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An Exploration of Grade 5 Learners' Writing Development

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Abstract

This thesis examines the writing development of Grade 5 learners who participated in two writing interventions, The Mobile Literacies Project and The Gauteng Primary Literacy and Mathematics Strategies (GPLMS), which were conducted at the learners' school in 2013. The learners, attending school at Mayeke Primary in Orange Farm, a predominantly black township in the South of Johannesburg, composed texts in the two projects using different tools. In the Mobile Literacies Project, the texts were produced using a digital tool, an iPod Touch, and the writing was done collaboratively: in pairs; whereas in the GPLMS writing was print-based: using pen and paper, in which the learners worked individually. In addition, writing in the latter project was aligned with the curriculum of Grade 5 English as a First Additional Language. Using qualitative methods, different sets of data were collected to gain an in-depth understanding of learners' writing development in the two projects. Firstly, texts collected from the iPod Touch (for the Mobile Literacies Project) and the learners' Grade 5 English exercise books (for GPLMS) were analysed to gain an understanding of how the learners' writing development was enabled or constrained within the two projects. This analysis was done in conjunction with lesson observations, for the Mobile Literacies Project, and lesson plans for the GPLMS, which provided a picture of the pedagogy employed by the teachers to facilitate the learners' writing and their writing development. Secondly, interviews were conducted with different staff members and learners. An analysis of interviews conducted with two sets of teachers: The Mobile Literacies teacher, and a Grade 5 English teacher who taught in GPLMS, as well as an Intermediate Phase (Grade 4-6) Language HOD and a GPLMS coach, was done to find out how they conceptualise writing development and how the projects enabled or constrained the learners' writing development. Lastly, an analysis of interviews was conducted with 24 learners split into four focus groups of six learners. This was done to find out how the learners conceptualise writing development and how their own writing development was enabled or constrained by the projects. The analysis of the learners' writing development in the Mobile Literacies Project shows that the learners were allowed opportunities to write in relation to a context which helped them to develop a sense of ownership in their writing. Therefore, the writing done in this project was more learner-centred, encouraging the use of their voices for writing. In the GPLMS project the writing activities were curriculum and teacher-centred. This culminated in writing that focused on accuracy without reflecting any personal style to enhance a more meaningful

writing purpose. Within both projects the learners recognise spelling mastery as a sign of writing development.

Declaration

I declare that this thesis is my own original work. It is submitted for the degree of Master of Arts (Applied Languages) at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. It has not been submitted previously for any other degree or examination at any other university.

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Sydney Fetsie Maluleke

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Introduction

In this chapter I intend to provide a succinct outline of this study: An Exploration of Grade 5 learners' Writing Development. This involves elucidating what the study aims to do, the question it aimed to address as well as its motivation. The illustration of these aspects will be based on the following headings:

- Background of the study
- Aims of the study
- Research questions
- Statement of Research Problem
- Rationale

1.2. Background of the study

Most of the theories underpinning the conceptualisation of writing and its development provide a limited view on how learners from diverse social contexts develop as writers. For instance, the South African writing curriculum, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement - CAPS (2011) for Intermediate Phase: Grade 4-6: English First Additional Language subscribes to traditional approaches of writing that focus on teaching technical skills, such as: spelling, grammar rules, vocabulary and so forth. However, there tends to be no activities which enable the learners to apply some of the rules they learn in writing for meaning. The models informing second language writing pedagogies draw from different theories of writing which, by origin, were initially designed for learners in home language writing contexts and, in their implementation, little is done to consider the second language contexts in which learners write. These models focus on what Hyland alludes to as "language structures, text functions, theme or topic, creative expression, composing process (process-based writing models), content, genre and context of writing" (2003: 2). Some of these models, relating to creative expression in particular, may result in a crisis when adopted in a second language writing context, for as Cecile Badenhorst (2010) shows, they reflect western cultures which allow learners to give their own views. In addition, a crisis may arise in African communities specifically where learners (children) are acculturated in ways that inhibit the expression of their own opinions, especially while in the presence of adults. Therefore, subscribing to the views of these theories may promote a monolithic

understanding of writing that overlooks the influence of learners' socio-historic contexts on their writing.

Different theorists have sought to understand second language writing development. Among many of them is Paul Kei Matsuda (2009), who employs a socio-historic perspective to understand second language writing in the twentieth century. In his study he critically reviewed and critiqued theories underpinning second language writing pedagogies by showing some of their limitations. One of his critiques was directed to writing models that focus on sentence level or syntactic accuracy and he showed that writing activities based on these models were heavily controlled such that, when applied to second language contexts, learners merely reproduce certain syntactic patterns (2009). In addition, Hendricks (2005), who explored the writing practices of learners in additional languages, showed that most of their writing, involved copying. On the other hand, one of the popular theorists is Vivian Zamel (1987) who established that there is not much difference between the writing strategies employed by first or second language writers. Her conclusions are regarded as problematic by some critics since they are based on a small scale study of eight proficient second language writers. In relation to these studies, Matsuda (2009), Hendricks (2005) and Zamel (1987), it is the methodological and epistemic gaps which this study intends to address.

This study aims to explore the writing development of Grade 5 learners who are part of two projects being implemented at their school: The GPLMS (Gauteng Primary Literacy and Mathematics Strategies) and the Mobile Literacies Project. This exploration aims to provide an understanding of how novice writers in the Intermediate Phase (Grade 4-6) in a South African English Second Language writing context develop as writers. Unlike Zamel's work (1987) this study intends to explore the writing development of 40 students who participated in two writing interventions which differ in terms of writing pedagogies and the materials used to facilitate writing. The Mobile Literacies Project employed a collaborative approach to writing, where the learners write texts in pairs using a digital device called an iPod Touch. On the other hand, in the GPLMS the learners write individually by hand in their class work books.

Writing development is a complex social process that occurs over a period of time (Andrews and Smith, 2011; Lytle and Botel: 1988). Using Dahl's and Farnan's definition, writing can be defined as a purposeful act of "composing or expressing ideas" (1998: 5) using different tools, such as computers, pencils, language, words, word art, letters, and so forth; but it is

crucial to note that the use of these tools and the meaning constructed depend upon the writing context. In this sense, writing is a social phenomenon which Prior (2006) deems as collaborative and interactive in nature. Therefore, using a sociocultural approach to writing, this study considers Grade 5 learners' writing development in relation to their proficiency with language appropriate for a specific genre, mastery of genre, and an ability to generate and communicate ideas clearly.

1.3. Research Questions

1.3.1. Main Research Question:

How do the Mobile Literacies Project and GPLMS programmes enable or constrain Grade 5 learners' writing development?

1.3.2. Sub-Questions:

Writing in GPLMS and Mobile Literacies Project:

- What kinds of texts do Grade 5 learners produce in their GPLMS workbooks?
- What kinds of texts do Grade 5 learners produce in the Mobile Literacies project using the iPod Touch?
- What kinds of topics do they write about in the Mobile Literacies Project and GPLMS?
- What genres do they use in the Mobile Literacies Project and GPLMS?
- Do the writing pedagogies employed in the two projects enable or constrain individual learner's writing and linguistic development?

1.4. Statement of Research Problem:

South Africa is one of the developing countries in sub-Saharan Africa with high levels of illiteracy. The 2011 PIRLS research reports that almost 43 percent of South African learners reach Grade 5 without properly developed literacy skills in their first additional languages. I acknowledge that the PIRLS report focuses on reading, not writing, but making reference to it highlights the state of literacy in our country. In the past 20 years in South Africa there has been instability in the education system. There has been constant restructuring of the curriculum beginning with Outcomes Based Education (OBE) implemented in 1998, the Revised National Curriculum Statement (RNCS/Curriculum 2005) in 2002, and Curriculum

and Assessment Policy Statement (CAPS) in 2011. All these curriculum statements expect teachers to change the pedagogies they use for teaching a first additional language. The current curriculum, CAPS, adopts a communicative approach to teach language, which Ayliff deems unsuitable for teaching writing to second language learners because such an approach produces learners who are "fluent in the spoken variety but weak in the written variety" (2012: 49). In addition, Bax (2003) strongly denounces all versions of the communicative model because they fail to consider how context influences writing and such negligence may ultimately impede writing development.

1.4.1. Rationale

My motivation to conduct this study on writing development stems from my interests and experiences as a developing writer. My previous personal experiences of school writing involved doing tedious writing activities which teachers used to measure our development of different skills such as spelling and mastery of grammar rules. Although we sometimes wrote extended texts such as essays, I do not recall being taught about what writing involves except that it had a topic which we all wrote about. This reflection makes me realise that most of my primary and secondary writing experiences centred on completing classroom exercises, homework or writing tests which involved filling in missing words, writing dictation words, and occasionally two pages essays in each term of the year. Our teachers never set writing tasks to include meaningful writing exercises where we would choose our own topics or be encouraged to write from our personal perspectives.

Furthermore, we always viewed the teacher as the bearer of knowledge with the authority to choose topics to write about. This practice continued until university where lecturers, mostly in content courses, chose the kinds of topics our assignment would be based on. It was not until I joined a writing course in my Master's studies in 2013 that I experienced the freedom to take ownership over the meaning in my writing. As a result my interest and development as a writer were enhanced. With this research I intend to bring about knowledge regarding the dynamics that affect learners' writing development, when they are viewed as authors rather than recipients of teacher's knowledge.

Research on second language writing development has received scant attention in the South African context, with the work of Bizos (2009) and Hendricks (2005) being exceptions. This study aims to contribute to the body of research available focusing on intermediate level learners' writing development. In addition, it also aims to add to new literacies studies where

learners are exposed to writing, using different technologies, i.e. iPod Touch multimodality in the Mobile Literacies Project and print-based writing in the GPLMS programme.

1.5. Outline of the all the chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter outlines the background of the study and its objectives.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter provides a critical review of literature pertaining to the topic and question of the study. It also provides an overview of the theoretical framework on which it is based.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

This chapter outlines the research design. It discusses how the whole study was conducted: how data was collected and analysed, who the research respondents were and what procedures were taken to conduct the study**.**

Chapter 4: an analysis of Grade 5 learners' writing development in Mobile Literacies Project

This chapter presents an overall analysis of the ways in which the Mobile Literacies Project enabled or constrained Grade 5 learners' writing development. In this chapter an analyses is done of the interviews with the learners, the Mobile Literacies teacher and an Intermediate Language HOD, to understand how they conceptualise learners' writing development in the project. Learners' written texts from the Mobile Literacies Project were also analysed.

Chapter 5: an analysis of Grade 5 learners' writing development in GPLMS

This chapter presents an overall analysis of the ways in which the GPLMS enabled or constrained Grade 5 learners' writing development. In this chapter interviews with the learners, the Grade 5 English Language teacher, an Intermediate Language HOD, and a GPLMS coach, were analysed to understand how they conceptualise learners' writing development in the project. Learners' written texts from the GPLMS project were also analysed.

Chapter 6: Conclusion and discussion

This chapter summarises the whole research project.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1. Introduction

In this chapter I critically review the literature pertaining to the topic of my study *'An Exploration of Grade 5 Learners' Writing Development'.* This review seeks to explicate how different theories of writing address second language writing development in the 21st century. The review is be based on the following themes:

- Theoretical Framework: Sociocultural theory of writing
- Second Language Writing Models

2.2. Theoretical Framework: Sociocultural theory of writing

This study is underpinned by Vygotsky's *sociocultural theory* which construes humans within their particular socio-cultural and historical boundaries as agentic in developing tools such as language and literacy which they (humans) use purposefully in different social contexts; the development of these tools, in turn, impacts on the development of a society and its members (Smythe and Toohey, 2009). This theory conceives of writing as "a social act" embedded in "social practices" which relate to "social and historical contexts" (Cremin and Myhill, 2012: 11). In addition, it also views writing as social: collaborative in nature, involving the writer to engage in "dialogic processes" of re-reading and sub-vocalising ideas (Prior, 2006: 58; Grainger, Goouch, and Lambirth, 2006). The dialogue in writing denotes the communication between the writer's voices where "the self speaks, the other self listens and responds" (Murray in Grainger, 2006: 168). Furthermore, collaboration in writing entails sharing responsibilities: "division of labour and forms co-authorship" where the writer draws upon "socio-historically provided resources: language, genre, knowledge, motives, technologies of inscription and distribution [which] extends beyond the moment of transcription and cross modes and media" (Prior, 2006: 58). These kinds of resources enable the writer to reflect on the text to see if it meets its purpose or addresses the intended audience.

The sociocultural theory of writing also stresses the interconnection between writing, meaning and social context and their implications for school writing. In this light, Andrews and Smith indicate that writing is a "means of expression" which mirrors the writer's "experiences and knowledge" (2011: 41). This view challenges the kind of writing activities done by learners at school where the topics are assigned by the teacher while depriving the learners the freedom to develop their own topics based on personal motivations. Andrews and

Smith's (2011) argument advocates that teachers should eschew from imposing specific topics which may eventually overlook the learners' social contexts. In addition, defining writing as a social practice challenges the traditional notion of writing as a skill-practising activity that is cognitively embedded. The social conception of writing does not deny the involvement of mental operations in writing, but argues that such mental operations are dependent on social contexts. Using the sociocultural theory, this study recognises how the meaning of a text and the kinds of technology used to write are related to particular social and historical contexts. In this study, the two projects whose writing I explore adopt different writing models and pedagogies to facilitate the learners' writing using different technologies. In the Mobile Literacies Project writing is done collaboratively using a digital device: the iPod Touch, whereas in the GPLMS project the learners write texts individually using traditional tools: paper and pen.

2.3. Conceptualisations of Second Writing Development

In this study, the concept of development is understood as a process that occurs within a social milieu. This encompasses a person's "emotional, physical, spiritual, intellectual, cognitive, moral, experiential, social or maturational" growth or change "over a period of time" (Andrews and Smith, 2011: 31). The conceptualisation of writing development, that this research adopts, is based on the definition of 'development' that Andrews and Smith provide. Most of the models of writing that have been used to conceptualise second language learners' writing take into account the "complex interactions of individual learners' processes, products, and the socio-cultural contexts which affect what and how students learn" (Lytle and Botel, 1988: 193). Taking into consideration the realities encountered by learners in their second language writing contexts, this study looks at some of the theories: specifically genre, process or product related theories, underpinning learners' writing in second language classrooms. Although these theories are adopted in second language writing, Hendricks (2005) also states that they were originally developed for learners writing in first language contexts. Hyland (2003) alerts us not to view them as polarised enterprises, but as representations of different interdependent options the teachers have available in teaching and facilitating different aspects of grammar. Drawing from Matsuda (2009) and Hyland (2003), the following second language writing theoretical orientations, which are also adopted by CAPS (2011) for Grade 5 English First Additional Language (Intermediate Phase), are discussed:

- Focus on Language Structure in teaching writing
- Textual Functions
- Creative Expression
- Process based theories of writing
- Genre based theories of writing

2.3.1. Focus on language structure in teaching writing

This study recognises some of the different debates raised about the significance of knowledge of grammar in learners' writing and how it enhances their development as writers. The study takes a contextualised notion of teaching grammar. It argues for the need to explore how "grammar might help young writers understand how to shape texts and make rhetorical choices, developing confidence in thinking not only about what to write but equally about how to write it to the best effect" (Myhill, 2011: 12). Writing based on language structure is commonly informed by behaviourist theories of learning which conceptualise writing development as a formation of habits. In this regard, it is therefore, concerned with learners' communicative abilities and grammatical accuracy of a written product. Adopting product-based models of writing, this perspective stresses the importance of developing "grammatical and lexical knowledge, [which are realised as a] result of imitating and manipulating models provided by the teachers" and this is often achieved through "familiarization, controlled writing, guided writing and free writing" (Hyland, 2003: 3-4). Writing activities underpinned by this approach tend to be highly controlled and typified by patterned ways of using language and constructing sentences. As observed by Hendricks in her examination of writing activities in first additional language writing contexts, language-focused writing activities tend to be tedious and dull. They involve what she refers to as "scribing" rather than "composing" (2005: 47). In addition, definitions of these two notions are provided below:

> composing denotes writing activities and tasks in which the learners convey their own meaning about a topic for purpose of communicating thoughts and/or feelings, while scribing denotes writing activities and tasks in which the learners practice content and knowledge and grammatical accuracy. Though the purpose for classroom writing is central to this definition, it enables the different sense of ownership learners would have over their writing, depending on whether they are composing or scribing.

Writing activities that involve scribing do not enable learners the opportunity to relate writing to their own real life experiences. These activities are normally characterised by "short texts [which require the learner to] to fill in gaps, complete sentences, transform tenses or personal pronouns, and complete other exercises that focus on achieving accuracy and avoiding error" (Hyland, 2003). This kind of writing encourages the learners to conform to certain fixed rules which police their potential to make free linguistic choices or use different syntactic strategies. Hendricks (2005: 48) argues that this kind of writing is "intended to develop learners' understanding of grammatical structures and rules of language. These writing practices exemplify scribing and reproductive performance". A problem with this is that "formal patterns are often presented as short fragments which tend to be based on the intuitions of material writers rather than the analyses of real texts. This not only hinders students from developing their writing beyond sentences, but can also mislead or confuse them when they have to write in other situations" (2003: 5). In other words, Myhill (2011a) argues that familiarization with certain grammar rules does not show the learners how those rules can be applied in meaning related contexts. Instead they are used to monitor how accurate the learners are and how much they conform to particular standards of using language. Therefore, in this manner language is presented as static and independent of the writer's intention.

Grammar-based writing pedagogies:

After evaluating the basic tenets of the form focus of second language writing, the question that arises is about how effectively grammar can be taught or incorporated in teaching writing. Among different grammar-based pedagogies, some advocate the need to teach the technical aspects (rules) of language independently of the writing task, whereas, other writing pedagogies argue that grammar teaching needs to be taught in the context of writing. What is also important to consider about the effectiveness of these pedagogies is how teachers feel about grammar and teaching it in general. The discussion of grammar pedagogies is underpinned by the following sub-themes:

- Teaching grammar in relation to form
- Teaching grammar in relation to context

Teaching Grammar in relation to form

One of the ways in which grammar is taught in second language classrooms is through lessons designated to focus on specific aspects of language – tense, adjectives, concord rules, pronouns, adverbs of time. Often such lessons, which Ellis (1998) views as focused on form, treat these language aspects in isolation from writing. In addition, they relate to the general conception of form as a reference to grammar. However, he also shows that it can be used broadly as a reference to language structure: "phonological, graphological, lexical or grammatical" (2002: 419). Teachers' pedagogic instructions are informed by the following pedagogic options: "structured input, explicit instructions, production practice and negative feedback" (Ellis, 1998: 39). Since the teachers' instructional choices represent their theoretical or research basis, Ellis (1998) chooses to refer to these pedagogic approaches as available options rather than methods. In elaborating how form-focused instructional options operate, Ellis distinguishes between two types of focus-on-form instructions: "focus-on-forms and focus-on-form" (2002: 420). In "focus-on-forms", drawing from language curriculum, attention is paid to specific features of target structure. This also involves the teachers predetermining how the teaching of those structures is sequenced. In contrast, "focus-on-form" instructions are oriented to meaning, and attention to a particular form "arises out of meaning intended activity derived from performance of a communicative task" (p. 420).

The first instruction option of focus-on-form, involves structured input. Teaching of language structures based on this option is planned (Ellis, 2002), and the teacher predetermines the ways in which learners induce an understanding of certain target structures. Based on structured input, learners are given activities intended to elicit their use of certain forms for meaning related purposes. In the context of learning the functions of verbs, learners may be given gap filling activities where they fill in appropriate verbs that will help produce a specific meaning. The second form-focused instruction involves explicit instructions: direct teaching of the rules of a target structure. According to Ellis (1998) the main intention of explicit instructions is to help raise learners' consciousness about how certain linguistic structures function. For instance, activities related to this instructional option are seen when learners are provided with a set of sentences in which they are asked to underline the correct auxiliary verb between 'is, are, and am'. The learners' judgement of the correct one will be based on the rules about where and how each of the auxiliaries is used. Thirdly, with regard to production-practice approach, Ellis (1998) shows that it operates on a continuum of controlled activities and those that allow opportunities for free writing. In order to elicit an understanding of a particular target structure through production-practice approach, learners

may begin by doing a 'controlled-activity' involving filling in gaps, then create their own text in which they are expected to accurately apply the knowledge of the rules of that particular structure. The last approach is negative feedback, which Ellis (1998) shows can be used in conjunction with production-practice, because the intention is to show the learners what is wrong. This can be done in a form of "recast, explicit feedback, clarification request, metalinguistic feedback or elicitation" (1998: 52). However, it is also noted that some of these approaches, recast for example, may not be effective if the writing activity is not meaning intended.

Although the learners get a chance to see how different linguistic structures function in relation to meaning, focus-on-form pedagogy does not enable the use of those structures in real contexts of writing. According to Ellis (1998) learners receive partial interaction with the linguistic structures. In addition, these pedagogies employ prescriptive approaches to teaching language which may result in the learners thinking that there is only one formula of using grammar. Furthermore, using communicative approaches to teach language (Bax, 2003), does not take into consideration the influence of the learners' writing context. In addition, not only should the factors impacting learners in their learning of a second language be recognised, but also those factors affecting the teacher. For example, in most second language classrooms the teachers are also not native speakers of the language being taught. This may open possibilities that they are also not fluent in the second language they teach, which may impact in the way they respond to learners' activities and the overall dissemination of the knowledge. Coming back to the main objective of this study, these kinds of concerns appropriate the question Hudson (2001) asks in whether formal grammar teaching can help to improve learners' writing.

Teaching Grammar in relation to context

In contrast to the form-focused approaches of teaching grammar (Ellis, 1998; 2002), the context related grammar teaching approach, advocated by this study, shows that the teaching of grammar should be embedded in contexts of teaching writing. It rules out the traditional notions that treated grammar and writing as two unrelated enterprises which are supposed to be taught separately. The concept of 'context', which is broad, does not necessarily refer to a physical setting like classroom in which writing occurs. As clarified by Myhill (20112b), here this concept refers to an integration of grammar teaching in the process of teaching writing. For instance in the teaching of poetry, context related grammar teaching implies that teachers

may focus on a specific linguistic form and clarify what and how it helps to communicate meaning effectively. In addition, she also shows that this pedagogic orientation "is fundamentally interested in how grammar might help young writers to understand how texts are shaped as well as making rhetorical choices, developing their confidence in thinking not only about what to write but equally about how to write it for best effect" (2011). In this sense, learners are encouraged to experiment with the different ways of using words and constructing sentences and this takes away the bureaucratic controls imposed by teachers based on the curriculum. Based on this approach, one way of viewing writing is as 'designing' (Myhill, 2011), because it involves writers bringing a sense of autonomy in choices about which words may best fulfil their intentions. Like designing, the designer's choices of action in a piece of art reflect their intentions of what the end product should look like. In this process, grammar should be viewed as tools that help to maximise communicative purposes of writers.

2.3.2. Focus on Text Function

Based on the theories of second language writing, another aspect necessary for second language writing development involves learning how texts function. This approach draws from what is normally referred to as "traditional rhetoric or functional approach" (Hyland, 2003: 6), which proposes the need for second language learner-writers to understand how different aspects should be organised to achieve ends or purposes of a text. For instance, learners writing an essay for academic purposes should take into account the introduction, body, conclusion, paragraphs, and sentences.

Teaching writing using this orientation normally focuses on developing sentence structure and how different sentences at particular stages of the text should be organised. The learners normally do activities involving "free writing methods, reordering sentences in scrambled paragraphs, selecting appropriate sentences to complete gapped paragraphs and write paragraphs from provided information" and, as Hyland points out, "one aim of this focus is to help students develop effective paragraphs through the creation of topic sentences, supporting sentences, and transitions, and to develop different types of paragraphs. Students are guided to produce connected sentences according to prescribed formulas and tasks which tend to focus on form to positively reinforce model writing." (2003: 6). This concern with text organisation encourages learners to take into consideration how their choices of linguistic resources affect their control of writing.

2.3.3. Focus on second language expressive abilities

The third principle underpinning second language writing pedagogies advocates allowing learners a chance to take charge in constructing the meaning of their texts: finding their own voice. This movement, pioneered by writing theorists like Peter Elbow (1987), began to emerge in the 1970s and encouraged writers and developing writers to reject conservative and traditional approaches of writing which are more oriented to mastering text functions or technical skills like grammar. Theorists advocating the importance of voice in writing argue that it "gives students (writers) writing strength, uniqueness, vibrancy, authority" (Badenhorst, 2010: 2). The issue of authorial authority has been questioned especially by Staplenton (2002) in terms of how it develops in second language writing context.

