better social status.

Conclusion

This chapter provides sufficient information on how, on the one hand, the team leader and his team members in their meetings, and, on the other hand, the team leader in other contexts at work, engage in literacy practices, which are conformed to the existing vertical hierarchy in the company. Management gives instructions to team leaders, either for transmitting to team members in meetings, e.g., the new administrative decisions, or for following in the accomplishment of the activities inherent in their category, for instance, the instruction related to casual workers admission. The literacy practices derived from following such instructions in the accomplishment of tasks arise constrained and shaped by the still traditional roles and relationships between workers and management.

The chapter gives also an account of how front-line workers are undergoing a construction of new identities, either resisting management authority (see section 6.1.1) or promoting learning apprenticeship in community of practice through immersion (see section 6.1.2), altogether not only in the context of the discourse the company divulgates to them, which is situated along the lines of fast-capitalist texts as to workplace, but also in the context of their own perspectives and beliefs.

Clearly, the front-line workers are becoming multi-functional in their commitment to the company, unfolding themselves in a gamut of work practices assuming new working identities. Such identities are formed in a context of tension between discourses of the old work organization, symbolized by the vertical hierarchy, and the new work organization, represented by the dynamism of teams.

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Chapter 7

Conclusion

This study aimed to find out to what extent literacy practices, the accompanying social practices and working identities, among the front-line workers at the Moz Soft Drinks, respond to the demands of the new workplace.

It was documented that work is team-based. Collaboration, responsibility, flexibility, auto-surveillance, auto-regulation, learning within a 'community of practice' are features of the new work culture which are visible among the front-line workers at the Moz Soft Drinks. Although the company denotes changes, it generally is still keeping aspects of the traditional roles and relationships between workers and management. It is these aspects that shape and constrain work practices and, consequently, the respective literacy practices: management decides and wants workers to follow its decisions.

In this environment the work is organized in such a way that the masses of front-line workers – bottle inspectors, machine operators and forklift drivers – do not have opportunities to perform literate functions that have to do with issues of power and authority. The use of Literacy to *Exercise, Acknowledge or Resist Authority, Exercise Critical Judgment, and Solve Problems* is an activity more likely to be performed by management – very often. I am considering the quantity of texts on procedures and decisions addressed to workers, that the company believes workers have “to read to do” (here, there are re-echoes of Mikulecky (1980), who identifies workplace literacies as “reading do to”). The team leaders engage in literacy practices related to issue of power to a relatively lesser extent. The operators of the 'paletizadora' and 'despaletizadora' are an exception, as they often engage in *Solving Problems* in their work events, interacting with texts made available to them by technology, while their colleagues in the other production line depend on forklift driver texts to participate in literate activities. Such literate activities fall under categories of *Basic Literate Functions* and *Taking Part in Discourse Around & About Text*.

It was also demonstrated that the introduction of technology demands new literacy practices, which to some extent empower some front-line workers who engage in practices of auto-surveillance and performance monitoring, at the electronic meter. During meetings, when the opportunity arose, few front-line workers engaged in literate activities to *Exercise, Acknowledge or Resist Authority*.

All these aspects substantiate Hull et al's (1996) findings in their study. Accordingly, to participate in literate activities is not so much a question of ability, then, as it is a question of rights and opportunities, seeing that patterns of literacy use are generally connected to structures of power: skills change when authority changes.

Evidence that workers undergo a process of formation of working identities, which change moment by moment, was provided. For instance, the team leader in the meeting reveals a 'neutral identity'; according to him, he is a 'vehicle of transmission' between management and workers. However, when on the production floor, he displays a different identity, more associated with the values and goals of the company. Also, the fact that team members could, in their turn, protest managements' decisions is a strong signal of a shift towards new ways of being at work, wherein workers are "asked to think and act critically, reflectively..." (Gee et al, 1997: 7)

In conclusion, this report demonstrates that to some extent, winds of globalisation as to new workplace have touched Mozambique, as well. To illustrate the point further, in this case study, the workplace is hybrid or ambivalent in terms of its work organization; and it appears to be in transition from the old capitalist work fashion towards the new work culture. For instance, the front-line workers perform new work practices, new literacy practices and assume new identities, but hierarchical management practices limit the extent to which 'new workplace' practices and new literacy practices are allowed to develop.

Endnotes

ⁱ O trabalho aqui é por equipas... todos nós constituimos uma grande equipa mas há pequenas equipas de dois três ou cinco depende dos casos... só para lhe dar uma ideia do que estou a dizer... os trabalhadores que estão nas caixas vazias se vêem uma garrafa caída na transportadora não vão ficar a espera que os tabalhadores que estão a vigiar as garrafas venham para pôr a garrafas em pé... mesmo o director industrial quando vem aqui e encontra uma garrafa caída na transportadora ele põe a garrafa em pé... o espírito de equipa é importante não só para termos o trabalho feito mas também para conseguirmos o incentivo

ⁱⁱ Nós trabalhamos em equipe... eu dependo deles... eles dependem dos outros... há uma interligação..queira sim queira não nós trabalhamos em equipes... o nosso trabalho é em equips

ⁱⁱⁱ Nós trabalhamos conjuntamente... eu dependo do operador da despaletizadora... ele depende do operador da empilhadeira... a desempacotadora dpende de mim etc

^{iv} A gente faz uma rotação ... vinte minutos estamos no visor... 20 minutos aqui na paletização ... outros vinte minutos na máquina

^v Eu sou visorista mas aqui na paletização sou aprendiz... toda a gente é uma espécie de faz-tudo mas no bom sentido (...) deixa me falar de mim mesmo... um pouco antes estava a lidar com aquelas máquinas... antes tinha estado a cingar caixas em paletas para serem conduzidas ao armazém pelo operador da empilhadora... e também limpei a área onde recebemos paletas como as vezes as caixas escorregam e algumas garrafas se partem ... tu tens que estar pronto para qualquer actividade

^{vi} Diz aos homens que hoje independentemente de tudo têm que produzir 24000 caixas... diz-lhes só isso... estão preguiçosos... se não conseguirem hão de vir trabalhar no Domingo... diz-lhes que há gente que quer trabalhar lá fora... vamos substituí-los um por um... diz-lhes só isso

^{vii} Nada se pode fazer sem ler... eu tenho lido estes manómetros de temperatura... estás a ver este esquema? Primeiro a garrafa é lavada com soda aqui... Segundo... ela é lavada com água aqui... terceiro... aqui é lavada com água, soda e sabão... quarto... aqui é lavada com água quente à temperatura de 65-70 graus... e tens aqui estes procedimentos... se tu não lês vais agir contra eles e podes estragar a máquina

^{viii} Eu acho que a condição para operar esta máquina é seguir as instruções... se alguém te explica como operar a máquina... tu podes operar...

^{ix} Isto é um manómetro... posso explicar à pessoa que se o ponteiro ultrapassar este limite deve fazer isto ou aquilo... em relação aos textos... acho que a informação escrita pode simplesmente ser falada... tão simples quanto isto... não há nenhuma complicação aqui...

^x ...é para... por exemplo... se acontecer alguma coisa no Mercado saberem que quem estava no visor nesta hora é tal fulano através do código....

^{xi} Eu sei todos os procedimentos

^{xii} Paro a máquina... lavo os copos... depois disso tiro o copo para ver se está estragado ou não... depois sopro a máquina... está a ver aqueles fragmentos? Depois tiro duas garrafas a frente e duas atrás... cinco vezes ... tiro as garrafas do copo onde rebentou a garrafa...

^{xiii} Eu leio muito... disse-lhe que as máquinas me deixam saber sobre o que se passa através destes ecrãs... posso informar-me sobre a produção de ontem... sobre a actual produção ... quantas caixas produzimos... qual é o correspondente em garrafas etc... desde que eu comande a máquina correctamente... como pode ver... há uma série de botões nos painéis... estas máquinas são autênticos computadores... tenho que dialogar com elas muitas vezes...

^{xiv} Em dez minutos se não houver nenhuma avaria podemos encher 300 caixas

^{xv} Danilo: Todos os dias tenho que estar aqui as 7:45... começo a trabalhar às 8:00... significa que diariamente vou estarei aqui na fábrica 15 minutos sem ser pago... quanto tempo vou perder em favor da companhia durante a semana?

Bernardo: 15 vezes 5... dá 65 minutos... é 1 hora e 5 minutos...