The term 'voice' is often defined as representing two dichotomies of writers' ability to express themselves as individuals or members of a society. The notion of voice as "personal and individualistic" expression (Prior, 2001: 55), adopts a liberal humanist view that recognises learners (writers) as having the agency to construct their own meaning based on their own personal inspirations such as "interests, energies, hopes and experiences" (Lensmire, 2000: 62), which are, as Mendelowitz shows, "located and constructed in social and cultural contexts" (2005: 16). According to Blommaert, recognising writer's individual expression enables them "to express things on one's own terms, to communicate in ways that satisfy personal, social and cultural needs to be communicatively competent, so as to speak" (2008: 17). In addition, writers' ability to express themselves as individuals also brings their sense of self, which is regarded "as dynamic, in process, multiple, and formed within relations with others" (Lensmire, 2000: 61). Lastly, based on these definitions it becomes clear that voice enables the writers to develop ownership of their own writing.

On the latter form, the definition of voices "as participation" (Lensmire, 2000: 57), relates to one's social identity. As Prior puts it "a notion of voice as social is also performed in practice when people speak as members of some group – projecting what they hope will be the recognizable voice of an ethnic or regional group, of a male or female, of a child or old person, of people who are well educated or not, of people who have some specialized knowledge (e.g. voice of a doctor)" (2001: 61). This notion tends to make generalisations about the kinds of views people identifying with certain groups may hold. This overlooks how due to socio-historic contexts voice can change and that people also have the agency to

challenge views upheld by social groups to which they belong. Hence, Prior (2001) warns against relying only on dualistic view of voice: as personal and based on social identity. Instead, he suggests the significance of recognising the influence of socio-historic background on how a person views the world.

In further critique of the dichotomised conceptualisations of voice, Prior (2001) suggests a third way in which voice can also be understood. The third view intends to propose a socio-historic conception that amalgamates the personal and social view of voice. Therefore, he argued for three ways in which voice should also be understood: "as a typification linked to social identities, re-envoicing of others' words in texts (oral or written) through processes of repetition and presupposition, and finally, voice as it is linked to the situated production of persons and social formation" (2001: 1). These views help to understand that a person's view does not come from a vacuum, but is tied to their socio-cultural and historic context. Personally, I find the conceptualisation of voice as only personal and social to have shortcomings for it fails to recognise the influence of cultural factors in certain societies, for example a culture in which children specifically are acculturated in a manner that suppresses their ability to express themselves especially in the presence of adults.

2.3.4. Process-Related Models:

The **process related model** of writing is interested in the processes, steps or strategies employed by a writer when producing a text. In their book, *Children's Writing: Perspectives from Research*, Dahl and Farnan, allude to the processes employed by a writer as cognitive or "mental operations" (1998: 5) of writing. However, it should be noted that reference to the sociocultural theory of literacy implies that the development of the cognitive or mental operations is inextricably linked to social and historical contexts. The process models of writing began to emerge in the 1980s, pioneered by writing theorists such as Hayes and Flower. They showed that the basic processes involved in writing are: "planning or brainstorming, the actual process of committing to the page or screen, processing or revising, and editing" (Andrews and Smith, 2011: 61). One should note that these processes refer more to writing undertaken in school contexts than that taking place in non-school settings using different media.

Hayes' and Flower's Writing Processes

Some of the key figures in writing process research include Hayes and Flower, who in the 1980s proposed that writing follow three steps or processes: "planning, translation, and reviewing" (Cremin and Myhill, 2012: 16; Dahl and Farnan, 1998: 9). The initial step of "planning", writing involves "setting goals, generating and organising ideas" (Dahl and Farnan, 1998: 9), by brainstorming ideas and asking questions. The ideas are being drawn from the writer's own experiences and knowledge of the topic. In contexts where the learners write collaboratively: in pairs or groups, planning may also involve discussion among partners who bring different experiences in relation to the same topic. While "translating" the writer checks whether the ideas are connected coherently to effectively communicate meaning and in ensuring that the communicative functions of a text are fulfilled, the writer pays attention to the kind of "audience [written for], tone (voice), style, and syntax as well as the motor demands for producing letters and words" (Dahl and Farnan, 1998: 9). For the final step of writing, "reviewing, [the writer] evaluates or revises" by "adding or deleting ideas, words or any sections of the text which do not meet its rhetorical goals, writing environment and the kind of text produced" (1998: 9).

In most writing exercises these steps are presented sequentially: the learners normally begin by planning then translating and finally reviewing where touch-ups are being done. However, since writing may require going back and forth the process is "recursive" (Andrews and Smith, 2011: 64; Lytle and Botel, 1988: 195), rather than linear. In addition, Andrews and Smith qualify this by showing that the writing process is not "systematic" but "dynamic" (2011: 61) and the choices made about the step at a particular stage of writing depend on what the writer intends to mean in a particular context. Hence, Dahl and Farnan developed a metaphoric description of the writing process: "a twisting mountain with a lot of switchbacks" (1998: 8). Not only should the writing process be understood as recursive, but it should be pointed out that the different processes and steps are interdependent and work interchangeably. In illustrating the writing processes Hyland (2003: 11) designed a table. See table below.

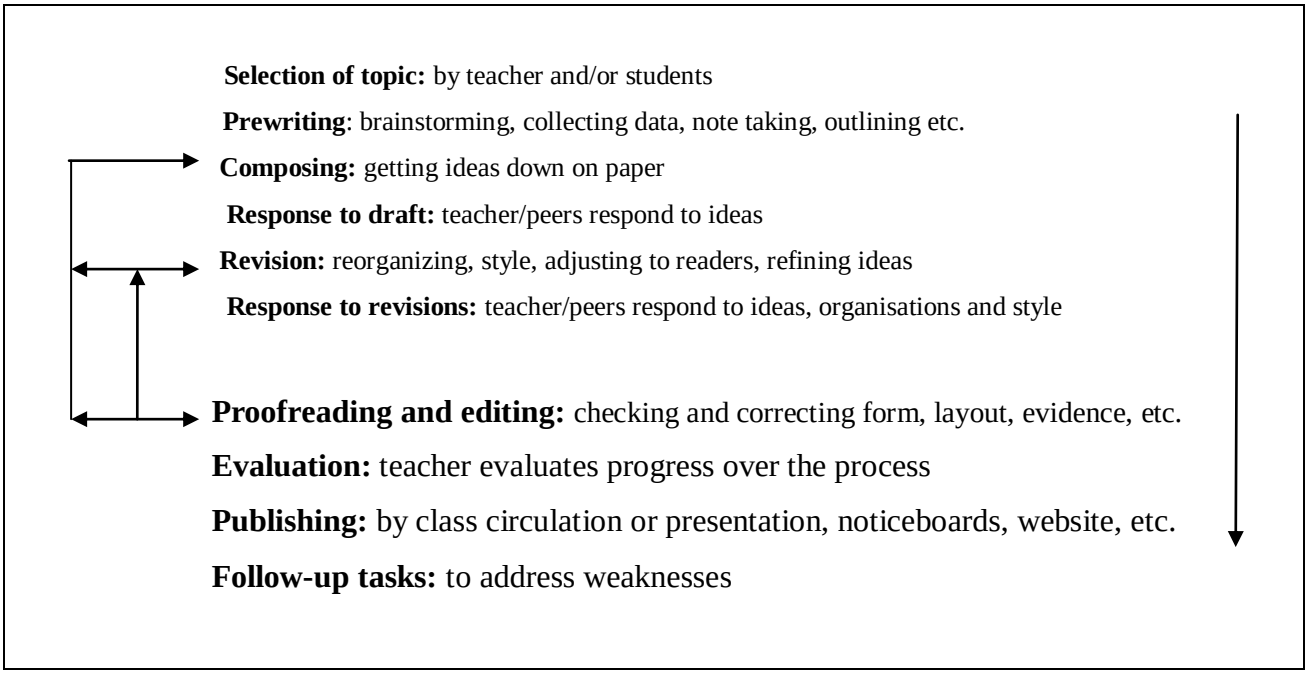


Figure 2.1: A process model of writing

Furthermore, in theorising writing, Hayes and Flower (in Dahl and Farnan, 1998) focused on the processes employed in first language writing contexts, which provides a limited view of the kinds of processes employed in second language writing contexts.

Since the 80s various research endeavours had been made to theorise the second language writing processes. This was pioneered by theorists such as Vivian Zamel (1987) who conducted a study that explored the composing processes of English Second Language writers. Her study focused on a small scale: eight proficient ESL tertiary students who were also enrolled for non-ESL courses. Her findings show that there are no differences between the kinds of processes involved in first language writing context and those employed in second language contexts. Through interviews, they showed that they engage in cognitive process that inform the kinds of decisions they need to take at a particular stage of their writing "several students reported having some sort of internal dialogue, a dialogue with an invisible person"; On the other hand "these students talked about writing down ideas, rethinking them, and then writing some more" (Zamel, 1987: 270). Although her study provides insight into second language writing process, it leaves the conceptualisation of second language writing processes with numerous queries. This is because her findings do not reflect the writing processes related to those of novice non-proficient young beginner writers. The process approach is one of the approaches adopted by the GPLMS lesson plans which introduce the learners to different strategies of producing texts. Therefore, it provides a basis in understanding how the texts were produced and whether the teachers understood

what process writing actually involves. In addition, focusing on the process approach also helps to understand how it can be incorporated in second language writing classrooms to maximise learners' writing development.

Models of text composition

Within the writing process perspective two models of text composition are established in order to draw a distinction between experienced and inexperienced writers. Bereiter and Scardamalia proposed that there are two models that differentiate between skilled and unskilled writers: "knowledge-telling and knowledge-transforming models" (1987: 5). The knowledge-telling model contends that text composition relies heavily upon the writer's oral language acquired through social interaction and experiences, and prior knowledge of a topic. According to Bereiter and Scardamalia, knowledge-telling writers' text generation is triggered and determined by "the topic and discourse schema" (1987: 7). The reliance upon oral language and information already contained in the memory results in the language of speech being reflected in writing. In addition, at a glance of a topic, the writer attempts to retrieve any relevant information from memory, and pays little attention to sculpting the text to typify texts of a particular genre and to achieve specific rhetorical goals. Dahl and Farnan (1998) also observed that knowledge-telling writers tend to approach writing in a generic manner. Thus, writing process behaviours remain the same regardless of the type of text, audience, or purpose to accomplish.

In contrast, the knowledge-transforming model followed mostly by skilled writers treats writing as a complex process requiring engagement of distinct processes and writing behaviours appropriate to achieve an intended goal. In this sense writing is goal-oriented, Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) claim that, instead of relying upon available information in the memory, writers depend upon aspects such as genres and content appropriate for specific goals. Therefore, the knowledge-transforming writers vary the ways they treat texts according to contexts.

In validating the arguments raised about the two writing models; knowledge-telling and knowledge-transforming models, Bereiter and Scardamalia (1987) (cited in Dahl and Farnan, 1998) conducted research in which they investigated the differences between writers deemed as unskilled and skilled. In terms of unskilled writers, they observed that their writing behaviours were generic across a range of writing tasks irrespective of the topic, audience, type of text or rhetorical goals to achieve. In contrast, they found out that skilled writers

"varied their writing behaviours" (Dahl and Farnan, 1998: 13) according to the writing demands. Unlike the unskilled writers they did not rely heavily upon prior knowledge about topic, but from experience they consider the rhetorical demands of each and every text.

Teaching writing as a process: pedagogy;

After this discussion of writing as a process, the question that remains relates to how the different writing processes have implications for classroom writing especially in a South African context. Different theorists such as Teresa Grainger, Kathy Goouch and Andrew Lambirth, (2005), Ken Hyland (2003), Sue Ellis (2002), and Andrews and Smith (2011), provide insight into what process writing involved. Although they mainly focused on the basic principles of process writing, their discussions can shed light in understanding how writing as a process can be taught to Intermediate Phase (Grade 4-6) learners from a multi-diverse South African context to develop writing. A discussion of different process-based teaching strategies is discussed in the following sub-themes:

- Teaching writing as processes
- A teacher of writing, an artist.

Teaching Writing as a Process

Different challenges have been identified with regard to the teaching of writing strategies in socially diverse classrooms comprised of many learners with diverse learning aptitudes. The challenges identified include what Ellis refers to as "getting ideas, planning and getting started, redrafting, keeping momentum and coherence" (2002: 36). Not only did she identify these challenges, but she also provided suggestions through which these pedagogic challenges can be addressed. In addition, it should be noted that, although they were stated according to her terms, they are still part of the basic processes of writing such as "planning, translating and evaluating" (Cremin and Myhill, 2012: 16).

Normally, most writing done in the classroom begins with generating ideas, and the learners, under the supervision of their teachers, engage in this process through group or whole class discussion. In her critique of these two approaches: group and class discussion, Sue Ellis (2002) observed some of their shortcomings and strengths. She points out that one of the problems about class discussion is that it does not enable equal participation of all the learners. She finds that in class discussion, it is mostly the learners with confidence and exciting ideas who have a stake in the writing rather than their less confident counterparts. As

a result, the less confident may feel subdued and engage in self-censorship regarding whether their ideas are appropriate enough to mention in the presence of the whole class. Since class discussion favours certain learners, some of the learners may not receive an equal share of the teacher's attention. Having recognised some of these problems regarding class discussion, Ellis (2002: 38-39) suggested three strategies that can help to address them: "paired brainstorming prior to class discussion, clarifying the purpose of class discussion, and overnight thinking time".

Firstly, through paired brainstorming, learners may receive equal opportunities to participate and, as Ellis shows, this avoids having the learners come up with similar ideas, "it ensures a variety of ideas" (2002: 38). In addition, when class discussion is involved the teacher should clarify the purpose of sharing a variety of ideas, which may encourage all the learners to voice their different ideas with one another. On the other hand considering the working strategies of different learners, providing them with a chance to think overnight about their topics and the kinds of ideas they need may enable them to form networks of writers outside school which may help them discover different ways in which people think about the same topic. This may also grant sufficient time for all the learners, regardless of confidence or ability, to think through their own writing.

Although these ideas appear to be attractive, their viability may be compromised especially in the context of South African classrooms, perhaps due to the current curriculum statement, Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement - CAPS (2011), which is highly scripted and imposes strict control measures on the content of the lessons. For instance, the curriculum sets out a certain sequence which teachers need to abide by and also provides teachers with a certain target which they are required to reach within a certain period. Hence, there is limited time for learners to think about their ideas overnight since there is a particular target to be reached with a period of time. In addition, one other problem may arise due to the conceptualisation of what some of the writing processes entail. In the CAPS curriculum for Intermediate Phase (Grade 4-6) the learners write using 'writing frames'. Writing frames refer to a paragraph or piece of text with incomplete sentences which require the learners to fill in gaps. Therefore, in such activities, the writing involves merely gap-filling, which undermines the true sense of what writing entails.

Once ideas have been generated, one of the difficulties the learners encounter relates to differentiating between the planning and the actual writing. Often their planning turns out to

become the writing of the story. Teachers are encouraged to take into consideration how different learners plan differently, some are able to plan on the spot while other require time to plan their ideas in much detail. Sue Ellis categorises these kinds of planners as "complete planners or happy accident planners" and she shows that since some learners fall in between the two categories, a balance should be established to accommodate them, and one way to integrate them is through "bare bones planning", which can enable the learners to use "strategic decisions" (2002: 40) in focusing on certain details of a story or texts they intend to produce regardless of the kind of planners they are.

It is noted that once planning is done other problems encountered by learners may relate to drafting, redrafting and keeping the momentum and maintaining coherences in thoughts. This problem of drafting is normally caused by learners not knowing exactly how, depending on text types, sentences are constructed or how they should begin. One way of remedying such a problem, as Ellis (2002) suggests is direct teaching of how a story begins. This can encompass paying attention to conventional ways of introducing a story or sentences (characters, places, conventions, or situations). At the same time, the paired students can be encouraged to write their own alternative beginnings of sentences according their own ideas. This will allow them to gain ownership over their writing.

Part of the writing process involves reframing one's thoughts: re-drafting. However, Scaradamalia and Bereiter (1987) once commented that this process is problematic especially with novice writers who commonly regard redrafting and editing as replacing a word without re-thinking about the ways in which ideas are expressed. Ellis suggests two ways of encouraging redrafting, and that is through "short re-drafts, hard edits or focused re-drafting" (2002: 44). Instead of hanging the idea of redrafting on the whole essay, it is suggested that learners rather do consistent and frequent re-reading throughout the whole writing process or expressing an idea in two different ways so that they can have alternative to choose from. On the other hand, focused-redrafting involves focusing on a specific aspect of writing, be it "a dialogue, characterisation, setting, plot coherence or pace" (2002: 44). This takes away the discouraging experience of having to redraft the whole essay which can be very disheartening to beginning writers.

2.3.5. The Genre-Related Models

The process-related models came under strident criticisms regarding their viability to facilitate learners' writing development. Proponents of the genre-related models, Johns

(2008); Boscolo (2008); Hyland (2007); and Kress (1987) feel that the process approach lacks explicit goals that learners need to achieve as they learn to write. While learners are taught the writing strategies of: "planning, translating, and reviewing" (Dahl and Farnan, 1998: 9), they are not clearly shown how language is used to construct meaning for particular purposes in different contexts. Consequently, learners fail to understand how text structures and language use can differ with different text types. In contrast, the genre approach argues for a focused writing pedagogy which explicitly "provides a coherent framework for focusing on both language and contexts" (Hyland cited in Hyland, 2007: 150). My discussion of the genre models will be based on the following themes: a brief definition of genre, genre oriented theoretical schools, an overview of genre pedagogy, and ideal approaches to teaching writing in relation to genre.

A Brief Definition of Genre

The term genre is commonly used to refer to text types: texts similar in terms of structure, use of language and purpose in social contexts. Ken Hyland defines a genre as "abstract, socially recognised ways of using language" (2007: 149). On the other hand, Ann Johns (2008) who adopts a New Rhetoric or Activity Theory approach provides a comprehensive description of a genre as inextricably connected to society in which different social institutions determine the purpose, structure or language usage which is acceptable for a particular text, for example: academic, occupational, health (medical), sciences or economic institutions. Hence, people are able to recognise the genre to which particular texts belong based on their language or structure. In addition, new members of a social community are constantly inducted into the ways in which different text types are constructed. For example, new students at university get introduced to ways of writing an academic essay which is distinct from the ways in which an essay is written in high school.

Genres serve not only social purposes, but are also related to personal fulfillment. Texts can be used to set out school rules, express one's opinions, report events or document historical accounts, and a recognition of purposes may influence the ways in which writers coil words or linguistic resources within their repertoires: metaphors, imagery or other figures of speech to effectively communicate meaning. Hence, Johns conceives of writing as a "purposeful [act], [that is], at the very least, responsive" (Johns, 2008: 239). In addition, there is a relationship between the purpose and the meaning constructed.

Johns further highlights the power relations regarding who determines the kind of purpose, language or structure acceptable for a certain genre: "genres are named by those in power" (2008: 239). In addition, genre naming also depends upon the domain and discourse communities to which the texts belong. Purposes for writing can be "pedagogical or communicative" and such purposes can be achieved through what is referred to as "generic values: arguments, narratives, descriptions, explanations and instructions" (Bhatia, 2004: 60). Furthermore, she also points out that such values result in other kinds of genres, i.e. "promotional genres [which encompass] book blurbs, advertisements, and job applications" (Bhatia, 2004: 59). In addition, genres are also typically "clustered or grouped" (Johns, 2008: 240) based by similarity of purposes or writer's goals. Thus, within a certain genre group there can be sub-genres. It is also noted that genres are characteristically "conventional" (Johns, 2008: 240). This implies that text production follows certain conventions or common features such as "the text structures, the register, the relationship between the writer and the audience, the uses of non-linear materials (e.g., graphs or charts), the common fonts, and even the paper type and quality" (Johns, 2008: 241). This review of the different definitions of genre lay out a foundation of understanding the perspectives used by different schools informing genre pedagogies. The following discussion intends to give a broader overview of different theoretical schools informing the conceptions of genre and their pedagogies.

Genre Oriented Theoretical Schools

The genre models are informed by three overarching theoretical schools, namely: "the New Rhetoric, English for Specific Purposes (ESP), and Systemic Functional Linguistics" (Johns, 2008: 241-245). The first school, **New Rhetoric**, which is associated with the Activity Theory (Johns, 2008) asserts that people's cognitive abilities are influenced by the social context in which they live. Thus, the way people think about writing is inevitably influenced by the society to which they belong, be it academic or non-school contexts. With context of genre production being fundamentally important for writing, the New Rhetoricians suggests that writing requires identifying "the genre, analysing the patterns in the genre: content, rhetorical appeals, format, sentence types, diction" (Johns, 2008: 242). However, following the steps proposed by the New Rhetoric may become problematic for novice writers and English non-native writers who do not have certain genres in home languages. Consistent with this view is Hyland who also critiques the New Rhetoric's view that writing cannot be learnt in what they refer to as distorted "inauthentic context of the classroom" (2007: 151). He points out that this view overlooks the possibility of learners from disadvantaged

backgrounds who first encounter writing in the classroom. Therefore, the New Rhetoric approach to genre can be rendered suitable only for most English native speakers.

The second school informing the genre theory is, the **English for Specific Purposes (ESP)**, which is oriented towards the language and structure of a text (Johns, 2008). This school focuses more on adult students who presumably are knowledgeable of different genres. Johns (2008) also shows that the kind of texts produced and the language used can help in making inferences about the context in which the text is produced and the relationship between the writer and the audience. This implies that by analysing a text, one is able to differentiate texts that belong to different discourse communities. One of ESP's shortcomings is that its pedagogical frameworks only cater for well-established writers and this is not suitable to novice writers' developmental needs.

The last school is referred to as **Systemic Functional Linguistics (SFL),** which Johns (2008), considers most productive and suitable for novice writers. Unlike the first two schools, SFL's focus encompasses the interrelatedness of "a text, purpose, content domain, and language" (Johns, 2008: 245) and their interactions in meeting the requirements of a particular genre. Teaching writing based on SFL is oriented to mastery of certain genre in which the pedagogy focuses on specific "key academic genres", such as "exposition, discussion and historical recounts" while "providing information about their central purposes, social locations, register, and stages" (Johns, 2008: 245). This school is highly recommended for novice writers because it equips them with the knowledge of how writing in different context differs for different purposes.

An Overview of Genre Pedagogy

An adoption of genre oriented pedagogy immerses learners into ways of perceiving writing as a purposeful activity that is embedded in social context. Unlike the process-related approach, a genre based writing pedagogy is "explicit, systematic, needs-based, supportive, empowering, critical and consciousness-raising" (Hyland cited in Hyland, 2007: 150). This enables learners to develop a clear understanding of how discourse structures inform the register and structure of texts. Writing instruction based on genre approaches "assists students to exploit the expressive potential of society's discourse structures instead of merely being manipulated by them" (Hyland, 2007: 151). Furthermore, this also raises learners' awareness of the interrelationship between social context and writing, and how social context informs the way texts are produced.

> "Perhaps the most important feature is that genre-based instruction offers students an explicit understanding of how target texts are structured and why they are written in the ways they are" (Hyland, 2007: 151).

Furthermore, genre-based approaches enhance both teachers and the learners' genre awareness. The concept "genre awareness" is introduced by Johns (2008: 238), and it refers to the writers' ability to adapt their knowledge of genre to different writing contexts. Teachers' awareness of genres and how they correlate with writing have a potential "to reflect on their own writing and that of their students, offering them a means to understand, deconstruct, and challenge texts" (Hyland, 2007: 151). In addition, reflective teaching also provides teachers with a general overview of their learners' writing development. This will also allow them to understand the kinds of genre learners understand easily and those they struggle to master.

A Genre-oriented writing lesson may help learners recognise how writing is a purposeful activity that responds to their needs in a particular context. Through a genre-based pedagogy, learners develop an understanding of how different contexts influence the kinds of texts structures, register, and rhetorical features appropriate in distinct genres. In addition, Hyland suggests different ways in which teachers can carefully "plan, sequence, support, and assess learning" (2007: 148), and a good consideration of these aspects may enhance learners genre awareness.

Firstly, in discerning what learners need to learn, teachers are advised to take into consideration the theoretical underpinnings, i.e. English for Specific Purposes (ESP) or Systematic Functional Linguistics (SFL), which helps to determine the ways in which learning is sequenced, supported and assessed. For instance, writing lessons which are based on ESP models pays attention to teaching learners a set of contextualised genres: genres they will use in specific contexts, whereas lessons based on SFL models require that genre teaching must focus on a wide range of themes (Hyland, 2007). Once the theoretical model is identified, teachers need to ask themselves the questions: "why are these students learning to write?" (Hyland, 2007:155). In addition, by keeping this question in mind, the teacher is able to identify and analyse (Hyland, 2007) students' learning needs, which will yield information about what they can do in relation to their context and what they need to do in order to reach a certain writing target.

Secondly, sequencing of learning ought to respond to the specific learning needs that the teacher has identified. The order which learning follows is based on three overarching principles: "determining the most critical skills or functions relevant to students' immediate needs, following the sequence of a genre set in a real world series of interaction, and grading genres by perceived increasing levels of difficulty" (Hyland, 2007: 156). ESP models specifically demands that the learning sequence should respond to the context of learning. On the other hand, Hyland shows that SFL is systematically sequenced which enables teachers to understand how students interact with various genres differently.

Thirdly, like process writing pedagogies, genre pedagogies also adopt a socio-constructivist approach. It gives "recognition to the importance of collaboration, or peer interaction, scaffolding, or teacher-supported learning" (Hyland, 2007: 158). These concepts are considered effective when they are based on notions of "shared consciousness and borrowed consciousness" (Hyland, 2008: 158). The notion of shared consciousness views effective learning in relation to learners' interactions with their peers, while borrowed learning scaffolds learning through interactions with a more knowledgeable teacher who understands a task better. Therefore, teachers are encouraged to be involved in their students' learning.

Scaffolding which is a buzz term in constructivist models encompasses "modelling and discussion of texts, explicit instruction, and teacher input" (Hyland, 2007: 158). Hyland further argues that teachers can facilitate learners' writing in relation to genre by providing them with a range of texts exemplifying certain genres which will enable them "to start, connect, and develop their texts appropriately while concentrating on what they want to say" (Hyland, 2007: 158). Furthermore, writing exemplars can also provide learners with all the necessary features of a text such as structures, and enhance their consciousness about the purpose of writing. When focusing on SFL writing specifically, Hyland (2007: 159) suggests that scaffolding takes a form of shared responsibility among learners and teacher's involvement.

> Here, the teacher providing initial knowledge and guided practice, moves to sharing responsibility for developing texts, and gradually withdraws support until the learner works alone.

However, scaffolding writing by providing learners with text models of texts may lead to some of the problems identified within the "focus on form" approaches where learners

merely imitate certain structure. Thus, writing does not enable learners to explore and experiment different ways of constructing meaning, but merely a reproduction of texts.

Furthermore, learners also need to be reminded about the genres which they might be familiar with. They can be the genres they encountered at home or other non-school environments. According to Johns, the text types which the learners encounter in non-school environments can be referred to as "homely genres, [for example], wedding invitations" (Hyland, 2007: 160).

Assessment of learners' writing in relation to genre

The assessment of learners' development of writing in relation to genre draws on current trends of language assessment. Following a "competency-based procedure" (Hyland, 2007: 161), learners' assessment must have a clearly defined "performance criteria" which will enable teachers to maintain consistent standards of what they assess, how they assess and what they expect of learners. In addition, a clear assessment criterion also helps learners to enhance awareness of what successful writing entails. Furthermore, in assessment of second language writing, genre approaches seem to be advantageous because they are "explicit" about the assessment criteria and teacher's feedback, "they integrate teaching and assessment, related to learners' writing goals, focused on competency: they specify student competencies and genre features, and focus on preparedness: they ensure assessment occurs when students are prepared for it" (Hyland, 2004: 163). Thus, a clear explanation of what is expected of students helps them to be motivated and confident in their completion of a writing task. When assessment draws upon "teaching-learning cycles" of SFL approaches, Hyland (2007: 161) argues that learners are able to become motivated and increasingly confident and independent from the teacher's involvement. In addition, a sense of independence will also help learners to identify the areas they need to develop and what they already have developed in their writing.

2.4. Conclusion

This chapter provided a critical review of different models informing the conceptualisation of second language writing development. As the field of second language writing is a new one, the models reviewed are adapted from the theory of writing in first language context which is interested in different aspects of writing: language structure knowledge, function of a text, use of voice in writing, and the significance of using voice in writing. The review focused

more on discussing the basic tenets of each model and also paid attention to the pedagogic approaches teachers can employ in their teaching of writing. The first model in specific, the language structure focus, as reviewed by Hyland (2003), Matsuda (2009) and Ellis (1998; 2002), employs a prescriptive approach to teach grammar for writing. As observed by these Interviewers, learners should develop accuracy and fluency in their use of language in order to write. This can be achieved through explicit teaching of grammar, structured input and production-practice activities, where learners get a chance to show their understanding of rules taught. Most of the writing activities based on these approaches tend to be very controlled, with little opportunities for the learners to take risks and manipulate the rules for their own rhetorical intentions. In contrast to this approach, Myhill (2011) introduced the importance of teaching grammar in relation to context. The conception of context she foregrounds in this sense relates to integrating and relating the teaching of grammar to teaching writing. She encourages teachers to view writers as designers, with writing as 'designing', which implies granting learners a freedom to use grammar aspects in ways that meet their own needs.

The other model such as creative expressionism prioritises the learners to use their own voices in their writing. However, this sparked a debate because some learners, especially in African second language contexts, are acculturated in ways that inhibit them from questioning things. Lastly, the two other models reviewed are related to process and genre approaches to writing. The former, process approach is based on Hayes and Flower's theory of cognitive processes involved in writing such as generating ideas, drafting and editing. On the other hand, the latter, as Johns (2008) observed, proposes the explicit teaching of text types by focusing on the purpose for writing certain types of text, the kind of language used and the structure the text adopts.

The overall review shows how different aspects of writing should be taken into consideration for the development of learners' writing. However, among all the models reviewed, none, in the discussion of pedagogic approaches teachers can employ made mention of looking at the possibility of combining the most positive aspects of the different models of writing (Mendelowitz, 2005). Since all the aspects of writing: language, expressive ability, writing processes, genre, and understanding of text function, are applicable in a single instance of writing, this implies that all the different models operate on a continuum and they influence each other. The writing processes and the learner's linguistic abilities are involved while learners write according to a particular genre. Lastly, from all the discussions, nothing is

mentioned regarding the teachers' role while learners are writing. Instead, most of the pedagogic approaches focused more on teachers' reproduction or regurgitation of approaches set out by each model. In contrast to these dominating approaches, Grainger, Goouch, and Lambirth (2005) suggest that teachers must be encouraged not only to become teachers of writing, but also assume the role of writers which will enable them to understand the kinds of difficulties learners encounter when planning or writing. Seeing their teachers also struggling with some aspects involved in writing enables a joint understanding of the challenges that everyone encounters when writing.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

In this chapter I discuss the methodology I employed to conduct my research.

3.2. Research Design

This study uses qualitative methods. Although some of the data is quantified, this has been used to support the overall qualitative approach to examine a social phenomenon (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000), and the data is represented in words rather than numbers or graphs. In addition, McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 321) highlight that using a qualitative approach also enables the Interviewer to examine "behaviour as it occurs naturally", and make interpretations based on the context. The study adopts "comparative approaches" to explore the differences and similarities "between two or more groups on a variable" (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010: 222). My research question is: *How do the Mobile Literacies Project and GPLMS programme enable or constrain Grade 5 learners' writing Development?* Comparative models enable me to compare how the learners' writing developed within the two different literacy interventions. In comparing the learners' writing development I focused on written texts they produced in each project, lesson observations. Lesson plan documents were used to understand the pedagogies that underpinned the learners' production of the texts, as well as interviews with the learners, teachers, Language HOD and GPLMS coach to gain an understanding of writing and how the projects enabled or constrained writing development.

3.3. Research Site: Mayeke Primary School

The school chosen for this study, Mayeke Primary School, was established in 1990. It is situated in a small township called Orange Farm in Johannesburg-South, Region D, 45 minutes away from Johannesburg in Gauteng. It accommodates learners from Grade R-7 and currently has an enrolment of 1200 learners who come from the same community and a neighbouring location called Lakeside. 95 percent of the learners are from Orange Farm and the other 5 percent are from Lakeside. Most of the learners speak black South African languages such as Sotho, Tswana, and Zulu. A minority of the learners are from neighbouring countries and speak foreign languages such as Shona and Kalanga. The school's medium of instruction is English although, Sotho and Zulu also dominate in communications between

learners among themselves, learners and teachers, and teachers among themselves. In addition, these languages are sometimes the learners and teachers integrate these languages while code-switching during lessons. However, their use is dominant mostly in outside classroom contexts. This school was chosen for the running of the Mobile Literacies Project in which I was involved as one of the Interviewers. Since my research was part of the larger project, the site was in a sense chosen for me. It meets the criteria for the larger project as a well a typical, but functional, township government school. As part also of the GPLMS, the school suited my research.

Orange Farm, the location in which the school is situated is a peri-urban residential area formerly designated for black people under apartheid and 20 years after democracy it remains black dominated. Although it is a multilingual and multicultural speech community it is dominated by Sotho speaking people. In this area, most people live under extremely poor conditions with only some having running water, electricity and sanitation in their households and others living in shacks or RDP houses.

3.4. Research Participants

Participants' Profiles

In this section I intend to provide detailed descriptions of the profiles of the participants in my study and the methods used to select them. The participants comprised of the following staff and learners:

- 40 learners who produced texts, with 24 learners in four focus groups of six learners
- Thobeka – The Mobile Literacies teacher
- Flora – the Grade 5 English teacher
- Selina – the Language HOD
- Thembi – the GPLMS coach

The Learners

In finding out how the two programmes: the Mobile Literacies Project and GPLMS enabled or constrained the learners' writing development**,** interviews were conducted with 24 learners in four focus groups of 6. The learners were selected from the class of Grade 5 learners which was selected for the Mobile Literacies Project, and also part of the GPLMS programme. The learners, aged between 10-12 years, male and female, come from the same community,

Orange Farm where the school is situated. As typical of the multilingual context of the community, the learners are able to communicate in different languages such as Sotho and Zulu which are dominant. The methods used to select the learners for the interviews are described below.

Each focus group consisted of six learners. The learners were selected according to the pairs in which they produced texts in the Mobile Literacies Project. This selection method was intended to provide information about how the learners conceptualised their writing development from both projects: through collaborative writing in the Mobile Literacies Project using the iPod Touch and the individual writing in their English exercise books through the GPLMS programme. Figure 4.1 illustrates the age range and gender differences between the participants.

Figure 3.1

		Focus Group 1	**Focus Group 2**	**Focus Group 3**	**Focus Group 4**
Gender	**Male**	0	0	4	4
	Female	6	6	2	2
Age		10-12 years old	10-12 years old	10-12 years old	10-12 years old

Thobeka - The Mobile Literacies teacher

Thobeka is a Grade 5 Life Skills teacher at Mayeke Primary School who was also chosen to teach in the Mobile Literacies Project. She is the class teacher of the Grade 5 class in which the Mobile Literacies Project was conducted and this was also the class with which I interacted for data collection. In addition, she was the one who conducted the Mobile Literacies Project lessons, thus she understands how the learners produced the texts using the iPod Touch devices. The interview with Thobeka was intended to find out how she thinks the learners' writing was enabled or constrained by the Mobile Literacies Project.

Thobeka was born and bred in the Free State province, Koppies village, where she did her primary schooling before moving to Sharpeville, in Gauteng province, where she attended secondary school. As she comes from a Sotho speaking community, Sesotho is her home language, and she also speaks other languages such as English, Zulu, and Afrikaans, second languages. Because of work, she is currently living in Sebokeng (Gauteng) which is 18 minutes away from Orange Farm.

After completing her matric (Grade 12) in 1994, Thobeka went straight to college in Kroonstad, where she obtained a teaching diploma, Junior Primary Teaching Diploma (Foundation Phase – Grade 1-3) in 1997. Due to lack of teaching job opportunities at the time, from 1998 she worked as an ABET (Adult Basic Education and Training) instructor but later resigned when she got a teaching job at Kroonstad Correctional Services where she worked for one and half years. Following that she worked as a primary school teacher for four years until she was employed at Mayeke Primary School in 2008 where she is currently employed. Due to a shortage of teachers when she arrived at Mayeke, she was allocated to teach English and Life Skills in Intermediate Phase (Grade 4-6), although she is trained for Foundation Phase.

Flora – Grade 5 English Teacher

Flora, the GPLMS teacher, is the learners' Grade 5 English teacher at Mayeke Primary School. As an English teacher working under the GPLMS programme, but not involved in the Mobile Literacies Project, she was interviewed to find out how she conceptualised the extent to which GPLMS enabled or constrained the Grade 5 learners' writing development. She was born and raised in the Vaal and speaks Sesotho as her first language but can also communicate in other languages such as Zulu, Afrikaans and English. She is a qualified Foundation Phase's teacher and obtained her teacher qualification, a Junior Primary Teaching Diploma (JPTD), from one of the former teachers' training colleges in the Vaal area. She began teaching in the late 80s but joined Mayeke Primary School around 1992. She has taught in various grades ranging from Foundation to Inter-senior phase.

Selina – Language HOD

Selina is a Grade 5 Life Orientation and Sesotho teacher who has 24 years of experience as an educator. She is currently the Language HOD at Intermediate Phase and she was chosen to monitor the Mobile Literacies Project at the school as well as to liaise with the Mobile Literacies Project team. As the Language HOD of the phase, she is the one who monitors the language teachers' work and learners' work on a regular basis. Therefore, her role in this study was also to provide information about how she perceived the two projects: the Mobile Literacies Project and GPLMS in enabling or constraining the learners' writing development.

Selina was born in the Free State province where she grew up, attended school and trained as a teacher. She is Sotho speaking, but she can also communicate in English, Zulu and Afrikaans. She lives in Sedibeng, a black township in Vereeniging, which is 35 minutes from Orange Farm. She is a qualified educator who has a 3 year teaching diploma, Junior Primary Teaching Diploma (JPTD), which she obtained in 1990 at one of the former colleges of education in the Free State. She trained as a Foundation Phase teacher (Grade 1-3). In developing herself further as an educator, she also holds a Further Diploma in Teaching, BA degree and Honours in Education – specialising in Educational Psychology. She joined Mayeke Primary School in 1991 and it is the only school she has been teaching at since graduating from college. She has taught mainly in the Foundation Phase but currently teaches Sesotho and Life Orientation in the Intermediate Phase, for which she is the head of the language department.

Thembi – GPLMS Coach

Thembi, the GPLMS coach, is a retired teacher who has taught for more than 3 decades, from 1978 to 2014. Throughout her career she has been a language teacher. She first taught English and Northern Sotho at a primary school in Soweto from 1978 to 1981. In 1982, due to a shortage of teachers in black schools, she was forced to go and teach in high school where she only taught Grade 10- 12 English. She worked as a high school teacher until she retired.

Thembi, born Pedi (Northern Sotho), was born in Soweto in Naledi, one of the sections previously designated for Sotho speaking people: Pedis, Tswanas and Sothos. As typical of the Soweto townships, she grew up in a multicultural community and she learned to speak Zulu, Venda, Xhosa, Tsonga and so forth. She qualified as a teacher in 1977 after doing a two year diploma, Primary Teacher's Diploma, at the former Johannesburg College of Education which allowed her to only teach at a primary school level.

In order to be recognised as qualified for teaching in high school, she completed a one year certificate, SEC (Secondary Teaching Certificate). She did this whilst training and working concurrently in a high school enviornment. She further obtained other teacher related degrees at the former Rau (Rand University) – currently known as University of Johannesburg, namely: BA degree, BEd (Bachelor of Education) and MEd (Masters of Education).

3.5. Description of the Projects

Mobile Literacies Project

The Mobile Literacies Project is a research project aiming at introducing the use of digital technology as a resource for learners' text production. It was conducted at two primary schools in Orange Farms while working with Grade 5 learners. One of the schools, Mayeke Primary, was the one in which I was based. In addition, the programme was conducted in one class, a Grade 5 class. It values writing using digital technology (an iPod Touch) that learners share in pairs. An iPod Touch is a phone-like device that can access the internet. This project builds on the sociocultural approach to writing which emphasises that writing is a purposeful social activity that is meaning-oriented depending on context, rather than a skill that has to be mastered (Prior, 2006). It considers encouraging learners and teachers to view context as a relevant factor for effective text composition, where learners can collaborate and choose topics to write about freely. It also gives teachers the freedom to select methods appropriate for facilitation of learners' writing development. In this project learners compose texts in pairs, where text composition includes sending messages, taking photographs and videos, and commenting on each other's texts.

Gauteng Primary Literacy and Mathematics Strategies (GPLMS)

Gauteng Primary Literacy and Mathematic Strategies (GPLMS), is a government programme that aims to improve Gauteng primary learners' literacy and numeracy skills. This programme closely aligns with the current curriculum statement, CAPS, and the learners compose texts using print-based technology (books and pens), and writing is done individually. In contrast to the Mobile Literacies Project, teacher's writing pedagogy is prescribed by documents which give instructions about curriculum coverage and sequencing. in terms of what they should achieve on a specific date and how teaching of writing should be sequenced. In this programme learner' writing includes writing spelling tests and using words in a sentence, writing dictation sentences, and marking each other's work. This project has coaches who monitor teacher's implementation of the prescribed pedagogy.

It is worth noting that, although the two programmes, the Mobile Literacies Project and GPLMS, employed different technologies and pedagogical approaches to teaching writing, the Grade 5 learners with whom I interacted in this study experienced them concurrently. Each of them had a slot in the normal school time-table of the Grade 5 classes.

3.6. Data Collection Methods

This research worked with three sets of comparative data which was collected in the two projects: the Mobile Literacies Project and GPLMS. An illustration of the data is provided in the table below, Figure 3.1.

Mobile Literacies Project	**GPLMS Project**
Texts produced in pairs using the iPod Touch: **Touch texts**	Texts produced in the class exercise books: **GPLMS texts**
Lesson Observations – Mobile Literacies Lessons	**Scripts-** GPLMS documents
Interviews with the Grade 5 Mobile Literacies teacher.	Interview with GPLMS English teacher for Grade 5 Interview – GPLMS coach
Interviews with Grade 5 learners in both projects. Other interviews were conducted with the Intermediate Head of Language Department supervising both projects.	

3.6.1. Written Texts

Firstly, the examination of Grade 5 learners' writing development was mainly based on the texts they produce in the two projects: Mobile Literacies and GPLMS. The texts produced in the Mobile Literacies are referred to as 'Touch texts', because they were produced by touching the screen of the iPod Touch. The texts produced in the GPLMS project are referred to as 'GPLMS texts'. Hence, the texts were compared to find out how writing development was enabled or constrained in each project. In total there were forty learners who participated in both projects. In the Mobile Literacies lessons, the texts were produced by twenty pairs of learners, whereas in GPLMS 40 learners produced the texts individually in their exercise books. Therefore, I had twenty sets of texts belonging to the Mobile Literacies lessons for each pair of learners, and forty from the GPLMS exercise books.

However, not all the learners wrote all the exercises and some did not write them completely. This impacted on my selection of the texts to analyse. Therefore, my selection of the texts focused only on those of the learners who wrote all the exercises assigned throughout the year and completed them. This enabled me to gain an in-depth understanding of their writing

development procress. In the Mobile Literacies Project only 12 pairs of learners wrote their work completely. I looked at the list of the learners who had completed all the activities and chose the texts after every count of three. Thus, I chose the texts produced by the third pair, the sixth, the ninth and the twelfths pair. 3.

The method of selection employed while selecting the Touch Texts was also used when selecting the GPLMS texts. However, there was a difference because the texts selected for GPLMS were produced the learners individually. Although the learners worked individually, the selection process took into consideration examining the writing development of the same learner as in the Mobile Literacies Project. This entailed looking at the texts produced by individual learners from two pairs. However, not all of the learners from the four pairs who produced the texts in the Mobile Literacies Project wrote all their activities completely. Only two individual learners from different pairs completed theirs. Therefore, two more learners' texts outside the pairs were chosen for analysis. This meant that the analysis followed the writing development of two learners from both project while writing collaboratively and while writing individual, as well as the analysis of two learners' texts from an individual writing point of view.

3.6.2. Classroom Observation

Secondly, as a member of the Mobile Literacies Research Project team I already had classroom observation field notes which were collected two times a week from April until October 2013. I collected some of the notes personally once a week and the rest were collected by my colleagues, other Interviewers in the project, who visited the school on the other days of the week. Although I did not have primary experience with some of the lessons observed, as consistent with Swann (1994), observations enabled me to observe people's interactions and behaviours as they occur naturally. They also helped me to understand the pedagogy which was used by the teacher in facilitating learners' text production. All the observation data collected were stored as field notes. Classroom observations were not done during the GPLMS lessons for I did not get permission from the department to do so. However, I have sought to evaluate the GPLMS lesson plan documents that informed teachers' writing pedagogies and the learners' text production. As these are highly prescriptive they provided insight into what the coaches expected teachers to do in the classroom.

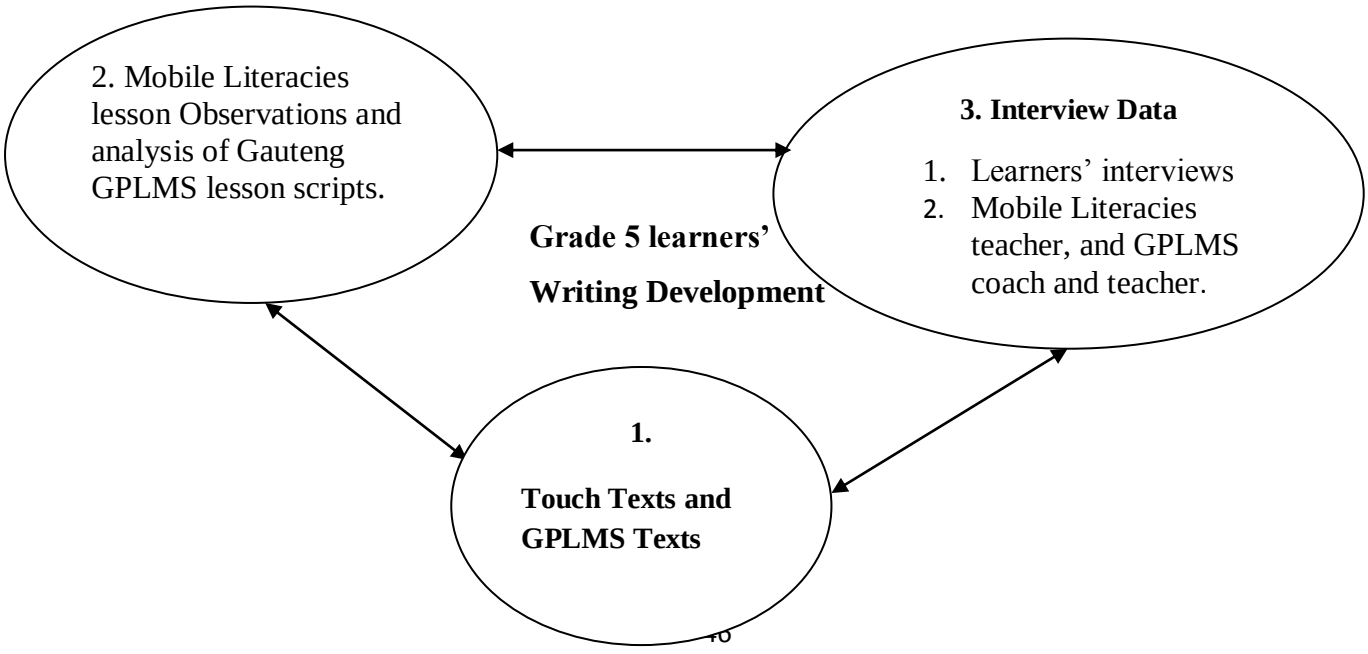
3.6.3. Interviews

Lastly, data was also collected through semi-structured interviews and the respondents included twenty-four learners who were part of the Grade 5 class that participated in the Mobile Literacies and the GPLMS project in 2013, two Grade 5 teachers (one from Mobile Literacies Project, one from GPLMS), one GPLMS coach and the Intermediate Phase Language HOD from the school. Four focus groups of six learners each were selected randomly for interviews to find out how they believe their involvement in the two projects allowed for or constrained their development as writers.