Orlando: Estás enganado... 75 minutos ... 5 vezes 5 dá 25 ... então temos 5 e vão 2... 5 vezes 1 é 5... mais 2 temos 7...

Danilo: Qualquer que seja o resultado... está claro que durante a semana vou trabalhar cerca de 1 hora sem pagamento... agora... quanto tempo vou perder durante o mês?

Orlando: Vamos clarificar os números... 75 minutos correspondem a 1 hora e 15 minutos... vamos multiplicar 15 minutos por 4 semanas... vocês sabem que o mês tem 4 semanas... ok... dá 60 minutos ou 1 hora... mais 4 horas de cada semana...

Trabalhadores em coro: 5 horas é muito tempo...

Augusto: A reunião é um momento importante de preparação para o dia de trabalho... vocês devem vir às reuniões de forma a participarem activamente na regulação do nosso trabalho... é importante falar do que fizemos e saber o que vamos fazer...

Orlando: Sabe se a lei laboral cobre esta nova decisão?

Augusto: Esta é uma orientação que vem lá de cima... eu funciono como um veículo de transmissão dessa orientação... sugiro que vocês organizem um documento com as vossas ideias e as dirijam à direcção via sindicato... em relação às ausências... se vocês não as justificarem estarão a contribuir para a vossa própria perda de credibilidade aos olhos da direcção... a maquinaria com que trabalham... pode produzir até 2000 caixas por hora em modo automático... se a maquinaria for substituída por uma nova... acreditem em mim... mais de

metade de vocês vai para o desemprego... e vocês estão aqui por dinheiro... as indemnizações que são pagas não são nada se olharmos para os actuais salários... há alguma sugestão?

^{xvi} As coisas mudam de dia para a noite... nos últimos dias as decisões da direcção até parecem cogumelos... e nós não somos consultados... mas nós é que fazemos o trabalho..

^{xvii} Diariamente tenho que saber quem faltou e registo os nomes num formulário próprio... depois mando para o director de produção, que assina e manda para os recursos humanos

^{xviii} Este trabalhador não sabe o quanto está a prejudicar o sector de produção... saiu sem que fosse substituído... passam garrafas partidas... essas garrafas vão ser contabilizadas como se fizessem parte das quebradas no nosso sector... quando já vêm quebradas do armazém... assim vamos usar o dinheiro do sector da produção para repor as garrafas em vez de comprarmos luvas, máscaras, auriculares... uma caixa completa é um pouco mais de dois dólares... se ao fim do dia passarem só dez caixas é muito dinheiro que será retirado do nosso orçamento... quase 250 dólares

^{xix} Quando tenho chance venho para aqui para aprender a lidar com estas máquinas... mesmo que isso implique perder o meu mata-bicho.

^{xx} O teu aluno ainda não está pronto... foi uma grande confusão logo depois que saíste

^{xxi} Tu também tiveste o mesmo problema... uma pessoa não pode dominar o uso das máquinas logo a primeira... é um processo... leva o seu tempo...

ANNEXURES

University of Cape Town

ANNEXURE 1

(Administrator –Delegate’s words in the Informative bulletin for internal circulation in the company)

“Enquanto nos direccionamos, diariamente, pela presatação de melhores serviços aos nossos clients, continuamos em paralelo a investir na formação contínua do nosso pessoal.

Nas nossas acções diárias, somos geridos pelos sete valores da nossa empresa:

- Integridade
- Iniciativa individual
- Valorização do cliente
- Trabalho em equipa
- Formação do pessoal
- Respeito mútuo e confiança
- Compromisso com as nossas actividades

Como uma equipa, o destino está nas nossas mãos. Temos desenvolvido as nossas estratégias e planos que nos levarão ao futuro.”

ANNEXURE 2
(‘Breakdowns’ Form)

COMUNICAÇÃO DE AVARIA	COMUNICAÇÃO DE AVARIA	COMUNICAÇÃO DE AVARIA
Linha: _____ Nº _____ Turno: _____ Descrição: _____	Linha: _____ Nº _____ Turno: _____ Descrição: _____	Linha: _____ Nº _____ Turno: _____ Descrição: _____
Cliente: _____ Técnico: _____ Data: _____ Hora: _____ Obra nº: _____	Cliente: _____ Técnico: _____ Data: _____ Hora: _____ Obra nº: _____	Cliente: _____ Técnico: _____ Data: _____ Hora: _____ Obra nº: _____