The interview data collected from the GPLMS and Mobile Literacies teachers provided insight on their views of the extent to which the writing pedagogies advocated in the projects enabled them to develop different strategies for teaching writing and how the pedagogies contributed to the learners' development of writing. The data from the interviews provided information about how the GPLMS coach viewed the teachers' implementation of the writing approaches prescribed by GPLMS to effectively facilitate learners' writing development. These participants were selected using purposive methods.

3.7. Methods of Data Analysis:

The data was analysed through "triangulation" methods which enabled me to converge and "compare different sources" of data (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010: 379) to see whether similar patterns emerge.



My data analysis was based on three sets of data: Interviews, Mobile Literacies and GPLMS texts, lesson observations and lesson plan documents. Firstly, interviews were conducted with the 24 learners in four focus groups of 6, two Grade 5 teachers: interviewed individually: Mobile Literacies teacher and Grade 5 English teacher, as well as Languages HOD and GPLMS Coach. An analysis of the interviews provided a broader perspective of how the learners, teachers, Language HOD and GPLMS coach conceptualise writing and how the two projects enabled or constrained writing development. Secondly, the analysis of the Mobile Literacies texts was done in conjunction with the lesson observations compiled as field notes. Thirdly, GPLMS texts were analysed by drawing from the GPLMS lesson plan documents, which provided an understanding of the pedagogy and context in which they were produced. Overall, to answer the research question, the analysis of the data paid attention to the relationship between the teachers' conceptualisation of writing development and the ways in which writing was framed by both projects. All the data was coded as follows:

Learner Interviews: LI

- Focus Group 1: LI:FG1 - 06 June 2014
- Focus Group 2: LI:FG2 - 06 June 2014
- Focus Group 3: LI:FG3 – 27 June 2014
- Focus Group 4: LI:FG4 – 27 June 2014

Teacher Interviews: TI

- Mobile Literacies Teacher Interview: TI1 – 16 July 2014
- GPLMS Language Teacher Interview : TI2 – 16 July 2014

Languages HOD Interview: LHI – 25 July 2014

GPLMS Coach Interview: GCI – 25 August 2014

Mobile Literacies lesson Observations: LObserv

The analysis of the Mobile Literacies and GPLMS texts was underpinned by the following categories:

- Use of genre in writing
- Learners' ownership in writing: use of their own voices and linguistic resources
- Control over writing

Description of the Categories of Data Analysis

The analysis of the Mobile Literacies and GPLMS texts was based on the following categories:

- Mastery of genre used
- Learners' use of voice and ownership in their writing
- Learners' control over their writing

3.7.1 Mastery of Genre Used

The first category of data analysis focused on the learners' mastery of genre used. This category draws from Ken Hyland's (See in Chapter 2) definition of genre as "writing frames" (2004: 3). An analysis of the manner in which the learners understood the genre used, takes into consideration how they followed some of the basic features of genres such as how a text exemplifies certain text types in terms of structure, use of language, and purpose for writing(See in Chapter 2). In addition, not only does this category analyse the learners' mastery of genres used but also looks at whether the writing done was related to genres.

3.7.2. Learners' use of voice and ownership in their writing

The second category focuses on two aspects of learners' writing. Firstly, it takes into account how well the learners' used their own voices in their writing and secondly about their sense of ownership in their writing. For the first aspect, 'voice', this study subscribes to Mendelowitz's (2005) conceptualisation as a "sense of immediacy, presence and connectedness with the text. In addition, it also adopts Lensmire's (2000) definition of voice as the writers' expressive ability which gives them a sense of identity and uniqueness. These conceptualisations (as discussed in Chapter 2) also look at how writers can adopt multiple voices and use writing to express their emotions or feelings, opinions and views about the world.

The study recognises the interrelationship between the first aspect, 'voice', and the second aspect, 'ownership in writing'. Learners' ownership in their own writing involves what Cremin and Myhill views as "authorial agency and independency" (2012: 82), i.e. the ability to make choices about topics to write about. According to Lensmire (2000) ownership begins from the point where learners are able to relate the topic and purpose for writing to their own personal experiences, interests, cultural knowledge which increases their recognition of the audience of their texts and ability to express themselves clearly (see in Chapter 2). Therefore, the study focused on how the writing done in the two projects enabled the learners to express

themselves and take control over their own writing. However, it also recognises that some genres may not enable the use of voice as a means of creative expression although the learners may assume an authoritative voice in their texts like in instructional texts.

3.7.3 Use of Linguistic Resources and Control in writing

With a use of genre, a sense of voice and ownership in writing, this study also looks at how these aspects influenced the learners' choices of linguistic resources to enhance meaning. Linguistic resources refer to what Blommaert calls "sociolinguistic resources" or "communicative resources as well as knowledge of their function and their condition of use" which represent "the social, cultural, historical and political factors" (2008: 5). Some of the linguistic resources related to particular genres. Examples of linguistic resources analysed, as adapted from CAPS (2011) document for Grade 5 English First Additional Language, include the following:

- Use of tense, i.e. present, past and future tense
- Use of figurative language: simile, metaphors, personification, alliteration, etc
- Descriptive Language: adjectives and adverbs
- Use of formal or informal style
- Use of conventional phrases
- Use of chronological order and bullet points to signal order
- Use of time connectives
- Use of rhetorical questions
- Use of quotes from people and many more

3.8. Ethical Consideration

As a member of the Mobile Literacies Research team, I undertook several visits to the school where my research was conducted. Since, this study is meant for my own individual research purposes, I obtained informed consent from all the participants to interview them. In requesting consent, each participant was provided an information sheet explaining the purpose of the study and consent forms to sign if they agreed to participate. Considering the age of the learners, with the assistance of their teacher, I provided their parents or guardians with information sheets and consent forms in which they could sign whether they allowed their children to participate in the interviews.

I have also applied and been granted permission for: an ethical clearance from Wits University to continue with the research, and Gauteng Department of Education to conduct my study at the school and to use the texts the learners produced in the GPLMS classes. The information that was collected from my informants was kept confidential, with the ability to have access to any data, notes, and reports. However, confidentiality of the learners' interview data was compromised because they participated in groups. To maintain their anonymity, any kind of identification of the participants was replaced by pseudonyms. The participants were also assured that data collected from them would be used solely for academic purposes, such as Master's Thesis, conferences, or academic journals and books.

- Use of figurative language: simile, metaphors, personification, alliteration, etc
- Descriptive Language: adjectives and adverbs
- Use of formal or informal style
- Use of conventional phrases
- Use of chronological order and bullet points to signal order
- Use of time connectives
- Use of rhetorical questions
- Use of quotes from people and many more

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Chapter 4: An analysis of Grade 5 learners' writing development in the Mobile Literacies Project

4.1. Introduction

This chapter presents an analysis of how the Mobile Literacies Project enabled or constrained Grade 5 learners' writing development. This analysis is based on three different sets of data: texts produced in the Mobile Project using the iPod touch, interviews, and lessons observation. The interviews investigated the teacher's, learners' and Language HOD's conceptualisations of writing and writing development. The following staff and learners were interviewed:

- a Mobile Literacies teacher
- a Languages HOD
- 24 Grade 5 learners in four focus groups of 6.

In addition, analysed in conjunction with the lesson observations the Mobile Literacies texts provide information about the learners' writing development in relation to the following categories:

- Appropriate use of genre
- Ownership in writing: use of their own voices and different linguistic resources to enhance meaning
- Control over writing.

This chapter is divided into two sections:

- Section A: Conceptualisations of writing and writing development
- Section B: An analysis of the Mobile Literacies texts.

4.2. Section A: Conceptualisations of writing and writing development in the Mobile Literacies Project

This discussion provides an account of how each of the interviewees viewed the Mobile Literacies Project as enabling or constraining the learners' writing development. Their views will be discussed based on the following headings:

- The Mobile Literacies teacher's conceptualisation of the learners' writing development in the Mobile Literacies Project
- The Languages HOD's conceptualisation of writing development in the Mobile Literacies Project
- The learners' conceptualisation of writing and their own writing development.

4.2.1. The Mobile Literacies teacher's conceptualisation of the learners' writing development

The interview with Thobeka, the Mobile Literacies teacher, revealed how different models of writing influenced her conceptualisation of writing development. These framed her views regarding whether or not the use of the digital devices (an iPod Touch) and the writing pedagogy employed in the project enabled or constrained the learners' writing development. The discussion addresses the following aspects of the question:

- An overview of writing development in Grade 5
- The effectiveness of the writing pedagogies adopted by the Mobile Literacies Project to facilitate writing development
- How the Mobile Literacies Project enabled or constrained the learners' writing development.

Writing Development in Grade 5

Thobeka expressed a variety of views about writing development and whether the Mobile Literacies enabled or constrained the learners' writing development. Her views concerned the kinds of skills the learners needed in order to develop as writers in Grade 5. She expressed the view that learners in Grade 5 needed to master technical skills such as: spelling, and the development of independence. In addition, the development of some of these skills, spelling for instance, improved from their access to the iPod Touch's spell check.

> *In relation to the project I would say learners' improvement of writing manifests through the development of independence, improved spelling, and their enjoyment in using the devices. This enjoyment comes as a result of the device's ability to correct learners' spellings. (TI1; 16 July 2014)*

Thobeka's conceptualisation of the learners' writing development is informed by two contradictory views. On one hand, it is based on traditionalist notion of writing, 'the autonomous model' (Street, 1993), which necessitates learning and accurate use of technical skills like spelling, vocabulary, or grammar rules. In addition, these language aspects are learned independently from context. Her conceptualisation of writing development based on this notion can be attributed to the CAPS (2011) curriculum in which grammar and spelling activities are foregrounded. In further understanding of the reasons for conceptualising writing development in this manner, her teacher's qualification needs to be taken into consideration. Thobeka is qualified to teach Foundation Phase (Grade 1-3), where the teaching of these skills is highly emphasised. Thus inferences can be made that her conceptions of writing development are related to the phase of teaching in which she was trained to teach. Although, it should also be taken into account that teaching approaches might be different from those used in Intermediate phase.

Thobeka also strongly emphasised the importance of correct spelling: *'.... Improvement of writing manifests through . . . improved spelling [which also improved] as a result of the device's ability to correct learners' spellings'* ***(TI1; 16 July 2014)***, which appears to be an important aspect to her, perhaps due to its prominent theme when she was studying. This formulation contradicts the commonly-held view of independence in writing, which can generally be understood as the ability to produce meaningful texts. However, from what she said there is no obvious link between mastering spelling and being able to produce texts which have meaning. The inconsistency in Thobeka's view brings into question her idea of what constitutes writing and the extent to which she values classroom exercises such as spelling tests. In spite of the project encouraging the learners not to worry much about grammar or spelling, she also indicated that these skills improved from the project, as the iPod Touch could also check spelling, which also increased the learners' enjoyment of writing. In addition, the contradiction in Thobeka's conceptualisation of writing is evident in her comments on other kinds of skills which learners in Grade 5 needed to learn as developing writers:

> *A learner whose writing has developed is confident to express themselves in writing. They are also able to write fluently. Expressing oneself in writing plays a role in boosting self-confidence which is important for writing.* ***(TI1; 16 July 2014)***

In this statement, she suggests that writing development entails fluency, which includes one's ability to use language clearly and effectively to communicate. This statement contrasts with her initial comment that spelling development is a significant feature of writing development. The contradictions evident can be attributed to her being overwhelmed by two contesting pedagogic approaches to teaching writing and conceptions of writing development. On one hand, writing was viewed in relation to meaning and context (Myhill, 2011) and the learners were encouraged not to worry about to spelling and grammatical mistakes of a text. From another perspective, writing is viewed in relation to mastery of language structures and accuracy in using a certain form (Hyland, 2003; Matsuda, 2009: Ellis, 1998; Ellis, 2002), which is a common teaching approach in second language context.

The effectiveness of the writing pedagogies adopted by the Mobile Literacies Project

Regarding what affected the learners' development as writers, Thobeka commented on the methods of teaching writing she employed and those adopted by the Project. In initiating writing lessons, she recapped on previous lessons, while also providing explanations of how certain texts are written. These explanations were accompanied by demonstrations of the form of the genre which was being dealt with. At the same time she did not use a one-size-fits-all approach in choosing the topics for the activities but she instead granted the learners the ownership to decide on their own.

> *I used to recap on what was done during a previous lesson; I would then build on what was done by making links with a current lesson. Sometimes I would demonstrate on the board how a certain text is written. Take for instance when they were writing a recipe. I would show them where to write the ingredients, methods and everything else. Sometimes I would also encourage them to choose their own topics which I think helped a lot.* ***(TI1; 16 July 2014)***

In her lessons, Thobeka encouraged the learners to develop an awareness of how writing is a purposeful activity which is advocated by Johns (2008). She demonstrated the structures used for different texts types (genres) '*I would show them where to write the ingredients, methods and everything else'* (TI1; 16 July 2014). Although her instructions hinted at the importance

of purpose in writing, she does not comment on how language features play a pivotal role in achieving the purpose of a text. Her comment on allowing the learners to choose their own topics is advocated by Lensmire (2000) who shows that it helps the learners to develop a sense of ownership in their writing. The learners will also be able to apply metacognitive processes in ensuring that their texts achieved an intended meaning (Cremin and Myhill, 2012). This was evident in one text type the learners produced namely Mothers' Day cards. With consideration of their personal situation certain learners chose to write individually to their mothers or people who they regarded as their mothers.

In Thobeka's view, not only did the writing pedagogic approach and the iPod Touch enable the learners an opportunity for freedom and ownership in their writing, but it also helped them to engage with different types of texts. When she became familiar with the affordances of the iPod Touch, she encouraged them to produce multimodal texts: they shot videos, took photos, or played games. Sometimes she would tell them to take pictures or videos and write about them. This confirms one of the tenets of the sociocultural theory of writing that recognises the use of different tools to communicate meaning (Prior, 2006). In addition, it also relates to the idea of writing as a design (Myhill, 2011) which involves using different materials and media to best communicate meaning.

> *The iPod helped the learners to learn spelling and to understand that writing can be done using different tools like photos and videos. That is why sometimes I told them to go out and take photos and write about them.* ***(TI1; 16 July 2014)***

Her recognition of the multimodal nature of writing increased the learners' sense of ownership in their writing. At one instance, the learners were asked to take three photos of anything they liked at the school. They were then told to choose one photo which they liked the most and write about it explaining what made it their favourite. In doing that, the choice of photos was central to them and was based on their own discretions. This resulted in them gaining a sense of freedom and ownership in their writing.

From Thobeka's comment, it is also clear that the introduction of digital technology in classroom writing provided both her and the learners with an unprecedented writing experience. This experience included the kind of media and modes used to write, the purpose for writing not being oriented to getting grades, and the audience not only being the teacher but the learners as well. As a result such experience was utterly different from the usual writing done in the classroom where only the teacher, with more power to determine whether

texts are correctly written, is vested in the sole authority of the teacher who is also the only audience they write for. What is also characteristic of such writing is that only the linguistic mode is used to communicate meaning while the others are being neglected.

The pedagogy adopted by the project also helped her to develop a better understanding teaching writing. One of the key approaches introduced by the project was collaborative writing. The learners wrote in pairs sharing one iPod Touch. Through collaboration they shared responsibilities in generating ideas and writing and developing their texts. This was unprecedented as, through CAPS curriculum, writing still involves the traditional approaches where learners tackle task on their own without seeking assistance from their peers. The significance of collaboration in writing is emphasised by the sociocultural theory of writing (Prior, 2006).

> *The project helped me to gain more understanding of how I can teach learners to write. I learned that the learners must be given a chance to work together as writers like they did in pairs where they can help each other in correcting things like spelling mistakes. Normally, like in the other subject the learners write individually in their books. If they grapple with something they need to ask me as the teacher, but the project helped me to understand that they can become teachers of writing as long as you have shown them how they need to write. I also learned that I must use different tools which the learners can relate what they write about to. (TI1; 16 July 2014)*

Based on the responses from the interview with Thobeka it can be argued that she appears to be caught between two contrasting approaches to learners' writing development. On the one hand she makes reference to the mastery of the technical skills writing like spelling embedded in the GPLMS (2013) lesson plan document which the learners encounter in their school writing. On the other hand, as a participant in Mobile Literacies Project, she is expected to encourage the learners to pay more attention to meaning than to technical issues such as spelling. This confusion is encapsulated by her emphasis on how the digital device, the iPod Touch, helped the learners develop as writers *'the iPod helped the learners to learn the spelling'.* In addition, she points out a disjuncture between what the teachers had to teach in the project and what they are expected to teach in the official curriculum. This disjuncture comes as a result of a lack of relationship between what the learners write in the project and what they were supposed to be doing in the Life Skills period in which the project is run. Her argument proceeds to show that the kinds of skills they were being taught and the texts they

wrote in the project were unrelated to those that they needed to learn in Life Skills. In addition, although the learners were allowed to collaborate, the collaborative nature of writing that occurred in the Mobile Literacies class was only limited to learners amongst themselves, without taking into account the significance of the teacher's involvement in writing which Grainger, Goouch and Lambirth (2005) comments about. The project still reproduces the unequal relations between the teacher and learners. The teacher still assumes the role of authority which serves to confirm the accuracy of learners' writing and this reproduces the traditional approaches which are employed in the other writing classrooms.

'As the project was run during the Life Skills lessons, it should use topics relate to life skills, and all the writing done should be based on Life Skills' topics. It should also allow teachers to be on the same level with the curriculum'. (TI1; 16 July 2014)

4.2.2. The Language HOD's views of the learners' writing development in the Mobile Literacies Project

According to Selina, the language HOD, the Mobile Literacies Project did not enable the learners' writing development. Based on the interview conducted with her, there are factors that constrained the development. These factors include the teacher's and learners' competence to use the iPod Touch as a tool for writing. Rather as in the previous discussion, her views were based on the following themes:

- Conception of Grade 5 Learners' Writing Development
- Teachers' and Learners' Development of Writing

Conception of Grade 5 Learners' Writing Development

In conceptualising writing development, Selina focused on the learners' ability to produce some of the text types prescribed in the curriculum. These included texts such as 'letters, reports or a paragraph'. Her conceptualisation differed from Thobeka's because it focused on particular text types and functions (Hyland, 2003) rather than the technical aspects such as spelling.

> *'Learners need to be able to write texts like letters, paragraphs and reports and make summaries'. (LHI; 25 July 2014)*

Selina mentions different types of texts which the learners must be able to write, but a paragraph, cannot be considered to be a text, but rather as an aspect of an extended text, although it is recognised as a text by the CAPS (2011) curriculum statement for Grade 5 English First Additional Language. For example, while writing descriptive texts, a learner is expected to write at least a paragraph in which they describe either *'a planned event or organise actions and events logically'* (CAPS, 2011: 55). Based on this example it can be deduced that CAPS influences the ways in which the teachers conceptualise writing and what developed learners in particular Grades must be able to do.

Teachers' and Learners' Development of Writing

Selina thinks the project had not done enough to enable both the teacher (Thobeka) and learners to develop as writers. She argued that the teacher did not show any evidence of development as a writer and teacher of writing. She identified factors which are accountable for the teacher's failure to develop as a writer: lack of relationship between the kind of

writing done and subject in which writing was done, and teachers' incompetence to use the gadgets.

> *When I look at Mobile literacies, it is done in the period of Life Skills which makes it difficult to tell if teachers are developing as writers and teachers of writing. It would be better if it was in an English class. Another thing is that teachers are not literate enough to use the gadgets. Some of them only experience technology devices likes iPods at school.* ***(LHI; 25 July 2014)***

Firstly, the writing done in the project did not relate to Life Skills which is the subject of the period in which the project was run. As the kinds of texts produced related more to English than Life Skills it becomes difficult to tell if Thobeka, the teacher, developed both as a writer and teacher of writing. Therefore, it could be suggested that the learners do the writing in the English period. This disjuncture complements Thobeka's suggestion that the writing done in the project should rather align to the curriculum so that the learners develop the skills envisaged for Grade 5 learners whose writing has developed *'as the project was run during the Life Skills lessons, it should use topics relate to life skills, and all the writing done should be based on Life Skills' topics. It should also allow teachers to be on the same level with the curriculum' (Thobeka)***.** Secondly, another factor that constrained the teachers' developing as writers and teachers of writing stemmed from a lack of competence to use the gadgets (iPod Touch) and to integrate them in their lessons as tools for teaching writing. Using the iPod as a tool for writing was a new experienced for Thobeka and this could have posed difficulties in her execution of the lessons. The difficulties can be attributed to the school itself because it does not have a computer centre which could be used to facilitate learning and teaching using digital technology in the 21st century. Therefore, this kind of disjuncture raises concerns regarding whether digital devices have a space in South African classrooms whether some of the older teachers, who have longer services as teachers, are not digitally literate. In addition, it also raises questions regarding the efficiency of the workshops teachers attended where they were taught about using internet based writing devices.

Thirdly, although the learners were able to produce different texts and employ cognitive processes (Cremin and Myhill, 2012) in their writing *"Yes, learners now can write different texts such as letters and summaries. They also can edit their work well"* ***(LHI; 25 July 2014)***, Selina shows that they still did not fully develop as writers. She then identified different factors which appear to have constrained their writing development.

"Mobile Literacies has not yet developed learners' writing. Learners need more opportunities to familiarise themselves with writing using the iPods. The number of periods they have per week is not enough". ***(LHI; 25 July 2014)***

Some of the constraints she identified are similar to those that affected the teacher's (Thobeka) development: as a writer and teacher of writing. Firstly, based on this response Selina shows that the periods allocated for the Mobile Literacies Project were few and granted inadequate opportunities for the learners to develop their writing fully. This could have also impacted on their execution of the lessons and pedagogy. It might have also deprived the learners of sufficient opportunities to become more competent in using the iPod Touch to write and this incompetence can be attributed to their socio-economic factors. Because most of the learners came from poor family backgrounds, Selina observes that some learners had their first encounter and experience to use the gadgets in the project when they arrived at school since the school also did not have computer facilities.

"Not yet, learners lack a motivation to write. For instance, they only experience an iPod at school. At their level most learners can only draw. I feel that the Mobile Literacies can motivate learners by allowing them to have ample opportunities to use the gadgets regularly even after school. The digital technology can enhance learner motivation because it provides a tool that varies from the traditional technology such as: paper and pen, a chalkboard which may limit learners' engagement with their writing". (LHI; 25 July 2014).

In addition, the learners' inadequate engagement with the iPod Touch resulted in lack of motivation which Selina thinks affected their development of writing *'learners lack motivation to write'(LHI; 25 July 2014)*. However, she observes that the project had the potential to enhance the learners' motivation because it provided them with exciting experiences of using modern technology to write and their motivation could be boosted if they received more time to use the gadgets '*I feel that the Mobile Literacies can motivate learners by allowing them to have ample opportunities to use the gadgets regularly even after school*' *(LHI; 25 July 2014).* However, Selina's comment on the learners' access to the digital device cannot be taken seriously given the saturation of cellphones in South Africa.

Based on the two interviews with the Mobile Literacies Teacher, Thobeka, and the Language HOD, Selina, it appears that they both argued that the project could have paid more attention

to some of the prerequisites for learners' development of writing. These include taking into consideration how the learners' and school's socio-economic factors influenced their use of the iPod Touch for writing and how they could impact on the teachers' pedagogy. In addition, the writing done in the project could have been aligned to that of the Life Skills curriculum which could make it easy to see how the learners' writing developed. Although I acknowledge these arguments, I question how much thought the two interviewees gave to the curriculum in terms of how and what could be done to make it relate to writing using digital technology.