ANNEXURE 3

(Table of meta-categories of literate functions (Hull et al, 1996))

Performing Basic Literate Functions	Using Literacy to Explain	Taking Part In Discourse Around & About Text	Participating in Flow of Information	Problem Solving	Exercising Critical Judgment	Using Literacy to Exercise, Acknowledge or Resist Authority
Completing Forms	Analogizing	Citing (A) (B)	Coaching	Brainstorming	Assessing	Actioning
Copying	Contextualizing	Constructing Rules	Constructing Rules	Calculating	Bestowing Blessings	Admonishing
Correcting	Demonstrating	Highlighting	Giving Instruction (A) (B)	Categorizing	Certifying	Assigning
Identifying	Dramatizing	Miming	Invoking	Conjecturing	Critiquing	Constructing Rules
Keyboarding	Elaborating	Perusing	Practicing	Creating Hypotheticals	Disputing	Deferring
Labeling	Exhibiting	Presenting	Providing Linguistic Assistance	Gauging Reactions	Evaluating	Fudging
Locating	Explaining	Quoting	Receiving Instruction	Justifying	Highlighting	Gaining Consensus
Looking Up	Illustrating	Recounting	Requesting/Providing Clarification	Planning	Inferring	Gauging Reactions
Matching	Role Playing	Referencing	Seeking Direction	Problem Solving	Interpreting	Giving Direction (A) (B)
Notetaking	Show-and-Telling	Reflecting	Seeking Instruction (A) (B)	Representing	Irony	Granting Permission
Practicing		Signifying		Revising	Validating	Interpreting B
Proofreading		Summarizing			Verifying	Invoking
Providing Documentation						Irony
Reciting						Proposing
Recording						Protecting
Requesting Documentation						Reprimanding
Tallying						Requesting Action
Translating						Requesting Permission or Approval

ANNEXURE 4

(Texts on Procedures at the Bottles Washing Station)

TEXT 1

ATENÇÃO

NO ARRANQUE DE LINHA:

1. NÃO ANDAR A MÁQUINA SEM VASILHAME!
2. LIGUE APENAS AS 2 BOMBAS DE SODA PARA AGITAR SODA CÁUSTICA

POUPE ÁGUA!!!

TEXT 2

ATENÇÃO OPERADORES DA LAVADORA

A lavadora só deverá arrancar quando a temperatura estiver entre 65°C a 70°C no banho 1 e 2.

ANNEXURE 6

(Text on workers who failed at the Bottle Inspection and
the product was sent back from the market)

TEXT 3

Sabor	Código	Linha/hora	Data de produção	Chefe de linha	Nome dos Visoristas
(...)	(...)	(...)	(...)	(...)	(...)

ANNEXURE 7

(Text on management's concerns about quality)

TEXT 4

ASSUNTO: Objectos estranhos ou garrafas sujas com produto

Caros colegas

Tem vindo a nossa atenção que os nossos clientes apresentam queixas relacionadas com garrafas sujas com produto ou objectos estranhos.

Como garantia de que o nosso produto sairá da fábrica com qualidade, as seguintes medidas serão tomadas com efeito imediato:

1. Parar a produção e chamar imediatamente a manutenção, sempre que a E.B.I. (Inspectore electrónica de garrafas) estiver avariada!
2. Será considerada ofensa disciplinar se um visorista abandonar o seu posto sem substituto ou abandoná-lo e não parar o movimento das garrafas.

Contamos com a colaboração de todos!

Juntos faremos o sucesso

ANNEXURE 8

(Text on Procedures after bottle burst at the filling machine)

TEXT 5

Procedimentos após rebentamento de garrafas na enchedora

1. Carregar o botão do spray
2. Parar a enchedora
3. Abrir a válvula onde ocorre o rebentamento para soprar e voltar a fechar
4. Lavar a válvula com água tratada
5. Substituir o vedante por um outro previamente mergulhado no cloro e enxugado com água tratada
6. Retirar duas garrafas antes e mais 2 (duas) depois da válvula em que ocorre o rebentamento
7. Retirar 5 (cinco) garrafas nas cinco voltas que a enchedora der, na válvula em que ocorreu o rebentamento.

Total: 9 garrafas

ANNEXURE 9

(Form created by a forklift driver for performance monitoring)

Tempo / Min	Nº DE PALAETES	Nº DE CAIDAS
08:00 A's 9:00		
09:00 A's 10:00		
10:00 A's 11:00		
11:00 A's 12:00		
12:00 A's 13:00		
13:00 A's 14:00		
14:00 A's 15:00		
15:00 A's 16:00		
16:00 A's 17:00		
17:00 A's 18:00		

DATA: _____

Su/109 1000									
Outro 1000									
Retorno/1000									
Quebras/1000									
Refeitao/1000									

ASILHAME

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

TOTAL

ANNEXURE 10

(Messages displayed by the 'despaletizadora' and 'paletizadora')

TEXT 6

'despaletizadora':

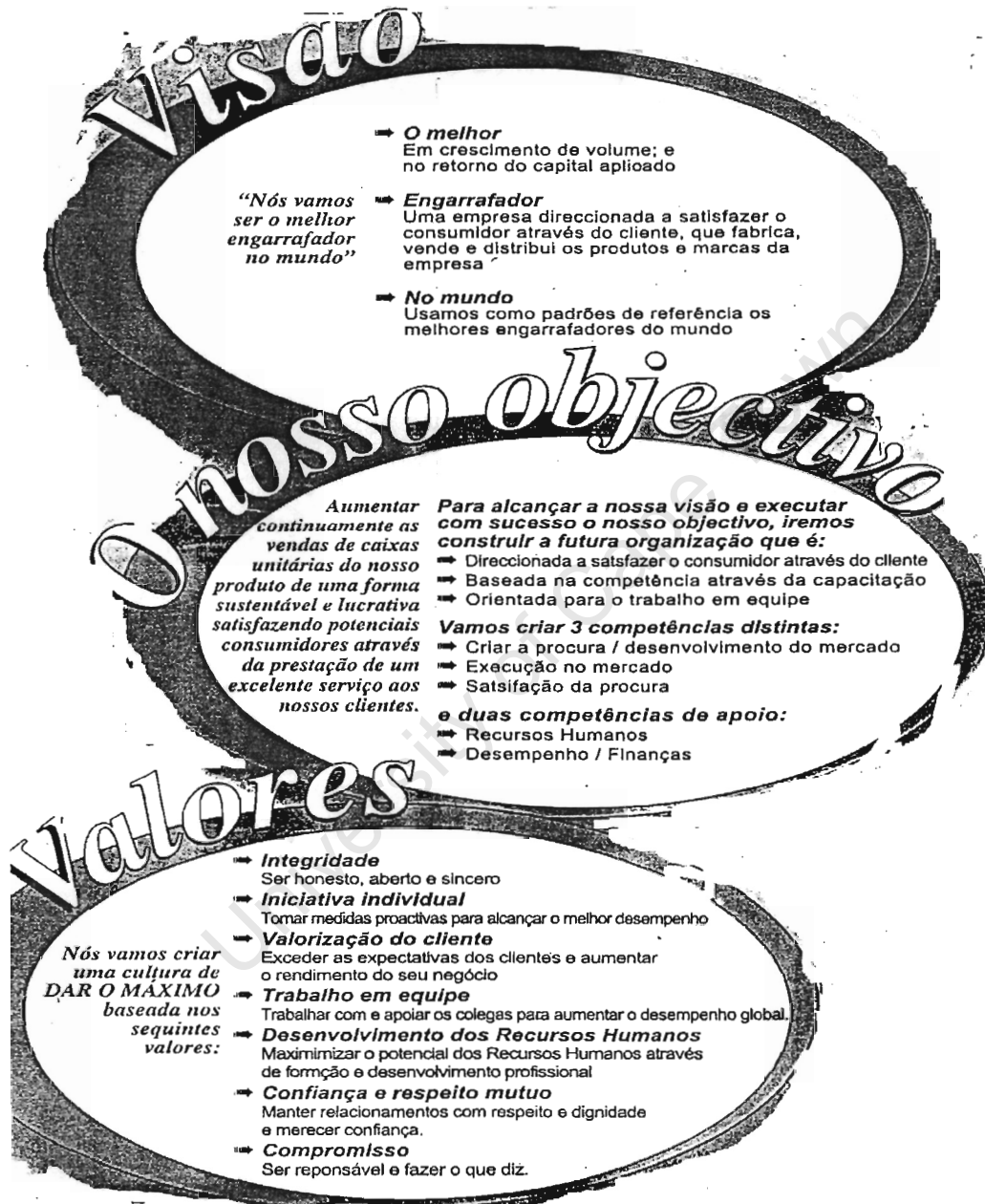
- Acumulação de embalagens: transportadora
- Falha – embalagens – saída (mesa)
- Área de segurança – Estação de saída