4.2.3. The learners' conceptualisation of their own writing development in the project

The interviews with the learners reveal how prescriptive discourses such as spelling were found in their language classrooms and how curriculum influences their conceptualisation of writing and writing development. These discourses also dominate in their conceptualisation of how the Mobile Literacies Project enabled their development of writing. The following themes emerged during interviews with four focus groups of six learners:

- The learners' conceptualisation of writing
- The relationship between the use of an iPod Touch and learners' writing development.
- The role of collaborative approach in learners' writing development

The learners' conceptualisation of writing and writing development:

Part of the interviews with the learners intended to find out how they conceptualised development of writing. Out of the twenty-four learners, fourteen of them (more than half the sample) expressed technicist views which conceive of writing as learning technical skills such as spelling, punctuation, or pronunciation. These views reflect the kinds of comments they receive from their teachers on their writing and how they (the teachers) put emphasis on their importance while writing. In addition, these conceptions are also embedded in the kinds of writing exercises they do in the language classroom. However, although the discourse of spelling seems to supersede their overall conceptualisations, some also value meaning in their writing.

> *'You, you must know the spelling, and... and know the spelling and know to write the story that you want to write'.*
>
> ***Sipho (LIFG4: 27 JUNE 2014)***

> *'You have to know to write how . . . how to pronounce words and how to write them when the article start. When you have pronouncation (pronunciation) of a word is good you are also able to write the spelling right. When you end you have to put full stop so that you're, your work has . . . and you have to write things that have meaning. You don't have to write anything that comes to your mind'.*
>
> ***Valerie (LIFG1; 06 June 2014)***

> *'You must know how to write spellings and comment to the other people to check with others and correct them when they are writing wrong things. You will say if he or she his story is good'.*
>
> ***Ntsako (LIFG3; 27 June 2014)***

> *What you must know when you write is, you have to know the spelling. Think what you are going to write, think before you write and write correctly. Even if they are not correct they must see what you have written.*
>
> ***Nomsa (LIFG1; 06 June 2014)***

The knowledge of spelling does not only benefit one's own writing but also informs the ways in which they evaluate the accuracy of their own and peers' texts. As Ntsako shows in his response, spelling formed part of what they commented about on their friends' texts in the Mobile Literacies project *"you must know how to write spellings and comment to the other people to check with other and correct them . . . you will say if he or she his story is good*" **(Ntsako, LIFG3;27 June 2014).** Although spelling seems to be a dominant discourse, Valerie also shows that writing involves recognition of the purpose and meaning of a text (see Cremin and Myhill, 2012 in Chapter 2). This also requires employing metacognitive processes to ensure that the ideas one has in mind relate to the topic and can help in achieving the intended meaning ". . . *you have to write things that have meaning. You don't have to write anything that comes to your mind" (Valerie, LIFG1; 06 June 2014)*. Similarly, Nomsa also comments on the significance of engaging in cognitive processes of writing (Dahl and Farnan, 1998) which enable one to make choices about the ideas you want to write about '*think what you are going to write, think before you write and write correctly*'. Another learner called Tisetso also does not consider spelling as pivotal in writing development but instead recognises the ability to write texts which are meaningful. In addition, he shows that a developed writer should be able to produce texts that are related to certain text types (Hyland 2007) and this involves knowing how it's structured: where the heading is written, and how to write the introduction, body and conclusion.

> *'when you always write a letter you will always have good sentences and good spelling and the letters we write we must always put a full-stop and when we write a story we must always put a paragraph. When you start writing you must put capital letters. When you are starting to write you must have headings that have meanings'.*
>
> ***Tisetso (LIFG3; 27 June 2014)***

Furthermore, by adopting a formulaic product-related model of writing (Andrews and Smith, 2011: 45), this learner conceptualises writing beyond spellings and stresses the use of different syntactic strategies to achieve meaning for a specific writing task *'when you always write a letter you will always have good sentences....when you write you must have headings that have meaning'* ***(Tisetso, LIFG3; 27 June 2014)***. Although both Valerie and Tisetso emphasised meaning in their writing, they also regarded spelling as relevant in writing

development. Their conceptualisation drew from the kind of writing approaches adopted in the Mobile Literacies project and those they encounter in the language class and other subjects. In the Mobile Literacies Project the learners were encouraged not to pay much attention to spelling or grammar, but these are some of the skills advocated by GPLMS (2013) in lessons for English First Additional Language. In the Grade 5 English First Additional Language curriculum (CAPS, 2011) some of the learning outcomes include developing the ability to use possessive pronouns, using the dictionary to spell familiar words correctly or using the regular or irregular forms of the verb. In addition, not only are these learners manifesting confusion of writing approaches, their Mobile Literacies teacher, Thobeka was as well ambivalent. On one hand she emphasised the significance of spelling while on the other she focused on the significance of writing for meaning.

> *I enjoyed touching the iPod because it is fun, and the iPod teaches a many things, like if you have written the wrong spelling it will appear as the right spelling.*
>
> *Ntsako(LIFG3;27June 2014)*

> *We enjoyed when we wrote sentences and statements and the iPod would correct us if we wrote incorrect spellings.*
>
> *Gladys (LIFG4: 27 JUNE 2014)*

The relationship between the use of the iPod Touch and writing development

The learners' interactions with the iPod Touch seem to have played a significant role in the development of their writing. The learners tended to attribute their development in writing to some of the affordances of the iPod Touch which include grammar and spelling check. In addition, these affordances also allowed them an opportunity to enjoy writing.

> *I enjoyed iPod because it made me learn how to use the iPod and how to write the sentences with the iPod. And I enjoy, and I enjoy sending the letters to the others, when we were writing the sentences of the things that we are writing about.*
>
> *Tisetso (LIFG3; 27 June 2014)*

> *We enjoyed when we wrote sentences and statements and the iPod would correct us if we wrote incorrect spelling.*
>
> *Gladys (LIFG4: 27 JUNE 2014)*

> *What I like about the iPod is to read other people's documents and comment on them because it is a lot of fun, a lot of fun because it's a funny thing to do.*
>
> *Khetha (LIFG2;06 June 2014)*

The iPod Touch also allowed the learners an unprecedented experience of writing which differed from the writing they did in the other subjects. Unlike the writing they did in their

classroom books, writing with the iPod Touch provided an opportunity for instant grammar and spelling check and also enabled them to see each other's texts and comment on them. Therefore, writing in this way was shared and done for a wider audience instead of the teacher alone. In addition, this challenged the usual confines of the teacher being the sole audience of their writing. Here they become co-writers. In addition, they also tended to associate writing using the iPod Touch with learning English.

> *It helps us when it comes to English; it helps us to write the sentences and to write the full-stops and the spelling that I didn't know. But I learned them from the iPod, when I wrote them in the book I always write them right.*
>
> *Tisetso(LIFG3;27 June 2014)*

The learners' writing experiences in the Mobile Literacies Project were somewhat different from the writing they did in other subjects. Apart from using the iPod Touch, the learners produced texts in pairs, which they considered beneficial for their writing development. They showed that the collaborative approach used created a collegial writing environment where writing partners helped each other with different aspects of writing such as spelling and punctuation.

> *Working with my partner it was helping me to write because if I had forgotten something she tells me what I have forgotten; to put the punctuation marks and other things that I need to put to the topic.*
>
> *Deliwe (LIFG2; 06 June 2014)*
>
> *When we work in mobile literacies it taught us how to send messages and write the correct spelling. We helped each other, if one of us did remember the thing that we write about I would help her and if we write an incorrect spelling the iPod would help us.*
>
> *Gladys (LIFG4: 27 June 2014)*
>
> *When we were teaching other people the spelling that is right and us they are teaching us to write the spelling that is right. When we wrote it wrong, there is a spelling that shows it red and you copy that spelling and write it right.*
>
> *Vusi (LIFG3; 27 June 2014)*

The collaborative approach through which the learners produced texts enabled the learners to teach one another how different words are spelled, and this enhanced their involvement in their own writing. Based on these quotations, the learners also stress the development of technical skills which was salient to how they conceptualised writing and their own writing

development. Contrary to these learners' assertions is Bonisiwe, who did not perceive the benefits of writing in pairs from a technicist perspective.

> *What I liked about working with a partner is because helps us think and come up with ideas. Bonisiwe (LIFG1; 06 June 2014)*

Learning spelling and punctuation for Bonisiwe was far from being significant in writing. Instead she shows that having had a writing partner helped them both in generating ideas relevant to particular writing context. Her view drew from process-related models which Andrew and Smith (2011) advocate. In addition, writing to her is a meaning oriented activity that is context dependent.

This analysis produces a contradictory picture of how the learners' conceptualise writing and writing development. Their conceptualisation of writing development reveals that they are caught between different discourses: process, product, sociocultural and technicist models of writing. What emerges from their responses is that more emphasis is made on improving spelling and punctuation. This might be a reflection of the kinds of pedagogy and discourses they encounter in their everyday schooling. At the same time such discourses might be embedded in their writing curriculum. In addition, the learners appear to carry these discourses into the writing they do in the Mobile Literacies Project using the iPod Touch. They comment on how the device (iPod) helps them to learn spelling and English. These discourses also influence their conceptualisation of the role of collaborative writing in the project enabling them to develop as writers. They showed that they helped each other with aspects like spelling.

The learners' views tend to coincide with the ways in which their teacher, Thobeka, conceptualise how their writing developed in the Mobile Literacies Project. Like the learners, she also displays confusion in her conception of what counts as writing development. On one hand she advocates improvement of spelling as signs of writing development, whereas on the other, she comments about writing for meaning. Like the learners, her contradictory conceptualisation stems from being immersed in two different approaches to teaching writing which they encounter in the project (the Mobile Literacies Project) and in the curriculum informing their everyday learning and teaching. The following section analyses the learners' written texts to understand how their writing developed in the Mobile Literacies Project.

Section B: Analysis of the Touch Texts

This section provides an analysis of the Mobile Literacies texts, which the Grade 5 learners' produced in the Mobile Literacies project. The analysis intends to find out how the learners' writing developed based on the texts they produced. The analysis of their writing development will be based on the following categories:

- Mastery of genre used
- Use of Voice
- Ownership and use of linguistic resources
- Control over writing

Throughout the year, between April and October, the learners produced different texts using the iPod Touch. The texts written ranged from descriptions, play scripts, instructional texts, Mothers' Day cards, and many more. At the beginning of the project some of the texts the learners produced were limited to questions and answers, which resembled the writing they did in their language classes. In one of the texts they wrote, *Rosie Helps Hungry Children*, the learners were merely providing close-ended answers to questions predetermined by the teacher, which according to Hendricks (2005) involved scribing information that was not related to meaning.

1. Rosie Helps Hungry Children

Nomsa and Bonisiwe	**Deliwe and Ntombi**	**Keabetswe and Ziyanda**	**Gladys and Sarah**
Where does Rosie live? She lives at soshanguve. Why did Rosie Start making sandweches? because she was trying to help hungry children .who helped Rosie to help the children? church helped Rosie. Do You	Where does rosie live? Rosie live in soshanguve. Why did Rosie startyes making sandwiches? To feed hungry children. Who helped Rosie to help the children? The ompany helped Rosie to help the children. Do you think the children could work better at school because they hAd something to eat	Where does Rosie live? rosie live in soshanguve. whydidrosiestartmakingsandwiches?rosiehelpshuhgrychildren. Who help	Where does Rosie live? Rosie moved from umtata to live in soshanguve. Why did Rosie start making sandwiches ? So that the children could go to school without hunger.who helped Rosie to help the children ? They said they had a company

	before school ?		who could help her

In this text the learners appear to be answering comprehension questions on a story prepared by the teacher. All the questions and their sequencing are the same, suggesting that they were being copied onto the iPod Touch. Writing is being used here to display their understanding of the story, not to communicate their own ideas. This text typifies some of the writing done at school except that here the comprehension questions and the answers are combined into a paragraph, rather than presented as separate answers to discrete questions. There appears to be a confusion of genre. Is this a comprehension task or a composing task?

Because everything is predetermined and heavily controlled (Hyland, 2003), the learners have no choice about what to write and the activity constrains the use of their voices and their linguistic resources. It is nevertheless possible to see differences in their control of word separation, sentence construction, punctuation and prepositions. None of the learners uses capital letters for proper nouns referring to places; all except Keabetswe and Ziyanda have used a capital letter for *Rosie.* Every learner answers most of the questions with a subordinate clause only, which is a natural way of answering communicatively in spoken discourse, although in school, teachers prefer learners to answer in full sentences when they write.

This first activity shows Gladys and Sarah to have the most control over their writing. They give more extended responses to the questions and are able to construct excellent prepositional phrases such as *from Umtata to live in Soshanguve,* and *without hunger* and their final sentence has two subordinate clauses. The other students produce simple sentences. The students showing the least control over their writing are Keabetswe and Ziyanda because they do not use third person ‘s’, and they do not separate one word from another.

2. Mothers' Day Cards

Nomsa and Bonisiwe	Deliwe and Ntombi	Keabetswe and Ziyanda	Gladys and Sarah
Bonisiwe I don\'t Have a mother but I have my grandmother my grandmother treit me the way my mother was treiting me like For now I am calling her mother because now she is like my mother. I am writing her a Mother\'s Day card now I am writing it dear mom I am writing this Letter No:1	**Deliwe** Happy Mother's Day I appreciate the love and care you gave to me . Mom I want to say you are a special mother I ever had . From Deliwe your daughter.	Ilove mother so Mach and I don't wat to lost him thnk you mother'that thinks that Have you dan to me I love you so Mach mymother	Happy Mother's Day mom iwish you a lucky day i'want to thank you about taking care of me i thank you with all my heart thank you for everything that you've made for me and you've buyed me beautiful clothes
Nomsa Dear mom I just want to say I thank you so much you are so special to me I love you so much I will never live with out you you mean so much to you me No:1			

Writing Mothers' Day cards were done on 6 May 2013, which was a week before the Mothers' Day weekend. The learners wrote Mothers' Day cards to honour and pay tribute to their mothers for giving them life and taking care of them. The Mothers' Day cards could also be written to a grandmother, sister, relative, friend, or aunt, who are mothers and any woman or primary caregiver who loves and takes care of them as a mother would. In the previous lesson, their teacher, Thobeka, discussed with them the concept of what a mother is. She then asked them to write Mothers' Day cards to their mothers expressing how they felt

about them for taking care of them. After writing, she asked them to give feedback on each other's texts and explain what they found to be wrong or right about the letters. Her instructions assumed that all the children had mothers and that a concept of a mother only refers to someone who gave birth to you. This resulted in certain learners trying to define who they regarded as a mother. In addition, drawing from product-related approaches of writing (Andrews and Smith, 2011) she also stressed that the texts produced should accurately resemble Mothers' Day cards in terms of the message and structure, which the learners, as co-writers, should evaluate. This raises questions about whether all the learners actually knew how Mothers' Day texts are written: structure, linguistic features and purpose since no explicit instructions (Johns 2008) were provided to facilitate that. Although, looking at the kinds of texts the learners produced, explicit instructions of genre can be challenged since it represents writing as formulaic (Andrews and Smith, 2011) rather than being determined by context.

> *"Now I give each of you 5 minutes, then you submit your document and pass it to your friend. Remember to write the document as 'letter'. You comment about what seems to be the problem, what is wrong or right, about your friends' story. You are not supposed to comment on your own story; you go through another person's story and give comments. You don't give comments individually; you have to go through the story and give a comment, and submit. Now as you have finished commenting, put the gadgets on the table, then go through the story and tell me what your comments were." (LObserv)*

Here the learners write Mothers' Day cards for Mothers' Day celebrations. The texts contained messages which they dedicated to their mothers. In addition, the message written in each card typified the messages found in Mothers' Day cards. The learners expressed warm feelings to mothers or primary caregivers who take care of them as their own children. Although this was done collaboratively, some chose to do it individually. For instance, Deliwe, Nomsa, and Bonisiwe wrote their texts individually. Bonisiwe wrote her text to her grandmother who is her primary caregiver. What is interesting is that Boisiwe did not conform to the genre. She began by telling her teacher why she had to write to her grandmother. Only once she had done this could she write her message to her grandmother. This shows an awareness that the prescribed genre was not appropriate for her purpose and situation, but due to her sense of agency she individualised it despite the teacher's instructions (see Johns 2008; Hyland, 2007 in chapter 2). Like her friends who express their

affection and gratitude or pay tribute to their mothers, she also highlights how much her grandmother also takes care of her in place of her mother.

In this activity meaning is drawn from the learners' own contexts, which include the personal relevance of the activity to their own lives. They use different voices to express their feelings and make choices from a wide range of linguistic resources to convey a message. Some write the Mothers' Day messages to express their love, gratitude, appreciation, and contentment for being taken care of by their mothers *'you are a special mother I ever had'*. Due to the teacher's instruction and implication that a mother is someone who gave birth to you, Bonisiwe is caught in a conflict of trying to explain who she regards as a mother in her life. She displays a sense of consciousness of the recipient of her Mothers' Day message. In this case, she specifically dedicates the message to her grandmother who she regards as a mother in her life.

The learners show different degrees of control over their writing. All the texts are written in paragraphs, with sentences and clauses, not punctuated which resembles everyday speech. In addition, most of the texts except Deliwe's consists of words which are not separated and which are incorrectly spelled '*I don\'t Have a mother but I have my grandmother my grandmother treit me the way my mother was treiting me like.'* In this example, Bonisiwe spelled the word 'treating' with a diphthong, but she has used the wrong vowel combination. Recognition of this diphthong may suggest that she has knowledge that the correct spelling has a combination of two vowels. Furthermore, the learners also use adjectives to describe their mothers, and what they do for them *'you are so special; you've buyed me beautiful clothes'.* The learners also demonstrate a common overgeneralization that all verbs end with *'-ed'* when changed to past tense, which is not applicable for irregular verbs.

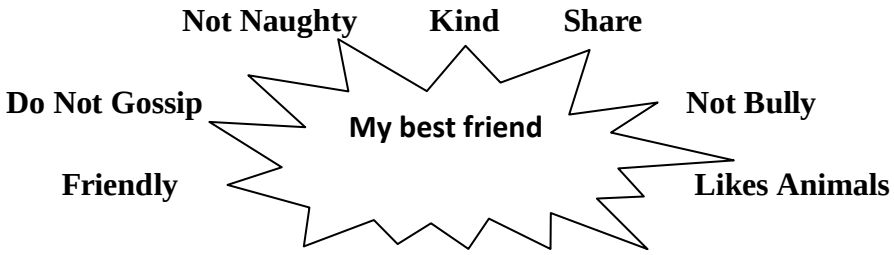
It is clear that Deliwe displays a high degree of control and awareness of the genre she is writing in. All the sentences are properly structured and punctuated with capital letters used at the beginning of each sentence. In addition, she ends the text by adopting a conventional way of closing Mothers' Day cards *'From Deliwe your daughter*.' On the other hand, Bonisiwe and Nomsa's texts are not punctuated, and some words are incorrectly spelled. While all the learners clearly display a sense of consciousness of the genre they write with, typically the content and purpose for writing, they experience difficulties in terms of sentence structuring. Most of the sentences are not properly punctuated and most of the words are not separated or correctly spelled. This is more evident in the texts produced by Keabetswe and

Ziyanda, Gladys and Sarah, Bonisiwe, and Nomsa. Keabetswe and Ziyanda specifically, show the least development in their control of the text. Although the learners receive input in terms of spelling in their English classrooms, with the devices affording them spelling check, they still do not seem to recognise some spelling mistakes in the texts they produce.

3. A Description of My Best Friend

Nomsa and Bonisiwe	Deliwe and Ntombi	Keabetswe and Ziyanda	Gladys and Sarah
NomsaA discription of my best friend. My best friend is fat and dark and lovely colour . She is short and she love's to loughs. In colour she is dack. And she likes food so much. She loves to wear short and skin tops.	A description of my best friend My best friend is Bonisiwe. She's short and has abrigh colour.And she has short hair and big eyes and she loves to share and to laugh.I love my best friend because she's kind,not naught,respect fully	A description of my best friends My best friend is Keabetswe and ZiyandaShe is tall And she is fat She have short ears And smallmouth And small nose And small eyes And short heir And I like her description	A description of my best friend. My best friend is mpho .she is light brown and she has small eyes. She also has small hands
Bonisiwe: My best friend name is Nsuku and she is not bully.She likes to play with me .she is kind, she does not gossip,she is not noughty,she likes to share.			

In these texts the learners write descriptions of their best friends. Before writing, the teacher began by discussing with them what is meant by a ‘Best Friend’. They are also asked to describe their best friends and their descriptions, which focus on personal qualities.



In doing this activity some of the learners worked individually while others wrote in pairs. The descriptions are based on physical features and personalities. The descriptions which focused on personal qualities also provided a glimpse of how they relate as friends. For example, Deliwe and Ntombi's descriptions, which include both physical appearance such as height and skin complexion, go further to provide details of their best friend personally and how they relate to her: *I love my best friend because she's kind,not naught,respect fully*. This description enables the reader to get an understanding of what the person described is like and why she is regarded as a best friend. In addition, this indicates an understanding of the purpose of the task and the topic, and an awareness of the descriptive genre which is adopted in doing the activity.

In this activity, the learners show a sense of freedom in choosing different linguistic resources, and using their own voices which enhance ownership in their writing and meaning of their texts (Lensmire, 2000). Nomsa, Bonisiwe and Deliwe and Ntombi described from their personal perspectives their friends' personalities and how they relate to them, *'I love my best friend because she's kind, not naught, respect fully'.* In addition, Nomsa's choices of descriptive words helped to create a clear picture of the kinds of qualities her friend possesses*: she loughs (laughs), likes food, loves to wear short and skin tops'.* Using strong verbs such as *'loves and loughs (laughs)'* she was able to provide vivid descriptions of how her friend behaves, instead of only what she looks like. In addition, using emotive language helps to show that Nomsa knows her friend's inner-thoughts: attitudes, or preferences.

On the other hand, Keabetswe and Ziyanda and Gladys and Sarah, present their friend focusing on fixed physical features. These include height, body size, and skin complexion. This kind of description is limited to external appearance which is not only passive but also fixed, without providing any sense about the friendship. In addition, such descriptions can be written by anyone regardless of whether they are friends or not. However, some of the personality characteristics mentioned in both Nomsa and Bonisiwe and Deliwe and Ntombi's texts tend to relate closely to those mentioned during the classroom discussion, such as: *not*

naughty, kind, share and not bully. This questions the learners' sense of ownership.. In addition, it highlights some of the shortcomings of whole class brainstorming which Ellis (2002) explains resulting in learners imitating.

Slight development of control over writing begins to emerge in terms of sentence constructions and spelling but some learners encountered difficulties in terms of third-person verb agreement. Although the texts are typified by simple sentences, the learners make attempts to link their ideas using complex sentences which reflect cognitive development in relation to the ability to provide reasons, *'I love my best friend because she's kind, not naught, respect fully'*. In contrast, writing in simple sentences and compound sentences '*She is tall And she is fat She have short'* results in a listing of attributes which are not linked to one another.

Although part of their English lessons include focus on sentence structure and spelling (Hyland, 2003), the learners appear to still encounter difficulties with spelling, punctuation and sentence and word separation. One of the common spelling errors is seen in Bonisiwe and Deliwe and Ntombi's texts, '*naught and noughty'*, for naughty. Albeit this word is spelled incorrectly, the learners display knowledge that the 'au' sound is realised in a combination of two vowels. At the same time, they still do not separate words '*smallmouth;ZiyandaShe'*. In addition, Deliwe and Ntombi show partial mastery of third-person subject-verb agreement: *'She love's to loughs; she loves to wear'*. In the first part of the sentence, the learners appear to understand that a morpheme 's' is used for third person singular verb, but show uncertainty as to whether the morpheme is also put on an infinitive verb, *'to loughs' (to laugh)*. In the second part, the morpheme is used correctly for both the finite and infinitive verbs. Here the root of the confusion seems to be whether the infinitive requires a morpheme's' but it can also be argued that it reflects the mental processes (Dahl and Farnan, 1998; Cremin and Myhill, 2012) the learner is going through when writing. In addition, some of the learners, also seem to confuse how an apostrophe is used for omission 'love's', which does not occur in a verb.