'paletizadora'

- Falta de embalagens
- Transportadora automática de embalagens – desligada
- Área de segurança 2 – porta bloqueada
- Tempo de espera – conversor de frequência
- Número de paletas: 54

ANNEXURE 11

(Text on vision, mission and values of the company)



ANNEXURE 12
(Workers' suggestions on the wallboard)

TEXT 7

NOVAS IDEIAS

- Comprar mais carrinhos de mão para as linhas porque as existentes estão danificadas
- Substituir as cadeiras dos visoristas
- Precisamos de pessoal para limpeza nos WC no final de semana quando houver produção
- Em caso de haver trabalho extra, solicitamos que sejamos informados com antecedência
- Nos trabalhos noturnos, os chefes de linha devem ter um tempo determinado para o corte
- Quando um trabalho estiver doente, o chefe de linha deve dispensá-lo imediatamente

ANNEXURE 13
(Daily Bottling map)

M.D.E. - MAPA DIÁRIO DE ENGARRAFAMENTO										Data	/	/	Linha:
Produto e Sabor	Tamanho	Horas			Contador de Garrafas	Caixas Produzidas	Total para Testes e Rejeitadas	Produção Líquida para Armazém	Xarope Usado	Capsulas Usadas	OBSERVAÇÕES		
		Início de Produção	Fim de Produção	Tempo Util									
ANÁLISE DAS AVARIAS		ANÁLISES DE TEMPO			QUEBRAS DE VASILHAME			PESSOAL ENVOLVIDO					
Transportadora de Círculos		Início de Turno		Tamancos	300 ml		Directo				M.D.E. N.º		
Desempacadora		Fim de Turno		Desempacadora			Indirecto						
Transportadora para Lavadora		Hora de Almoço		Lavadora			OBSERVAÇÕES						
Lavadora		Fim de Turno antecipado		Enchedora									
Transportadora para Enchedora		Mudança de Produto		Capsuladora									
Visor de Garrafas Vazias		Preparação		Módo Estalado									
Enchedora		Limpeza e Saneamento		Outros			Manutenção						
Capsuladora		Manutenção Planificada											
Visor de Garrafas Cheias		Paragem Planificada											
Transportadora Depois de Enchedora		Problemas de Materiais											
Empacadora		Problemas de Qualidade											
Transportadora de Garrafas		Outros Paragens não Planificadas											
Misturadora		COMENTAR											
Frio													
Carbonatadora													
Caldeira													
Outros													
		Chefe de Linha:											

Minerva Central

ANNEXURE 14

(Texts on the external wall of the filling room)

TEXT 8

**Mantenha
limpo e
arrumado
o seu
posto de
trabalho**

**Proibido
comer,
beber e
fumar**

**Obrigatorio
usar
chapéu de
protecção**

ANNEXURE 15
(Form for workers' attendance control)

CONTROLO DIÁRIO DE FALTAS

Serviços: _____

PESSOAL QUE FALTOU AO SERVIÇO NO DIA ____/____/____

Número de Código	Nome	Secção	Assinatura do Encarregado da Secção

Academica, Lda.

O CHEFE DOS SERVIÇOS.

VISTOS

O DIRECTOR.

ANNEXURE 17

(Form for totals of rejected bottles)

Data _____/_____/_____

Linha nº

Tumo

Resumo das garrafas rejeitadas nas Linhas

PRODUTO		VASILHAME	
1. Mal cheias devido a paragens		1. Gargalhos paratidos	
2. Mal cheias (Liquido a mais)		2. Garrafas sujas	
3. Mal cheias (Liquido a menos)		3. Material Estranho	
4. Capsula diferente		4. Outros sabores	
5. Capsula amolgada			
6. Sem capsula			
7. Garrafa estalada			
8. Rotulo deficiente			
9. Garrafa estranha			
10. Quebra na capsuladora			
11. Rebentamento de Garrafas			
Total		Total	

Caixas produzidas Empilhador	Garrafas Contadas	Caixas Rejeitadas	Caixas para Laboratorio	Caixas produzidas contador

Observacoes: _____

	O Chefe de Linha:	
Nome	Assinatura	

ANNEXURE 18
(Form on rejected bottles due to breakages)

QUEBRAS DE VASILHAME

Data _____

Linha _____

Turno _____

Origem das Quebras _____

Quantidade Caixas; Bidons kg

O Visorista _____

Chefe da linha _____

Operador da Empilhadora _____

ANNEXURE 19

(Official form for performance monitoring by the forklift driver)

Empties Received by Line..... Date:.....

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105
106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120
121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135
136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150
151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165
166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180
181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195
196	197	198	199	200	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210
211	212	213	214	215	216	217	218	219	220	221	222	223	224	225

Fulls Transferred To Warehouse

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45
46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75
76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105
106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120
121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135
136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150
151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165
166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180
181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195
196	197	198	199	200	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210
211	212	213	214	215	216	217	218	219	220	221	222	223	224	225

Reconciliation	Agreed	Sign
Empties Received Production		
Production Breakages	Production	
Chipnecks	Forklift Driver	
Dirty Bottles	Line Foreman	
	Warehouse	
Fulls Received Warehouse	Warehouse Shift Supervisor	
Difference		

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Endnotes

ⁱ O trabalho aqui é por equipas... todos nós constituímos uma grande equipa mas há pequenas equipas de dois três ou cinco depende dos casos... só para lhe dar uma ideia do que estou a dizer... os trabalhadores que estão nas caixas vazias se vêem uma garrafa caída na transportadora não vão ficar a espera que os trabalhadores que estão a vigiar as garrafas venham para pôr as garrafas em pé... mesmo o director industrial quando vem aqui e encontra uma garrafa caída na transportadora ele põe a garrafa em pé... o espírito de equipa é importante não só para termos o trabalho feito mas também para conseguirmos o incentivo

ⁱⁱ Nós trabalhamos em equipe... eu dependo deles... eles dependem dos outros... há uma interligação... queira sim queira não nós trabalhamos em equipes... o nosso trabalho é em equipas

ⁱⁱⁱ Nós trabalhamos conjuntamente... eu dependo do operador da despaletizadora... ele depende do operador da empilhadeira... a desempacotadora depende de mim etc

^{iv} A gente faz uma rotação ... vinte minutos estamos no visor... 20 minutos aqui na paletização ... outros vinte minutos na máquina

^v Eu sou visorista mas aqui na paletização sou aprendiz... toda a gente é uma espécie de faz-tudo mas no bom sentido (...) deixa-me falar de mim mesmo... um pouco antes estava a lidar com aquelas máquinas... antes tinha estado a cintar caixas em paletas para serem conduzidas ao armazém pelo operador da empilhadeira... e também limpei a área onde recebemos paletas como as vezes as caixas escorregam e algumas garrafas se partem ... tu tens que estar pronto para qualquer actividade

^{vi} Diz aos homens que hoje independentemente de tudo têm que produzir 24000 caixas... diz-lhes só isso... estão preguiçosos... se não conseguirem hão de vir trabalhar no Domingo... diz-lhes que há gente que quer trabalhar lá fora... vamos substituí-los um por um... diz-lhes só isso

^{vii} Nada se pode fazer sem ler... eu tenho lido estes manómetros de temperatura... estás a ver este esquema? Primeiro a garrafa é lavada com soda aqui... Segundo... ela é lavada com água aqui... terceiro... aqui é lavada com água, soda e sabão... quarto... aqui é lavada com água quente à temperatura de 65-70 graus... e tens aqui estes procedimentos... se tu não lês vais agir contra eles e podes estragar a máquina

^{viii} Eu acho que a condição para operar esta máquina é seguir as instruções... se alguém te explica como operar a máquina... tu podes operar...

^{ix} Isto é um manómetro... posso explicar à pessoa que se o ponteiro ultrapassar este limite deve fazer isto ou aquilo... em relação aos textos... acho que a informação escrita pode simplesmente ser falada... tão simples quanto isto... não há nenhuma complicação aqui...