4. Monster Match and Word Ball

Nomsa and Bonisiwe	Deliwe and Ntombi	Keabetswe and Ziyanda	Gladys and Sarah
Monster Match A Report by Nomsa and Bonisiwe. To Mr Khumalo. On 10 June we were playing a game Monstermatch.*The* was so interesting because it teaches us to remember and to match . We would like to put on more animals so that it can be more interesting and more theme and more sound.	**Word Ball Deliwe** A report by: Deliwe To the teachers and Mr Khumalo On 10 June we were playing a game a Word Ball.The game was so interesting because it help me to be fast . It teach me many things like a words . It make me be fast because it like to appear on the screen and show me score I would like to say I enjoy a game very murch and I'm so happy	**Monster Match** A report by Keabetswe and Ziyanda We enjoyed taping. the blogsAnd enjoyed the sounds. Wee joyed busy playing again and again. Playing the game .We enjoyed seeing the pictures . we we enjoyed	**Monster Match** A report by Gladyis and Sarah To mr Hazel and mr Khumalo We enjoyed playing the monster match game because it made us know how to match things that match well

Monster Match and Word Ball are two games which the learners played on their iPods. Monster Match is a game with different monster-like creatures and the players must draw an object that resemble the shown creatures. If the object drawn looks like one of the creatures, then the creature disappears from the screen and the player gets points. In Word Ball the players toss words to one another. In this text the learners wrote reports about the two games, Monster Match and Word Ball. The reports are addressed to the Mobile Literacies Interviewers present in the class, Mr Khumalo and Mrs Williams, and tell them what they enjoyed or found interesting about either of the games they played. The learners were also asked to state suggestions about how to make the games more enjoyable and interesting. In addition, Thobeka provided the learners with sentence starters which guided them to begin their reports:

'On 10 June we were playing a game . . .'

'The game was so interesting because it. . .'

'I would like to . . .'

Despite the purpose of the activity being to write reports, the texts include two overlapping genres. *'The game was so interesting because it helps me to be fast. It teaches me many things like a words'.* On the other hand, as part of the activity, some of the learners also reflected on how they could make the games more enjoyable and interesting '*we would like to put on more like to put more animals so that it can be more interesting and more theme and more sound'*. In addition, the learners show a sense of consciousness of the kind of meaning they intend to construct, and this is realised by using set sentences provided by their teacher *'On 10 June we were playing a game Monstermatch',* which guide them in terms of how reports should be written. However, I personally disagree with providing learners with these sentence starters without also encouraging them to come up with their own to suit their purposes as this may result in certain learners assuming that there are no other ways in which reports should be written. In this manner the learners may believe that writing involves imitating certain structures (Hyland, 2003) without manipulating them according to their own needs. In each text the learners write with a particular audience in their mind *'A report by Gladys and Sarah to Hazel and Mr Khumalo'.* The recognition of the audience for their writing enables them to become more conscious of the purpose of writing and the kind of linguistic resources appropriate for achieving that particular purpose.

Although the activity allows for meaning to be drawn from personal experiences (see Lensmire, 2000, Badenhorst, 2010 in chapter 2) with the games, some of the learners' choices of linguistic materials and sense of ownership remain constrained. In all the texts the learners begin with the starters provided by their teacher as a guide, then follow with their experiences and reasons for enjoying the games. For instance, the first sentence of Nomsa and Bonisiwe and Deliwe and Ntombi begins with when they played the game with its name *'On 10 June we were playing a game Monstermatch; On 10 June we were playing a game a Word Ball'.* On the other hand, Keabetswe and Ziyanda and Gladys and Sarah's introductions of their texts state their experiences of the game *'We enjoyed playing the monster match game because it made us'.* Thus, using these starters results in the learners adopting similar patterns of word choice with ideas sequenced in more or less the same order. The learners presumably do not think there are other ways in which the texts can be introduced or written. Their writing tends to be controlled and accuracy-driven (see Hyland, 2003 in chapter 2); in terms of the kind of ideas they need to write about and the ways in which these ideas are structured. In addition, most of the learners' writing focuses on enjoyment without reflecting on how they could make them more interesting.

This analysis has aimed to provide a broad picture of the learners' writing development based on the texts they produced in the first few months of the Mobile Literacies Project: between May and June. The analysis reveals in various ways how, in this period, the project enabled or constrained the learners' writing development in terms of: understanding of the purpose and the ability to write using genres, ownership in writing based on: freedom to choose different linguistic resources and the use of voice to enhance meaning as well as the learners' control over their own writing. In these texts the learners' display an awareness of the purpose for writing especially in texts like *the Mothers' Day card* where the learners clearly understand who the audience is. However, due to a lack of clarity in the genres used, certain texts such as *Rosie Helps Hungry Children*, tend to exemplify some of the school writing activities where the learners answer comprehension questions. In such texts everything: i.e. the purpose for writing and the kinds of answers the learners provide is predetermined.

In some of the texts the learners' choices of linguistic resources and their use of their own voices reflect a sense of ownership in their writing. This ownership can be attributed to certain activities enabling the learners to relate to their own personal experiences. For example, the writing of the Mothers' Day Card opened opportunities for the learners to write in relation to who they consider to be their mothers. This is seen by Nomsa and Bonisiwe who, wrote their texts individually with Bonisiwe challenging the notion of conceiving a mother from only a biological point of view (as someone who gave birth to you): '*I don\'t Have a mother but I have my grandmother my grandmother treit me the way my mother was treiting me like For now I am calling her mother because now she is like my mother'.* However, in some of the texts the learners display little sense of ownership.

As seen in the texts about *A Description of My Best Friend* and *Monster Match and Word Ball*, the teachers' instructions tend to hinder the learners' freedom to choose a variety of linguistic resources to enhance their intended meanings. In the case of the texts about *A Description of My Best Friend,* the learners' lack of ownership can be imputed to the whole class discussion about a best friend, with ideas being brainstormed on the board prior to writing. As a result for most of the learners, writing tends to be copying ideas generated by the class (Hendricks, 2005) instead of generating their own adjectives: *'not naughty, not bully or share'.* In the case of Monster Match and Word Ball, the learners are provided with pre-set sentence starters which they use to begin their texts. For example, *'On 10 June we were playing a game Monstermatch'.* Being provided with these prompts, infers that this is the

most accurate way of writing the reports, therefore the learners eschew from taking risks and explore other means of expression which may best relate to their intended meanings.

Some of the learners display a sense of control over their writing, except for Keabetswe and Ziyanda whose writing is imbued by writing simple sentences with some not making sense and having poor punctuation e.g: *'We enjoyed taping the blogsAnd enjoyed the sounds.Wee joyed busy playing again and again'.* Among those who have control over their writing, (specifically Deliwe and Ntombi, Nomsa and Bonisiwe), they make use of compound and complex sentences to convey a message. For example they provide reasons for enjoying the games *'the game was so interesting <u>because</u> it helps to be fast'.* In this example, the complex sentence consists of two clauses combined by a subordinate clause *'because'.* Characteristic of most of the learners' texts, is a lack of consistency in their use of tense. The first clause *'the game was so interesting'* is written in past tense, but they fail to maintain the same tense in the second clause and eventually write in a present tense. This raises questions about the effectiveness of explicit teaching of language (see Ellis, 1998 in chapter 2) on writing which is also prevalent in GPLMS (2012) and adopted in second language classrooms in South Africa. In GPLMS (2012) lessons in the first term for Grade 5, the learners learned about conjunctions where they were told that their function is to combine sentences. Based on how the learners used conjunctions here, it shows that there is a disjuncture between the kind of knowledge CAPS wants the learners to gain and their knowledge of using different language forms.

5. People we admire

Nomsa and Bonisiwe	**Deliwe and Ntombi**	**Keabetswe and Ziyanda**	**Gladys and Sarah**
People we admire We admire Hector Peterson Hector died for South Africa .He fought against apartheid . He was killed by Burris in Soweto.In June 16 1976.At the age of 12 years old.Many people died that day.Because they didn't want us to learn Afrikans.Then apartheid was done.	Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela was born in a small village near Umtata in the Transkei. He dreamed to be come a Lawyer. He was arrested for leaving the country without government\'s permission.he became the first black president of South Africa after he was arrested for 27 years in jail. When he was accused he said : \"I have fought against white domination and I have fought against black domination . In 1993 he receivedNoble price We wish to look like Nelson Mandela I would like to help people.		We admire mem Thobeka Madupe because she shows us how to love each other,and how to help others if they have a problem. She also love children she makes us laugh ,but she teaches us a lot ,everyone loves him.

These texts were written in the first week of August after mid-year winter holidays in June-July. The learners were asked to write about people they admire. In getting them started, Thobeka asked them: *"who do you admire?"* and they discussed some popular political figures like Nelson Mandela, Barack Obama, Jacob Zuma, as well as their parents. In prompting them further, she also told them to say why they admired those people but many of the learners spoke about what their parents did for them without focusing on admiration. Thobeka also told them to make the 'type of document' for their texts a 'short story', but due to a difficulty in working the iPods she then changed the instruction to write a 'report'. The teacher appeared to be very confused about genres, without clarifying what is meant by a short story and how it differs from a report.

This confusion is seen in how most learners wrote biographies which recounted on the lives of well-known South Africans politicians such as Nelson Mandela and Hector Peterson, who were involved in the struggle against apartheid. The biographical information they wrote

about included their birthplace, their roles in the struggle, why they were arrested and how long they stayed in prison, and how, when and why they died. It becomes clear that the learners' mainly intended to provide a series of events that occurred in the lives of these people. In addition, some learners do show their admiration for the lives of these people: *'In 1993 he receivedNoble price We wish to look like Nelson Mandela I would like to help people'.* However, due to lack of clarity and confusion about text type they were producing, the learners seem to deviate from what the teacher wanted them to focus on.

The learners' decision to write biographies informed their choices of linguistic resources and use of different voices. The texts are written in past tense which signals that the events occurred in the past. They enhance the contexts by using words and phrases pertinent to South African history *'June 16 1976, Apartheid, Burris (for boers), Afrikans (Afrikaans), 27 Years in jail'.* In addition, they also show how they relate to them based on what they did in their lives '*We wish to look like Nelson Mandela I would like to help people'.* Additionally, Gladys and Sarah who write about their teacher provide reasons why they admire her: '*We admire mem Thobeka Madupe because she shows us how to love each other'.* The learners' ownership and freedom over their writing is enhanced by alternating between their own voices as writers and their characters' voice. In writing about Nelson Mandela, Deliwe and Ntombi chose to incorporate some of his famous quotes from his speech *'I have fought against white domination and I have fought against black domination'.* This quotation helps to create a sense of the kinds of views the learners believed Nelson Mandela held during apartheid.

In this activity during second half of the year, there is evidence of development in the learners' control over their writing. In the text written by Deliwe and Ntombi the most development is shown in comparison to their classmates. There is improvement in their text cohesion. Ideas are connected with pronouns throughout. In addition, they also maintain consistency in their use of tense. For instance the text is written in past tense depending on the speaker. When quoting Nelson Mandela's words, they write in present tense which echoes his own voice: *'I have fought against white domination and I have fought against black domination'.* This use of a present tense is also maintained when they write with their own voices. Furthermore, the learners also display a high sense of complex sentence construction to convey the message, with sentences containing more than one subordinate clauses '*He was arrested for leaving the country without government\'s permission.he became the first black president of South Africa after he was arrested for 27 years in jail'.*

The learners spelling and punctuation have also improved. Only a few words have been incorrectly spelled, for example *'burris'* for boers, and *'Afrikans'* for Afrikaans. These spelling mistakes may be attributed to the ways they pronounce the words in oral speech. However, the learners still seem to encounter difficulties with paying attention to separating words and sentences.

6. Our Favourite Picture

Nomsa and Bonisiwe	**Deliwe and Ntombi**	**Keabetswe and Ziyanda**	**Gladys and Sarah**
Amblem Version 2 Orange farm primary amblem We Love our amblem.It shows us light.It tell us that we must Let Be Light. We love it because it shows people when we are lost where we are coming from.So that they can take us where we are coming from. No: 1	**our favourite picture** We like that picture because it has a symbol of our school. The name of our symbol ls LET THERE BE LIGHT. We did'nt took other photo's because this photo is the important sign of our school. And it show's the colour of our school. We really like the uniform of our school PHATSAMERI PRIMARY SCHOOL	**NelsonRolihlahlaMandela** We love this picture because this picture is our favourite one.And remains us Tata u Nelson Mandela because he is our hero.And most like him because .He fought ageist white Domination and I have fought against black Domination.o	**pictures that we like** We love our principal because he is always busy for the work that we must do at class everyone loves him he also loves children of this school.He won many trophies because he played many games and we also helped him to win other trophies .Many people love this school because of him and we also love him ,i wish he keeps that thing so that our little brothers and sisters

Here the learners wrote about pictures they took with the iPods. Thobeka asked them to walk around the school and take three pictures of things they like. Some took pictures of the school playground while others chose to take pictures of Nelson Mandela's portrait drawn on a school wall. After taking the pictures she asked them to choose one photo to describe: *'pick up only one picture out of the three. Discuss which one, then write about why you picked that one. What do you like about that one? Write on the iPod'*. Once they chose the pictures, she opened a class discussion about how their texts should be named: *'let us discuss how to name our document'.* From the discussion came a suggestion from one learner to name the texts *'The picture I like',* which the teacher brushed off and suggested that they all name their texts

as follows *'call it My Favourite Picture'*. Allowing the learners an opportunity to choose the pictures based on their own discretion benefits their sense of freedom and authority in their writing. However, this gets limited when the teacher imposes her own suggestions on how the texts should be named. Out of the 20 pairs of learners only 13 pairs did the activity. 7 pairs named their texts 'Our Favourite Pictures', 1 pair named theirs *'Pictures that we Like'*, 2 pairs named theirs *'Rolihlahla Mandela'*, another 2 pairs named theirs *'Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela'* with 1 pair naming theirs as *'Park'*. Out of this sample, only one pair named their text 'Our favourite Picture'. Writing to a set of rules is typical in South African classrooms where a one-size-fits-all notion is being advocated by teachers. At the same time, the whole class discussion appears to be pointless because it does not offer equal opportunities for all the learners to make suggestions freely based on their own texts except for the few confident ones.

In this text the learners describe the pictures they took: what they are, what they symbolise, and the roles they play in the school. Gladys and Sarah describe their picture of their principal focusing on his personal character. He is described as a popular person who is active and innovative, playing a pivotal role in the success of the school: *'he won many trophies because he played many games. Many people love this school because of him'*. In addition to describing what he does, Gladys and Sarah show their affection for him: *'we love our principal because he is always busy: we also love him. I wish he keeps that thing so that our little brothers and sisters'.* By way of contrast, both Nomsa and Bonisiwe and Deliwe and Ntombi chose to write about their pictures of the school Emblem. Nomsa and Bonisiwe describe their picture of their school emblem based on how they relate to it and how it forms part of their identity as learners at the school: *'it shows us light, it tells us that we must let be light. It shows people when we are lost where we are coming from'*. Whereas, Gladys and Sarah use the principal to embody the school ethos, these two pairs chose something more abstract.

In this activity the learners not only describe the pictures but also explain why they chose them. This necessitates introducing reasons using the word 'because' which results in the learners creating complex sentences with at least one subordinate clause and some contain more than one subordinate clause introduced by subordinating conjunctions such as: '*that, when and where'.* For example, Gladys and Sarah, who write about the picture of their principal, use the conjunction 'because' to introduce a reason for their affection *"We love our principal <u>because</u> he is always busy for the work that we must do".* This complex sentence

consists of one main clause *'we love our principal',* and two subordinate clauses: (1) *'because he is always busy' for the work,* (2) *'that we must do'.* However, this sentence on its own is so complex that the learners struggle to translate their ideas into writing clearly. In full, when broken into clauses the sentence is as follows *(1) We love our principal* (2) *because he is always busy for the work* (3) *that we must do at class everyone loves him he also loves children of this school'*. This sentence was supposed to end at the word *'class'*. Another sentence which could be a 'compound sentence should have begun from the adjective *'Everyone'* with two main clauses combined by the conjunction 'and'. The sentence would read like: *Everyone loves him and he loves children of this school*.

Another example of a complex sentence consisting of one main clause and three subordinate clauses found in Nomsa and Bonisiwe's text *'We love it because it shows people when we are lost where we are coming from'*. In this sentence the main clause is *'we love it',* with the three subordinate clauses (1) *'because it shows people',* (2) *'when we are lost',* (3) *'where we are coming from'.* Here the thought is complex and the learners struggle to express it all in one sentence. They leave out a key piece of information – that they wear the emblem on their uniforms – which would help the reader to understand how the emblem serves a practical purpose.

Deliwe and Ntombi seem to encounter difficulties in terms of the functions of an apostrophe: to indicate possession and omission. In the case of using an apostrophe for contraction, 'did'nt', these learners seem to struggle with where the apostrophe should be placed after contracting. They know that the letter 'o' should be omitted, but they seem to be confused whether the apostrophe is placed on the right or left of the letter 'n' after contraction. In another instance, there is confusion in terms of how the apostrophe is used for possession. They firstly use it in a noun: '*we did'nt take other photo's because this photo'*. In this case the learners intend to write the word in plural as 'photos', but using the apostrophe on the word renders the sentence incomplete which affects the meaning which they originally intended to construct. Secondly, the learners use the apostrophe in the verb 'show's', for which it cannot be used. Here the learners seem to confuse the use of an apostrophe with writing of an *'s'* for a third person verb.

Although writing with reasons is an indication of development of complex thinking, some of the reasons the learners provided tend not to relate to the main clauses. For example, there is no link between the main clause and subordinate clause in Keabetswe and Ziyanda's

introductory sentence about why they chose to describe the photo of their principal: *'We love this picture because this picture is our favourite one'*. This sentence is clearly tautologous. It can be because when something is your favourite you automatically love it. In addition, such a circular reasoning can be attributed to two things. First, the learners' failure to recognise the relationship between loving and being in favour of something; secondly the use of an inappropriate conjunction to link the two clauses. It can be suggested that the learners should rather have used a coordinating conjunction *'and'* which would be followed by a reason why the picture is their favourite and why they love it.

Keabetswe and Ziyanda's lack of control in their writing becomes more apparent in some of their spelling, punctuation, and translation of information from direct to reported speech. In writing the spelling of the preposition 'against', the learners struggle with the grapheme for the phonic sound *'ai'* which they write as *'ei': 'ageist'*. As this phoneme can be written in different graphemes, the one which is used is correct when used in words like 'eight'. Other graphemes for this phoneme can be *'a'* for lady, *'a-e'* for bake, *'ai'* for tail and '*ay*' for May. The learners also wrote one of Mandela's quotes which they intended to communicate in using an indirect voice, but because the quote was written in direct speech they got confused in changing the whole message to reported speech. They wrote the quote as *'He fought ageist white Domination and I have fought against black Domination'*. In the second clause they fail to maintain the third person voice and write the quote from Mandela's voice as *'I have fought . . .'*

7. A Trip to New York

Nomsa and Bonisiwe	Deliwe and Ntombi	Keabetswe and Ziyanda	Gladys and Sarah
Going to Swaziland Version 2 By Nomsa and Bonisiwe At home our mother told us that we are going to visit our grandmother in Swaziland .On Friday we packed on our clothes.On Saturday we go for shopping and buy clothes.And when we get home we baked cookies for Granny. On Sunday we get at the airport an we stand on the line then they told us that the Airo plans is coming at 3:00	**visiting to Cape Town** It was the 20th of December 2013 my mother asked where we want to visit and we said:/\"Cape Town Cape Town!!!.Then my mother said /\"okay/\"!! so we were motivated a lot she asked to go to shopping then we said /\"yes/\" At the mall we looked for beautiful clothes .we got home my mother booked for A plane.We slept early and In the morning we take a bath. We got on the airport, catches a plane on it/\'s way we got in it we sat down then we got out after 3 hours we saw granny /\'s house then we got in.	**A visit to New York by** On Monday me and Keabetswe we We//\'re playing with our laptops and our mothers came after cleaning and sad the house and they said //\"we all have tickets for New York and then we screamed and we said we have it.On Tuesday we all packed our things rushing for going to new york.On wensday get in the car and drive when we arrived at the air port we were tuning as fast as we can. And they schaked our bags and when wesaw the airoplain and we hoped at the airairplain and then it flyed up in the sky, whenit arived at new yorkwe go to scort land.and tchalked our bag	**going places** On February i came home and i saw mom packing new and i said \"mom where are we going\"mom said\"don\'t worry it\'s a surprise.I was so surprised i wen\'t to bath ,mommy gave me new clothes to wear.I was also surprised .Mom said\"let\'s go\"Then we went to the train ,the train took us to the airport . I saw the airport but i didn\'t know that i was in the airport \" wow this place is so wonderful\" i said to mom.We went inside the airport i saw many things that i don\'t know i also saw three airplanes and we went inside.

In this activity the learners are asked to write short stories about the places they visited during the festive season in December. Thobeka introduced the topic by firstly asking them about what they would be doing or where they would be visiting during Christmas holidays: *"What will you be doing during the holidays this December? Where will you visit?"* Some of the learners responded by mentioning different places like *Cape Town, Newcastle, Durban,* whereas some said they would be spending their holidays at home. Since most of the learners

indicated where they were planning to visit, she asked them about how they would get to their destinations, and to indicate the use of various kinds of transport such as buses, aeroplanes, train or car. Thereafter, she showed them a poster of people at different transport stations, taxi ranks, bus stops, airport and trains and asks them to look at the pictures and try to figure out what might be happening:

> *"Look at this poster and choose one picture and describe what is happening. Tell me, what do you see? What are the people doing? Where are those people going? What do you think they are waiting for wherever they are?*

The learners looked at the pictures on the poster and analysed them in pairs. Thobeka then asked them to write a text in which they described their holiday trips. However, her instructions are not sensitive that some learners presumably have never had an opportunity to go on a holiday. In helping them to describe their trip, she told them that they could choose any of the pictures and relate what would be happening if they were the people on the picture:

> *'Once you're done looking at the pictures, now write about a trip you went for a holiday. In your stories say what happened, how you arrived at your destination, what transport did you use? What I also want you to do is, imagine you were one of the people in the pictures on the day of your trip. Say what would be happening there and how were you feeling'.*

The learners briefly discussed what they wanted to write about in relation to the pictures in the poster. Their texts describe a series of the events that took place when they went on their holiday to different places, like Cape Town and New York. Some of the descriptions provide not only the details of the places they visited, but also the exact dates on which they left for their holidays *"It was the 20th of December 2013 my mom asked me where we want to visit. . ."* On the other hand others show that they went on a holiday on a random day of the year, it is not clear how the recount relates to December as was expected and this may be a reflection of the confusion about the purpose of the activity.

Unlike most of the controlled writing (see Hyland, 2003 in chapter 2) that takes place in most second language classrooms, here the instructions for the activity opened up opportunities for freedom to select linguistic resources to enhance learners' voices and ownership over their writing (Blommaert, 2008; Lensmire, 2000). The learners write about going to different places both local and international. For example: *'Going to Swaziland, Visiting Cape Town*

and Visiting New York', and the kind of places they chose to write about determined the kinds of transport they will use and the kind of places they will pass by. In addressing the purpose of the activity, the learners also describe their trips from when they began with all the arrangements. This includes when they *packed clothes, booked for A plane, sleeping early and missing a plane'.* In addition, most of their writing makes use of a narrator's voice which comes from a first person involved participant to enhance the meaning of their story. Using the first person point of view to tell the story, the learners are able to clearly express their feelings during the trip. For Gladys and Sarah this begins with excitement after being asked where they would like to visit for a holiday, and immediately screaming *"Cape Town Cape Town!!!* Others expressed excitement when they arrived at the airport when they got off their aeroplanes"*\" wow this place is so wonderful\""*.

Although the learners show a sense of ownership in their choices of topics, their writing shows little control due to the following factors: random shifts from one tense to another, inaccurate sentence construction, and spelling errors. These kinds of random shifts in tenses reflect the learners' mental processes engaged when writing about events that occurred in the past. In so doing, they create confusion for the reader in understanding when the events actually happened.

The learners also fail to maintain consistency in their use of tenses especially in sentences consisting of more than one clause. For example, in Nomsa and Bonisiwe's text, the first sentence, a complex sentence with two clauses, is begun in past tense which is not maintained after the subordinate conjunction 'that: *At home our mother told us that we are going to visit our grandmother in Swaziland.* In this sentence the learners appear to be reporting what they were told by their mother, but they fail to translate what they were told into reported speech. Instead, in the second clause, *'that we are going to visit our grandmother in Swaziland,* they report the event as if it is happening in a present moment. In another instance, Deliwe and Ntombi's fifth sentence, a compound sentence, the tense also shifts from past to present: *'we slept early and In the morning we take a bath'.*

The inconsistency of tenses in the sentences, as also witnessed in the aforementioned sentences may be caused by a number of factors: a communication of compound and complex thoughts which the learners struggle to translate properly into writing as well as failure to properly modify the ideas processed in their home language into English, which they write with as a second language. In addition, one other way to understand the causes of

these inconsistencies may be related to the ways in which language is taught in their classrooms. With CAPS (2011) learners are being taught language using a communicative approach which does not pay attention to their second language contexts. Focused on form (Ellis, 1998) the learning of language in these classrooms tends not to link the aspects between the language rules and the context in which language is used. As a result the learners do not see any relationship between learning, the context in which such language is used and how that impacts on their writing.

Overall, the four texts consist of 28 sentences: there are 8 simple sentences, 6 compound sentences, 5 complex sentences, 6 compound-complex sentences, and 3 are not clearly a particular type. The learners manipulate simple and compound sentences to create a 'shopping list' of things they did and events that occurred before and after their holiday destination. Simple sentences, like sentence 2 of Nomsa and Bonisiwe, *'On Friday we packed our clothes'*, and sentence 3 of Keabetswe and Ziyanda '*On Tuesday we all packed our things rushing for going to new york'*, the reader finds simple information which lacks deep thought. Another kind of listing occurs as they begin the sentences by mentioning the day something was done or happened. For example, in Keabetswe and Ziyanda's text the first three sentences foreground the days of the events: (1) '*On Monday . . .*, (2) *On Tuesday*…, (3) *On Wensday'*. In this, a series of events is also provided. Although there is evidence of writing complex sentences, most of them contain excessive use of the coordinating conjunction 'and', which results in the sentences imbued with listing. Keabetswe and Ziyanda's first sentence is comprised of seven clauses, in which 'and', has been used 5 times: (1) *On Monday me and (2)Keabetswe we We//\'re playing with our laptops (3)and our mothers came (4)after cleaning (5)and sad the house and they said //\"we all have tickets for New York (6)and then we screamed (7)and we said we have it.* In conceptualising writing development, Scardamalia and Bereiter (1987) categorise writing where lists of information are provided as 'knowledge-telling'. This results from lack of skills to differentiate between spoken and written language. In this case the learners encrypt the information as it is processed in their brains without modifying it to suit a written genre.

When looking at Keabetswe and Ziyanda's text, it is interesting how their use of language is influenced by the conversational patterns typical in their vernacular or home languages. This is seen in their first sentence, where the pronoun 'we' is used after writing their names: '*On Monday me and Keabetswe we We//\'re playing with our laptops and our mothers came after cleaning'.* The phrase '*On Monday me and Keabetswe',* has been directly translated from

their home language where you begin by referring to yourself before the other person. For instance in Nguni languages like Zulu, this can translated as *"NgoMsumbunuko, mina noKeabetswe besidlala ngamaLaptop ethu . . .",* in Sotho languages like SeSotho this can be translated as *"Ka Mandag Nna le Keabetswe re ne re bapala ka dilaptops tsa rona",* whereas even in Tsonga the pattern is the same *"Hi Musumbuluko mina na Keabetswe ahi tlangisa tilepithopo ta hina. . ."*. These patterns of reference are common among South African languages and most English second language speakers, like these learners often do not recognise the reverse ways of reference.

Other examples pertaining to the influence of the learners' first languages in second language writing include a repetition of pronoun and confusion in the usage of the pronoun: as subject and object. These examples are witnessed at the beginning of Keabetswe and Ziyanda's first sentence *'On Monday me and Keabetswe we We//\'re playing with our laptops'*. In this sentence, the learners begin by making an inclusive plural reference: *'me and Keabetswe',* which is qualified by a first person plural pronoun *'we'*, but because this is a first time subjects are mentioned, the pronouns should not be used. However, due to differences of speech patterns between English and the learners' home languages, they tend to use the pronoun 'we' the same time as the subjects they refer to. This is caused by a direct translation of how they speak in their home languages into writing in English as a second language. If translated into the learners' vernacular languages the inclusion of the pronoun after the names would make grammatical sense. In Zulu: *'NgoMsumbuluko mina noKeabetswe besidlala ngamalaptops ethu', and in Tsonga: Hi Musumbhuluko mina na Keabetswe ahi tlangisa tilepithopo ta hina'.* The underlined syllables signal first person plural pronoun 'we'.

In addition, the wrong usage of the pronouns can also be attributed to translanguaging which is common among many second language speakers of English, where it is either used for code-switching or where it serves as a lingua franca.

The learners also confuse the use of the first person singular pronoun 'I' with the subject 'me'. For example, in the aforementioned sentence Keabetswe and Ziyanda say 'Me and Keabetswe', and in this case they use the object 'me' as a subject for a pronoun 'I'. In the learners' vernacular languages, the first person pronouns: subject and object use the same word. In Tsonga a word for *'I and me'* is Mina, and the same in Zulu. In plural *'we'* and *'us'* consist of one word in Tsonga which is 'hina', and 'Thina' in 'Zulu'. Therefore, when writing

in English, as a second language, the learners make generalisations based on how they translate the two pronouns into their home languages.

There are a number of spelling mistakes witnessed throughout the texts. One of the commonly misspelled words is *'aeroplane'* which the learners spell as *'airoplans, airoplains, and airairplains'*. In this case the learners appear to be confused about how the words forming the words aeroplane are spelled: aero + plane. In the case of *'aero'*, which Nomsa and Bonisiwe and Keabetswe and Ziyanda spell as *'airo'*, it can be said that it arose from overgeneralization of pronunciations. In everyday speech the learners seem to understand the pronunciation of the *'ae'* sound to be the same as that of air. In addition, with those overgeneralisations, they presume that 'aero' is made up of a combination of the word *air* and a vowel *'o'*. The learners also get confused by the spelling of 'plane'. In the case of Nomsa and Bonisiwe, they spell it as *'plans'*, which may be related to the ways in which they pronounce it in everyday speech, whereas Ziyanda spell it as 'plains'. In this case, these learners are aware that the word plane needs an emphasis on the vowel sound *'a'*. However, they confuse that sound with the phonetic sound of *'ai'* which is found in the words *'plain'*. Nevertheless, although the spelling is wrong, these learners still recognise that the word aeroplane is a combination of '*aero' + 'plane'* which are not written separately. Another spelling mistake which can be imputed to overgeneralization of pronunciation are seen in the verb *said* which Keabetswe and Ziyanda spelled as 'sad', which is its homophone. In this case the learners fail to differentiate the differences between the spellings and the ways in which the words are being pronounced.

8. Our Drama

Nomsa and Bonisiwe	Deliwe and Ntombi	Keabetswe and Ziyanda	Gladys and Sarah
Stolen child The plot at home. The beginning. Once upon a time lived a mother with three children .The name of those children were Thandi, Thandeka,Zandile and Grace.The mother loved the last born she treated her like a princess. Middle One day the mother waked up at the morninwe.And she called Zandile and said :Zandile let's go to the Town to buy some clothes for you. Grace:and you stay behind and clean the house. -and mom we need some money for food. -I don't have money! -sho!I hate Grace -Yooooooh! Grace she hate us Hummmh! -You know what I have a plan at night why don't we go and check her hand that doe's she belongs to this family na? -Yah ne! End -Zandile was kicked out of the house. The end	StoryTeller:One day It was sunny day in Toluca ,Mexico .The princess were sleeping with their only aunt queen Miriam who always abuse them. Vanessa:La la la la la!g Miriam:Hey you lazy girl go fetch some flowers for the vase Vanessa:Yes aunt.layla:aunt aunt aunt! Miriam:what! Layla:we are hungry . Miriam :that is not my problem. Fantasia:no!mom don't do that. Mariam:shut up! I'm not talking to you! ehhh!how could you do that to me you are unbelievable . Vanessa:Stop it guys I can hear the noise from my bed room.why are you doing this to us? Miriam: what kind of question Is that? Vanessa:I don't know go ask your mama. Miriam:what did you say . Vanessa:you heard me better than Layla &Fantasia. Miriam :Vanessa I will sue you . Vanessa Layla:Do it now you are afraid. Miriam:come you girls!!! Fantasia:where are you taking them. Miriam:non of your business. Fantasia:I'm going with them. Miriam:No my child go to your bed room. Fantasia:No I won't I'm coming with them. Miriam:fine get in. Vanessa:no we will be fine. Fantasia:no way I'm not letting you go. Layla:Yes Vanessa can she stay with us. Vanessa:Okay fine! Miriam:get in! Vanessa:why are you doing this to us. Miriam:I don't know	True friend:By Keabetswe and Ziyanda and m bali &Ruth and Tshegofatso Long long are go throe was the little girls and they were going to work and there is some anther boys were going to take some money to use and we run away and we came with police. And another day we were going to the shops and we were going to by some food and we came back home and some boys came in our home and they took our things and they run away. And we Coll the police and they were gone and the police was very disappointed s and they sad we will never came back again police I am so sorry plz came back plz no ways we are not coming back okay yes good by police THE AND	True friend:By Keabetswe and Ziyanda and mbali &Ruth and Tshegofatso Long long are go throe was the little girls and they were going to work and there is some anther boys were going to take some money to use and we run away and we came with police. And another day we were going to the shops and we were going to by some food and we came back home and some boys came in our home and they took our things and they run away. And we Coll the police and they were gone and the police was very disappointed s and they sad we will never came back again police I am so sorry plz came back plz no ways we are not coming back okay yes good by police THE AND

Towards the end of the third term the learners were busy preparing plays that were intended to be used as performances at the end of the year. In this activity, after they had chosen their topics, characters and discussed the plots, they were to write the scripts of their plays where

they focused mainly on the lines of the characters. Their teacher, Thobeka, firstly asked them to tell her what they did in the previous lesson and they randomly said: *We thought about the beginning, middle & the end… the characters and the plot and said the name of the document will be "A Script".* She then told them, *"Today, we each will write our scripts".* In addition to that, she went to the board and tried to demonstrate how they were supposed to write the dialogues. She chose two different characters randomly and wrote their lines on the board:

Script by Esther and Jane

Super: _____

Peter: _____

After that she told them to start writing and said: "*Now 'let's write our scripts, don't write too many-many things, because of the time. Just give us the highlights, we are writing the lines for the script now!"* The learners began to write while Thobeka was walking around checking whether they understood what and how they were supposed to be writing. She discovered that some of the learners seemed to encounter difficulties and asked three learners to act out a certain play they did when in Grade 4 in 2012. The characters in that play were *Mrs Sibeko, the receptionist, and the doctor*. As they were acting out the play she was writing their lines on the board for the whole class to understand how dialogues are written. However, her dialogues were problematic because they did not employ a proper structure. Instead of showing how the conversations between the characters flowed, she merely wrote the characters names and all their lines separately which did not reflect any interactions. Her kind of dialogues as written on the board went as follows:

Receptionist: Next

Whats happened?

What did you eat?

Let me call the doctor

Mrs Sibeko: My thoat is so sore

I don't know

Good morning doctor

My throat is so sore

Doctor: Good morning Mrs Sibeko

What is wrong with you?

Open – say aaahh

Looking at these texts, it is evident that some of the learners, especially Nomsa and Bonsiwe, and Deliwe and Ntombi, had an understanding of the kinds of texts (play scripts) they were supposed to write. In particular to their texts we see an exploitation of some of the features typifying play scripts. These include using a narrative voice to highlight the background details of the story dialogues to show how the characters interacted. As typical of play scripts, the introduction, in a form of narration, did not only introduce the story, but also the characters and their relationship. In Nomsa and Bonisiwe's text there are five characters: the mother and her children: *Thandi, Thandeka, Zandile and Grace'*. In addition, the learners also introduced the story using a conventional opening *'Once upon a time lived a mother with three children.* Likewise, Deliwe and Ntombi, start their story using a similar conventional opening *'One day It was sunny day in Toluca ,Mexico .'* These openings also enable the reader to understand the context in which the storyline occurred.

Clear dialogues have been used to show the interactions among the characters. For instance, in Deliwe and Ntombi's text we observe a heated conversation between *Miriam* (the aunt) and her nieces *Vanessa* (the princess) and *Layla*.

> *Vanessa:La la la la la!g Miriam:Hey you lazy girl go fetch some flowers for the vase Vanessa:Yes aunt.layla:aunt aunt aunt! Miriam:what! Layla:we are hungry . Miriam :that is not my problem.*

Although the dialogues are not structured as they should be written in the conventional way, the learners seem to understand what their importance is in a play script. The improper structuring could be attributed to the device not being user friendly to produce a proper structure for texts such as dialogues. However, what is important in this text is that the learners are able to show creativity and imagination in their own writing. They have created imaginary characters and used the writing license of incorporating colloquial speech within their scripts.

9. What we are wearing

Nomsa and Bonisiwe	**Deliwe and Ntombi**	**Keabetswe and Ziyanda**	**Gladys and Sarah**
My name is Nomsa and in the story is I am Thandeka .My role in the story I am a sister. -pyjamas -skirt and top -shoes -bucket -mop My name is Bonisiwe and in the story i am Grace.My role is a mother. -pyjamas -skirt and top -shoes -a bag -car keys -house keys – money	I'a m Deliwe as Vanessa.Im going to wear a: Glitz dress a red one because I'm a princess. I 'm going to use a brown basket and Bunches of flowers. I'm an abused teenage girl. I'm Ntombi as Miriam.	My name is Keabetswe and I am going to wear my dress and my brown hi heels and my role is a Mother my props are cellphone and a bag. Pearl My real name is Ziyanda & my role is a mother that have a beautiful doughtier her name is but that's not her real name her real name is I am going to wear a black & white dress & wedges . Cellphones Bags Make ups Shoes Clothes Chance' s Books Laptops THE & .	*My name is Gladys* my part is Angela *i* am going to wear a pink dress and a tight. I'm going to use : A groom to clean A clothe to dust Blanket *My name is Sarah* my part is police am going to wear a blue jean ,shirt boots going to use: Bulet proof Toy/paper gun Police phone Dishes like: Cups Plates Spoons Knifes

After writing their play scripts the learners had to discuss the equipment they would need for their performance. In this activity they write descriptions of the costumes each character would wear and the props they would use. The descriptions are preceded by introductions of their characters and roles they play in their dramas. For example, Sarah, who did not mention what her character's name is, says that she plays the role of a police officer. The kinds of costumes she would wear also tend to relate to police officers: '*my part is police am going to wear a blue jean ,shirt boots going to use: Bulet proof Toy/paper gun'.* In order to resemble a

police officer she chooses to wear blue jeans, which is the colour of police officers' attire. In addition, Deliwe plays a character of *Vanessa*, who is a princess, and the kinds of clothes she plans to wear are *'Glitz dress, because she is a princess'*. The kinds of choices they make about the costumes and props enable the audience to get a picture of what the character looks like. These descriptions show that the writer understands the purpose which this writing exercise serves.

In this activity the descriptions of costumes and props the learners provide are determined by the kinds of characters they play. This enabled them to freely choose different linguistic materials which enhanced ownership in their texts. As each text has two characters playing different roles, the descriptions of the costumes and props also differ. For instance, in their stories, Bonisiwe plays a role of a mother called Grace, whereas Nomsa a sister called Thandeka. In addition, as in Gladys and Sarah's text, the descriptions provided tend to be related to their characters. A police officer, a character played by Sarah, is described in relation to the colour of uniform, and the kinds of tools, like a gun, which they carry. The blue colour of the police officer's uniform, wearing of boots and having to carry a gun, tends to reflect the learners' experiences and knowledge of what police officers in a South African context look like. These kinds of choices do not only show a sense of audience-awareness, but also increased the learners' sense of ownership over their writing.

The meaning of the texts tend to be dependent on the characters and their roles, this activity results in the learners producing lists of things they need for their plays. After introducing their characters, Nomsa provides lists of things they will need which are in bullet points: *'- pyjamas –skirt and top –shoes –bucket – mop'*. These lists are hanging in the text and only inferences can be made to understand what the writers intend to do with the items. In addition, as the texts are dominated by listing of things, they are also typified by simple sentences that introduce characters *'I'a m Deliwe as Vanessa'*, with some compound sentences combined by a coordinating conjunction, *'and'*, which is commonly referred to as 'an additional conjunction'. The compound sentences, for example '*My name is Keabetswe and I am going to wear my dress and my brown hi heels and my role is a Mother',* merely lists things she is going to do, and the role she will play. Furthermore, the learners show little control within their sentence constructions. Due to lack of punctuation in the text, the learners write long and incoherent sentences which are not properly combined e.g: '*My real name is Ziyanda & my role is a mother that have a beautiful doughtier her name is but that's not her real name her real name is I am going to wear a black & white dress & wedges'* . From this

sentence or three sentences should rather be formed: *(1) My real name is Ziyanda & my role is a mother that have a beautiful doughtier; (2) Her name is . . ., but her real name is . . . ; (3) I am going to wear black & white dress & wedges'*. In addition, we also see complex-compound sentence construction in the first sentence, which is signified by subordinate conjunctions *'and'* and *'that'*. In addition, the last part of Ziyanda and Keabetswe's text contains a group of words which are disconnected: *Cellphones Bags Make ups Shoes Clothes Chance's Books Laptops THE &* . This kind of writing raises questions of what the learners actually intended to do: Are they writing a list of things the character wants to use or what is the lists' purpose? In Deliwe and Ntombi's text, although there are problems related to syntax, reasons are provided for choosing certain items. Using a subordinate conjunction 'because', they combine the main clause *'Im going to wear a: Glitz dress a red one'* and a subordinate clause *'because I'm a princess'*.

From the above texts the one can applaud the given opportunity for the learners to use freedom in choosing linguistic resources related to their plays, which in turn, enhanced ownership in their writing. In addition, it can also be said that the learners, to a certain extent, understood the purpose of writing. However, there seems to be a lack of understanding of the style required: how must they structure their text? If they are writing lists of things, how is it done?

10. Instructions on How to Act

Nomsa and Bonisiwe	Deliwe and Ntombi	Keabetswe and Ziyanda	Sarah and Gladys
instructions 1.No noise 2.Be active 3.No real fighting 4.Raise your voice 5.Concetrate 6.Don't be shy 7.Don't steal 8.Be passionate 9.Don't chew 10.Give one another a chance	**instructions on acting** -When acting you must raise up your voice louder. -While acting you must be passion and active. -The audience must be quite while people act . -We can\'t use real money we can use toys. -We can\'t Insult one another or fight. -We must not be shy. -The people must show their talent. –When		**Instructions on how to act** When acting u must: 1Do not make noise 2Focus on acting 3 Don\'t make noise 4 Don\'t fight real 5 Few people must shoot 6 Don\'t disturb each other 7 Don\'t laugh at others 8 Use props not real money 9 Raise your voice

Before acting their plays Thobeka and the learners discussed what makes a good actor. In addition to this, they also tried to generate instructions on how to act. A list of instructions was written on the board as follows: *'speak loudly, audience must keep quiet, not be afraid to act in vernacular, don't use real money, be acting nice, read your script, no real fighting, and when acting you must concentrate'*. After the discussion the instructions were erased from the board and the learners were asked to write their own instructions on how to act: *'Now can you write instructions on how to act?'* The class discussion impacted on the learners' attempts to generate their own instructions related to their plays. To a certain extent it predetermined what the learners wrote. Instead, the instructions they wrote were similar and they appear to be copied from those which were on the board. Some of the most common examples are: *'no noise or don't make noise, no real fighting, raise your voice, and be active'.* Although the learners gave the same responses, they display an understanding of the

genre of instruction which the texts are supposed to adopt. Their points are either arranged in bullets or are numbered.

In this activity the meaning is predetermined by the discussion and, as a result, the learners' choice of linguistic resources is being constrained. This affects their sense of ownership in their writing, resulting in the learners merely copying or scribing (Hendricks, 2005) the instructions which were brainstormed on the board. However, it is still interesting to note that some learners went an extra mile and generated a couple instructions of their own. For example, Deliwe and Ntombi mention something like *'we can\'t insult one another, we must not be shy, the people'.* Although the learners' ownership was subdued, they still expressed themselves using authoritative and commanding voices in their writing. This is realised by the use of simple sentences which give commands: *'Don't be shy, don't steal, do not make noise, don\'t laugh at others'.* Writing short sentence, simple sentences, in these texts reflects the kind of controlled writing they do in their English (First Additional Language) lessons. As based on CAPS (2011) and GPLMS (2013), the learners write language based activities where the kinds of texts are typified by short simple sentences, not necessarily connected to one another. Such activities, as viewed by Matsuda (2009) and Hyland (2003), are heavily controlled and inhibit the learners' sense of exploration which writing involves.

In addition, they also use modal verbs, such as 'must', 'can' and 'can't' which shows a high degree of authority: *When acting you must raise up your voice louder, we can\'t use real money can use toys'.* Looking at these texts it can be said that the learners have an improved sense of control over their writing. Their ideas are ordered using bullets or number, however they seem to have a problem with regards to the use of an apostrophe for omission. They insert a backslash before an apostrophe in the contractions for *Don\'t and can'\t.*

4.4. Conclusion and Discussions

This chapter explored the ways in which the Mobile Literacies Project enabled or constrained the Grade 5 learners' development of writing. It traced their writing development over a period of 7 months, from April 2013 to October 2013 when the project stopped. It also explored how different participants, the learners, (24 learners in 4 focus groups of 6), the Mobile Literacies teacher, and the Language HOD, conceptualised writing development and how the project enabled or constrained the learners' writing development. The analysis regarding how the learners' writing development was enabled or constrained was shown by the use of the ten texts produced in different terms of the year.

Based on the analysis of the interviews, there tends to be a relationship between the kinds of writing discourses embedded in the language curriculum and the ways in which the different participants conceptualised writing development. Overall, these conceptualisations appeared to align more to accuracy-driven product based approaches of writing which underpins the writing activities done in the English subject.

The Mobile Literacies teacher, Thobeka, who teaches Social Sciences, observed that there seemed to be a sign of development in the learners' writing. She showed that this was seen as the learners started spelling correctly. In addition, she also asserted that this benefit was partly due to the use of the device, iPod Touch, which provides the tool of spelling and grammar check. Like her, most of the learners also pointed out that writing with the iPod Touch, helped them in learning spelling and this formed the basis of what their peers discussed when writing. On the other hand, Selina's conceptualisation of how the project helped the learners develop writing drew from text-function approaches of second language writing theories. She showed that after the project the learners knew how to write texts like letters and understood the functions of different aspects of various documents.

Furthermore both the Mobile Literacies teacher and the Language HOD pointed out a disjuncture between the kinds of writing done in the Mobile Literacies lessons and the allocated subject in which the project was run. They both argued that since the project was run in Life Skills period, the text subjects done should have been aligned to Life Skills rather than English.

The Language HOD specifically, also pointed out that the project failed to help the learners develop writing fully. She identified some of the factors accountable for the lack of full development in the learners' writing. These included the teachers' incompetence to use digital tools for teaching writing, as well as the overall need for more time to explore the devices due to factors resulting in complete unfamiliarity with such technology.

Based on the texts the learners wrote, it is clear that meaning was centralised over and above technical aspects such as spelling. This somewhat enabled the learners to develop writing in terms of ownership and use of voice in writing. In addition, the aspects use of meaning, ownership and voice use were encouraged by the types of topics the learners wrote about which provoked the learners to draw meaning from their own experiences and knowledge. Some of these topics such as, Mothers' Day cards or People We Admire, encouraged the learners to write from a personal level and express emotion within their writing.

Not only did the texts that they wrote enable the learners to keep a particular purpose in mind, but they also enabled them to use certain genres. However, the significance of genre consciousness was not emphasised by the teacher and sometimes there tended to be confusion about the genres required. Genres were being chosen from the iPod Touch as a 'type of document', but the teacher, as Johns (2008) argues, did not give emphasis on how a genre influences the structure, language use and purpose of the text.

Based on the texts which the learners wrote, the Mobile Literacies project constrained the development of certain aspects of the learners' writing. Mainly, unlike in the language classes, the learners were only expected to write texts, but there was no linguistic input for them to know how they had to manipulate language aspects to create meaning. It was assumed that they would transfer their linguistic knowledge gained from, English, into the writing they did. As a result, the kind of transfer that the learners made was only seen when most of them were writing simple sentences or a single word in a sentence. Such sentences, exemplifying a lower-order thinking of Bloom's taxonomy, typified by the kind of writing exercises they do in their language classes where they write short simple sentences of four to five words. Most of the learners showed no complex thoughts in their writing. This could have been influences by a lack of tutoring regarding how language is used according to a particular genre.