^x ...é para... por exemplo... se acontecer alguma coisa no Mercado saberem que quem estava no visor nesta hora é tal fulano através do código...

^{xi} Eu sei todos os procedimentos

^{xii} Paro a máquina... lavo os copos... depois disso tiro o copo para ver se está estragado ou não... depois sopro a máquina... está a ver aqueles fragmentos? Depois tiro duas garrafas a frente e duas atrás... cinco vezes ... tiro as garrafas do copo onde rebentou a garrafa...

^{xiii} Eu leio muito... disse-lhe que as máquinas me deixam saber sobre o que se passa através destes ecrans... posso informar-me sobre a produção de ontem... sobre a actual produção... quantas caixas produzimos... qual é o correspondente em garrafas etc... desde que eu comande a máquina correctamente... como pode ver... há uma série de botões nos painéis... estas máquinas são autênticos computadores... tenho que dialogar com elas muitas vezes...

^{xiv} Em dez minutos se não houver nenhuma avaria podemos encher 300 caixas

^{xv} Danilo: Todos os dias tenho que estar aqui as 7:45... começo a trabalhar às 8:00... significa que diariamente vou estarei aqui na fábrica 15 minutos sem ser pago... quanto tempo vou perder em favor da companhia durante a semana?

Bernardo: 15 vezes 5... dá 65 minutos... é 1 hora e 5 minutos...

Orlando: Estás enganado... 75 minutos... 5 vezes 5 dá 25... então temos 5 e vão 2... 5 vezes 1 é 5... mais 2 temos 7...

Danilo: Qualquer que seja o resultado... está claro que durante a semana vou trabalhar cerca de 1 hora sem pagamento... agora... quanto tempo vou perder durante o mês?

Orlando: Vamos clarificar os números... 75 minutos correspondem a 1 hora e 15 minutos... vamos multiplicar 15 minutos por 4 semanas... vocês sabem que o mês tem 4 semanas... ok... dá 60 minutos ou 1 hora... mais 4 horas de cada semana...

Trabalhadores em coro: 5 horas é muito tempo...

Augusto: A reunião é um momento importante de preparação para o dia de trabalho... vocês devem vir às reuniões de forma a participarem activamente na regulação do nosso trabalho... é importante falar do que fizemos e saber o que vamos fazer...

Orlando: Sabe se a lei laboral cobre esta nova decisão?

Augusto: Esta é uma orientação que vem lá de cima... eu funciono como um veículo de transmissão dessa orientação... sugiro que vocês organizem um documento com as vossas ideias e as dirijam à direcção via sindicato... em relação às ausências... se vocês não as justificarem estarão a contribuir para a vossa própria perda de credibilidade aos olhos da direcção... a maquinaria com que trabalham... pode produzir até 2000 caixas por hora em modo automático... se a maquinaria for substituída por uma nova... acreditem em mim... mais de metade de vocês vai para o desemprego... e vocês estão aqui por dinheiro... as indemnizações que são pagas não são nada se olharmos para os actuais salários... há alguma sugestão?

^{xvi} As coisas mudam de dia para a noite... nos últimos dias as decisões da direcção até parecem cogumelos... e nós não somos consultados... mas nós é que fazemos o trabalho...

^{xvii} Diariamente tenho que saber quem faltou e registo os nomes num formulário próprio... depois mando para o director de produção, que assina e manda para os recursos humanos

^{xviii} Este trabalhador não sabe o quanto está a prejudicar o sector de produção... saiu sem que fosse substituído... passam garrafas partidas... essas garrafas vão ser contabilizadas como se fizessem parte das quebradas no nosso sector... quando já vêm quebradas do armazém... assim vamos usar o dinheiro do sector da produção para repor as garrafas em vez de comprarmos luvas, máscaras, auriculares... uma caixa completa é um pouco mais de dois dólares... se ao fim do dia passarem só dez caixas é muito dinheiro que será retirado do nosso orçamento... quase 250 dólares

^{xix} Quando tenho chance venho para aqui para aprender a lidar com estas máquinas... mesmo que isso implique perder o meu mata-bicho.

^{xx} O teu aluno ainda não está pronto... foi uma grande confusão logo depois que saíste

^{xxi} Tu também tiveste o mesmo problema... uma pessoa não pode dominar o uso das máquinas logo a primeira... é um processo... leva o seu tempo...