Mostly, the learners seemed to lack control of their language, evident throughout the texts that their spelling of words was incorrect as well as difficulty in separating words and sentences correctly. This could also be attributed to a lack of language input by the teacher. These errors therefore contradict the learners and teachers comments that spelling was developed through the use of the device.

Chapter 5: An analysis of Grade 5 learners' writing Development in the GPLMS Project

5.1. Introduction

In this chapter I present an analysis of the Grade 5 learners' writing development in the GPLMS project. Like in the previous chapter, this analysis is based on three sets of data namely; the GPLMS texts produced in English exercise books, interviews and GPLMS lesson plan documents. Since permission was not obtained to observe the lessons, the GPLMS lesson plan documents provide information about how and why the texts were produced. The interviews investigated the teacher's, the learners', the GPLMS coach's, and the Language HOD's views regarding how the project (GPLMS) enabled or constrained writing development. The following staff and learners participated in the interviews:

- a Grade 5 English teacher
- a Languages HOD
- a GPLMS coach
- 24 Grade 5 learners in four focus groups of 6 learners in each group.

The analysis of the texts intends to establish whether or not the learners' writing developed in the GPLMS project. Due to the nature of the texts produced: exercises mostly typified by separate sentences or words, it became difficult to analyse them in using the same categories used to analyse the texts (Touch texts) in the previous chapter (Chapter 4). Therefore, the analysis was based on the objectives underpinning writing in categories set out by GPLMS:

- Reading and Viewing
- Writing and Presenting
- Language Structures and Conventions.

This chapter is divided into two sections:

- Section A: Conceptualisations of writing and writing development
- Section B: An analysis of the GPLMS texts.

5.2. Section A: Conceptualisations of writing and the learners' development of writing

This section covers the different views raised regarding whether or not the GPLMS project enabled or constrained the learners' development as writers. These views are based on interviews conducted with a Grade 5 English teacher who participated in the project in 2013, the English Language HOD, the learners and a GPLMS coach. The discussion of these views is underpinned by the following headings:

- The Grade 5 English teacher's conceptualisation of the learners' writing development
- The English HOD's conceptualisation of the learners' writing development in the GPLMS project
- The GPLMS coach's conceptualisation of the learners' writing development in the GPLMS project
- The learners' conceptualisation of their own writing development

5.2.1 The Grade 5 English teacher's conceptualisation of the learners' writing development in the project

Flora, the Grade 5 English teacher, who participated in the GPLMS project, expressed scepticism on whether the project enabled the learners to develop writing. She highlighted a number of factors to which a lack of the learners' development of writing could be attributed, and among others things, she strongly emphasised 'time insufficiency' as a key factor that hampered their development of writing. Some of the key themes that emerged from her interview include the following:

- Overall views of developed Grade 5 learners' writing
- The effectiveness of the pedagogy on developing the learners' writing

Overall views of developed Grade 5 learners' writing

With regard to what counts as development of writing for learners in their fifth grade, Flora's views draw from traditional technicists theories of writing (Street, 1993). She shows that for a Grade 5 learner to be considered a developed writer; they must be able to complete their work with manifestation of good handwriting.

> *They must be able to complete their work, and handwriting is also important. But this was difficult to achieve with GPLMS because of lack of time or insufficient time for learners to focus on developing their handwriting. (TI2; 16 July 2014)*

Although she conceived the two skills of, handwriting and the ability to complete activities, as important signals of developed writing, she also pointed out that these skills were not fully developed because of lack of time. This view showed how her conception of writing focus on superficial aspects of writing without paying attention to the quality of the content of what is written. The root of Flora's focus with technical skills such as handwriting could be traced to the kinds of training she received in the GPLMS project *'They gave us workshops where we got to understand what writing is all about. We were even taught some important writing skills such as writing in cursive'* (TI2; 16 July 2014). At the same time this could also be a reflection of her experiences of learning to write as a former primary learner where handwriting and completion of work were strongly emphasised by teachers more than content and quality of writing.

Flora's conception of writing development appears to coincide with that of Thobeka, the Mobile Literacies Teacher. Like Flora, she also conceptualised writing development using the traditional model. Although she did not comment on completion of activities and handwriting, she viewed, spelling, a technical skill, as a good sign of writing development '. . . *I would say learners' improvement of writing manifests through . . . spelling' (TI1; 16 July 2014).* Both teachers' references to technical skills might be influenced, as shown by Flora, by the curriculum informing their teaching and probably the teacher-development workshops which they attend. Following this discussion I intend to look at the effectiveness of the pedagogy to facilitate learners' writing development.

The effectiveness of the pedagogy to facilitate the learners' writing development

Not only did Flora find the learners' writing partially developed in terms of the skills she mentioned, she was also sceptical about the effectiveness of the pedagogy employed by GPLMS to facilitate the learners' writing development. She pointed out two factors which seemed to have had a major impact on the implementation of different teaching methods as well as the execution of lessons. These factors included learners' ability to write and the time available for the teaching of writing and for learners to do different activities. Flora showed that time specifically was a major factor which affected her incorporation of different teaching materials while teaching writing. She expressed this when commenting on the advantages and disadvantages of the GPLMS pedagogy: *'There is always a disadvantage, because time is the biggest problem. Due to it, their work is rarely well done or complete. The learners were also slow. Maybe the old ways of teaching, where lots of repetition was*

done, would be better and suitable for them' (TI2; 16 July 2014). One can see that she also points out that *'the learners were slow'* (TI2; 16 July 2014) and this affects not only their completion of their activities but also her teaching. Flora then points out the learners' lack of independence which further hinders their development as writers *'I used different materials which learners would copy, but they did not have time on themselves to do so. Some of them would not do any work when they go home because of lacking independence'* (TI2; 16 July 2014).

Flora made suggestions about what could be done to improve the project for the learners to develop as writers. Considering the issue of time insufficiency and the learners' lack of independence to write, she revered the old ways of teaching and learning that was epitomised by rote learning, *'maybe the old ways, where lots of repetition was done, would be better and suitable for them'* (TI2; 16 July 2014). This could be the kind of schooling she encountered as a former learner which promoted memorising without comprehension and internalisation of concepts. Unfortunately, this approach to teaching results in learners developing a myopic view of concepts which would ultimately hinder them to freely explore other avenues of comprehension. Furthermore, Flora emphasises that there is a need for more time to implement all the GPLMS lessons as well as the need to pay more attention to learners: *'Learners need serious attention and GPLMS needs more time for implementation and they must also have special period for learning handwriting'* (TI2; 16 July 2014). The following discussion aims to focus on the way the Language HOD viewed the learners' writing development from the GPLMS project.

5.2.2. The Language HOD's conceptualisation of the learners' writing development in the GPLMS project

Here I analyse the interview with Selina, the English HOD, who expressed optimism on the GPLMS Project's potential to help the learners' develop writing. She highlighted some factors which played a role in the learners' writing development. These factors were embedded in the following themes:

- General overview of learners' writing development in the GPLMS project
- The interventionist approach adopted by GPLMS Project.

General overview of learners' writing development in the GPLMS project

Selina discusses her opinion about what counts as signs of writing development of Grade 5 learners and how their writing development benefited from the GPLMS project. Her conceptualisations of what to expect of a Grade 5 learner whose has developed as a writer recognised the significance of writing in relation to context which included taking into consideration the type of text produced as well as its purpose: *'learners need to be able to write texts like letters, paragraphs and reports and make summaries'* (LHI; 25 July 2014). This view shows how learners in their fifth grade should be made aware that writing is a meaningful activity. However, taking into account the kind of writing that took place in the GPLMS project, when they wrote paragraphs using writing frames in which they were required to fill in gaps, Selina's view could be challenged since the writing highlighted in this example did not allow the learners to construct their own meaning. Instead of writing their own paragraphs, they were completing incomplete paragraphs found in GPLMS lesson plans. On the other hand, her view of how the learners' writing developed in the project coincides with Flora's who views the ability *'to complete their activities'* (LHI; 25 July 2014) as a sign of writing development. The factors to which she attributed the learners' writing development in the project are discussed below.

The interventionist approach adopted by GPLMS Project

The GPLMS project, according to Selina, was typified by an interventionist approach to teaching and specifically the facilitation of writing. This involved providing the teachers with lesson plans which stipulated the kinds of objectives to be achieved and the steps to be followed while teaching. The teachers also had coaches who provided them constant supervisions in their implementation of the lesson plans. This was found to be effective in

helping the learners develop writing. Selina states: *'GPLMS had lessons prepared for teachers which specified what they needed to teach. At the same time, the teachers also had coaches who supervised them regularly on their teaching. I think GPLMS did achieve its implementation of its lesson scripts because lessons were already prepared for teachers and they were constantly monitored by their coaches'* (LHI, 25 July 2014). However, this view contradicts that of Flora, who raised the issue of time constraints as a major factor that hindered successful implementation of lesson plans, therefore impacting on the learners' writing development.

5.2.3. GPLMS Coach's View of the Learners writing development in the GPLMS Project

The interview with Thembi, the GPLMS coach, reveals a sense of ambivalence regarding the implementation of the lesson plans, the effectiveness of the pedagogy employed to facilitate writing and whether the project helped the learners develop as writers or not. The discussions of her views are summed up by the following themes:

- General View of Writing Development
- Implementation of Lesson Scripts.

General View of Writing Development

Thembi's view of what constitutes writing development in Grade 5 differs from that of Flora and Selina. She stated that for a Grade 5 learner's writing to be regarded as developed, the learner should be able to make meaning of what they were supposed to write and also understand how certain text types are written. This involves using knowledge of text function which informs how information in a text is organised to create meaning. To achieve this she states that learners must develop control over their writing: *'they must be able to understand the topic and be able to write in relation to it; They should be able to write logical sentences with good order'* (GCI; 25 August 2014). This view, however, contradicts the manner in which the learners write in the GPLMS classroom where their writing activities do not allow an opportunity to write extended texts which require coherent connection of sentences. In some cases, as part of process-based activities where the learners write paragraphs using writing frames with gaps to be filled in. In addition, gap filling activities are also typical in grammar based activities. Thus, expressing a contradictory writing conception, and shows Thembi's disapproval of the ways in which the project conceptualises writing.

Implementation of the lesson plans

Like Flora, Thembi found that the lesson plans were not successfully implemented and this became prevalent in the Annual National Assessment (ANA), where it was found that the learners encountered difficulties with spelling. Expressing a reason for this problem, Thembi states: '*some teachers lacked motivation they were lazy and wanted to complete in one moment'* (GCI, 25 August 2014). She found the writing pedagogy employed in this project to yield signs of development: *'there were signs of development. We did demonstrations; we would do this in the class, through charts that consisted of different topics. We would ask the learners about their prior knowledge and they would contribute'* (GCI).

5.2.4. Learners' Conceptualisation of their own writing development in the project

The interviews with the learners revealed a relationship between the kinds of writing they did at school specifically in the GPLMS classes and the ways in which they viewed writing and their own writing development in the GPLMS project. Drawing from CAPS (2012), the GPLMS writing activities for English First Additional Language paid attention to developing technical skills of writing such as spelling, grammar, comprehension and process related writing strategies. Writing activities based on developing these skills were informed by four broader themes which are also found in CAPS (2011): Reading and Viewing, Listening and Speaking, Writing and Presenting and Language Structures and Conventions. The discussion of the learners' conceptualisation of writing is based on the following themes:

- Conceptualisation of writing and writing development
- Learners' freedom in their writing
- Role of individual writing
- Teacher's role in facilitating the learners' writing.

Conceptualisation of writing and writing development

The kinds of writing activities which the learners did in the GPLMS project were skill-based. In these activities the learners practised different technical skills such as: spelling, comprehension, grammar, as well as process related writing strategies: drafting, planning, editing and reviewing (GPLMS, 2012; Cremin and Myhill, 2012). The learners' encounter with these activities tended to influence the ways they viewed writing in general and how

their own writing developed in the GPLMS project. They expressed these views when asked about what they thought is necessary for one to be able to write. Some of them commented on spelling and punctuation, whereas others raised the significance of understanding the text function.

> *You must know how to write a paragraph and spelling words and when you write a story you must start with a heading, and end with a full-stop and you story must have capital letters.*
>
> *Ntsako (LIFG3; 27 June 2014)*
>
> *You need to know punctuations.*
>
> *Deliwe (LIFG2; 06 June 2014)*

In this view, Ntsako does not only comment on spelling but also raises the importance of understanding the text function *'you must know how to write a paragraph . . . you must start with a heading'(LIFG3;27 June 2014).* The development of text function forms part of writing in second language contexts (Hyland, 2003), and this involves knowing how different aspects of a text such as heading, paragraphs, subheadings and conclusion affect the logical coherence and meaning of a text. Like Deliwe, Ntsako also raises the significance of other technical skills such as punctuation '*end with a full-stop and you story must have capital letters',* which do not really affect the meaning of a text. Viewing writing in relation to punctuation can be attributed to some of the activities which the learners did in GPLMS. Firstly, under the theme of Language Structure and Conventions (GPLMS, 2012) the learners did a grammar based activity where they practised the differences between common and proper nouns, thus, Ntombi views knowing *'common nouns' (LFG2; 06 June 2014)* as important for writing. In differentiating the two types of nouns, they were told that all proper nouns begin with a capital letter (GPLMS, term 2, 2012: 76). Ending sentences with full-stop can be related to some of the teachers' discursive practises that emphasise writing punctuation marks in sentences. The learners' conceptions of what it means to be able to write also influenced how they conceptualised the way the GPLMS project enabled them to develop as writers. They indicated that part of their writing development in the project included being able to punctuate sentences, spell words, write paragraphs and summarise stories using their own words (LIFG4; 27 June 2014).

> *When we read about stories when we write in our class work books we write paragraphs and summarise the story with our own words not copying in the book.*
>
> *Gladys (LIFG4; 27 June 2014)*

Yes, by spelling words and write sentences about people who are in a story and main characters.

Rifumo (LIFG3; 27 June 2014)

It helped us because we did not know how to spell the words and how to read, but when we were busy writing we learn more.

Tisetso (LFG3; 27 June 2014)

Yes, it helped us when a story is not a statement it's a question. We understand where we should put capital alphabets.

Valerie (LFG1; 06 June 2014)

Learners' freedom in their writing

The kinds of topics they wrote about included: *'Visiting the library, the Bull and the Mouse, Mr Giraffe, the Tiny Mouse'.* In GPLMS, the learners indicated that they did not have the opportunity to choose topics. They were prescribed to them by the teacher depending on what the theme of the lesson was *"we found them in the book, and the teacher told us to write about them" (Rifumo; LIFG3; 27 June 2014)*. This kind of approach is typical in most traditional second language classrooms in South Africa, and as Cremin and Myhill (2012) and Lensmire (2000) show, depriving learners of opportunities to draw topics from their own personal inspiration or experiences may result in them lacking authority in their own writing. The lack of freedom, as will be seen in the analysis of the learners' writing, was further hampered by the pedagogy employed in GPLMS, although certain topics like 'Visiting the Library', which drew from the learners' experiences had the potential to help them use their imagination and creativity.

Role of individual writing

Yes it helped us. If there is something we don't understand we asked the teacher and the teacher would tell us just like the iPod when we write the wrong spelling it would give us the correct spelling. We also learner about present tense and future tense sometimes we wrote about them when we write sentences.

Gladys (LIFG4: 27 June 2014)

We worked individually. It helped us a lot because when you are a person you have to think on your own because there is no person.

Nomsa (LIFG1; 06 June 2014)

In GPLMS the learner wrote in their class work books individually. This is one traditional teaching approach which has a long history in the South African education. As shown by Nomsa, writing individually brings with it a certain degree of independence. It raises the learners' awareness that they have to work out problems on their own without relying on others *'when you are a person you have to think on your own because their no person'* (LIFG1; 06 June 2014). Although the learners are supposed to become independent, Gladys shows that in cases where they needed help, they normally relied on their teacher who, as a more knowledgeable body in the class, would help close the gap between what they didn't know and what they wanted to know. In most cases, they would ask her to help them to correct spelling *'if there is something we don't understand we asked the teacher and the teacher would tell us...when we write the wrong spelling [she] would give us the correct spelling'* (Gladys; LIFG4: 27 June 2014). Using an example of spelling reflects the significance of the spelling based exercise they do in GPLMS, and how it influences their conception of what they need to achieve as writing learners. In the texts they produced she would normally correct their spelling and, in reverse, some of the learners would also trace their spelling mistakes and attempt to correct them (see appendix). The development of spelling was also central with regard to how the learners viewed the ways in which their teacher specifically facilitated their writing '*by showing us how to write spelling, like when you write jump she says it in a way learners do.*

Deliwe (LIFG2; 06 June 2014)

5.5. Section B: GPLMS texts analysis

In this section I analyse the learners' texts (GPLMS texts) to establish whether or not the learners' writing developed in the project. The writing was underpinned mainly by three categories which are also found in the CAPS curriculum (2011) for English First Additional Languages: Reading and Viewing, Language Structures and Convention and Writing and Presenting. Due to this, the texts are repetitive in terms of pedagogic approach, learning objective and purposes for writing. Therefore, I only analysed the texts which were produced in the first and second term of the year. In addition to that, considering the nature of the texts it also became difficult to analyse them using the same categories used in the previous chapter, hence the analysis of these texts was based on the following categories:

- Quality of texts produced
- Learners' Writing Competence
- Complexity and variation in selected texts
- Models of writing development employed used to write
- Writing Activities feasibility to enable learners' development in relation to:
    - Use of genres
    - Use of Voice
    - Ownership and use of linguistic resources

5.5.1. Term 1: 9 January to 21 March

The first term began on the 9th of January and ended on the 21st of March for Easter holidays. Informed by the three categories prescribed by GPLMS (2012), Language Structures and Conventions, Reading and Viewing, and Writing and Presenting, twelve exercises were done during this term. These categories resemble the pedagogical approaches underpinning second language writing such as grammar teaching and process writing (Hyland, 2003). Five exercises were grammar based, two were comprehension tests and the other five were related to process-based activities. While following the three categories, the first exercise was based on practising reading and viewing skills then two grammar-based exercises, and three writing and presenting exercises. Typified by controlled form-focused writing exercises, the learners seemed to strive for accuracy and correctness in their responses to the questions of the exercise. As a result, writing in these exercises was based on reproducing knowledge, for instance applying certain grammar rules. Without any meaningful texts written, the writing

exercises did not enable the learners to get a clear picture of how the different skills learned are used in relation to writing. While being underpinned by the different categories which were developed, the analysis looked at how writing developed in each of the themes:

- Reading and Viewing
- Language Structures and Conventions
- Writing and Presenting

5.5.1.1. Reading and Viewing

Under this theme the learners wrote two comprehension test activities, with the following headings: '*School library burns down'* and '*A wonder boy'.* The main objective of these activities was "to expose learners to longer texts; to help learners practice post-reading skills' (GPLMS, 2012: 47). My analysis of writing done under this theme during the first term is based on the first comprehension, *School library burns down.*

School Library Burns Down

by Lisa Grainger
25 October 2012
The school library at Wilson Primary School in Soweto, Johannesburg burnt down on Tuesday afternoon.

Mrs Mary Molefe, the librarian at Wilson Primary, went back to the library after break and she saw smoke coming out the library windows. She pushed the fire alarm and the school went to the field to escape the fire. Fire-fighters arrived at the school and put out the fire. The fire had destroyed the reading corner in the library. A total of 238 books were destroyed and flames damaged the bookshelves and carpets.

After questions had been asked, it became clear that a young boy had set a curtain in the library alight while he was playing with a box of matches. The boy has been told to do 18 hours of community service as punishment for what he did.

Learners are working hard to raise money to get new books for the library. The library has been closed until it has been fixed. This should take a few weeks and once this has been done, the library will re-open.

Questions	**Memo**
a) When did the story take place?	a) On Tuesday afternoon
b) Where did the story take place?	b) Wilson Primary School, Soweto
c) What happened?	c) School library burnt down
d) Why did this happen?	d) Young boy was playing with matches
e) What was destroyed?	e) 238 books, carpet and bookshelves

The passage consists of five short paragraphs. The story in the passage is about a young school boy who was playing with a matchbox inside a school library which set a curtain ablaze and burned the whole library destroying many books, bookshelves and carpet. The story took place in Soweto, a township in Johannesburg, which was previously designated for

black people in the apartheid era. This passage was introduced in another lesson, a reading lesson, where the class focused on comprehension skills.

Learners' answers:

Gladys 1. The story ~~took~~ was ~~place~~ on ~~Soweto~~ Tuesday ~~Johannesburg~~ afternoon. 2. The story took place in Soweto, Johannesburg. 3. The school library burnt down. 4. because a young boy had set a curtain in the library alight while he was playing of matches. 5. The fire destroyed the reading corner in the library. **Corrections** a) On Tuesday afternoon b) Wilson Primary School Soweto.	**Jennifer** 1. The story take place at Wilson Primary School in Soweto, Johannesburg. 2. burnt down on Tuesday afternoon. 3. The story take place in 25 feth October 2012. 4. The boy was playing with a box of matches. 5. The firi had destroyed the reading conner in the library. **Corrections** b) Wilson Primary School, Soweto e) 238 books, ~~the~~ carpet and bookshelves were destroyed.
Nsuku a) The school library at Wilson Primary School in Soweto, Johannesburg burnt down on Tuesday aftrnoon. b) Mrs Mary Molefe the librarian at Wilson school went back to the d) e) **Corrections** a) On Tuesday Afternoon b) Wilson Primary School Soweto c) School library burnt down d)Young boy was playing with matches e) 238 books, carpet and bookshelves	**Ntombi** 1. The story take the place in 25 October on Tuesday afternoon. 2. The story take place at Wilson Priiamry School in Soweto, Johannesburg. 3. The boy set a curtain in the library alight while he was playing with a box of matches. 4. Because he was playing with a box of maches. 5. Destroyed 835 books **Corrections** a) On Tuesday afternoon b) Wilson Primary School Soweto c) School library burnt down d) Young boy was playing with a box of matches e) 238 books, carpet and bookshelves were destroyed.

Amount of Writing

In this activity the learners, as shown in GPLMS, were supposed to "practise the post-reading skill of identifying main facts" (2012: 45). This was done by answering five close-ended questions (*wh-type)* which were written on the board. The questions were rehearsed in the previous lesson where they focused on finding information related to the characters in the story (who?), the setting of the story (*where?),* what happened *(what?),* and the reason it happened (*why)*. Thus, through such a guided approach, the learners were familiar with the kinds of answers which were required in this activity. In this activity all the learners wrote five separate sentences answering the questions, with each sentence beginning on a new line. After completing the test, the learners copied corrections which were written on the board. Some copied the whole correction, while others focused mainly on the answers which they got wrong.

In this activity the writing done was not meant for meaning related purposes, thus it involved reproducing knowledge. Typifying copying or what Hendricks, in her research, deems as "scribing" (2005: 47), this activity constrains learners' engagement with the topic personally. The learners were copying answers from the text (passage) and due to that, in some cases, some of them did not write the answers in their own words without changing the syntax of the sentences. For example, in Question 1 Nsuku copied the first sentence from the text which did not only provide information about when the story took place, but also where it took place *'The school library at Wilson Primary School in Soweto, Johannesburg burnt down on Tuesday afternoon'.* Although this answer is correct, it was considered wrong on the basis of being verbose and therefore not as concise as it appeared in the memo 'on Tuesday afternoon'. In the decision to mark the answer as wrong shows how the teacher prescribes a certain way of copying from the text as well as the kind of information the learners should include or omit when copying. This results in a disconnect between the kinds of answers expected of the learners by the memo, the ways in which the learners wrote their answers and the teacher's expectations of how the learners must write their answers and her discernment of what is considered to be a correct or incorrect answer.

Since the answers the learners wrote were not all correct, they were then provided with corrections on the chalkboard which they had to copy into their books based on the answers they got wrong. This kind of writing does not have any cognitive demands because the learners only have to employ their ability to decode letters in their books. Furthermore, looking at the answers the learners wrote and those from the memo, it is clear that this activity encourages lower-order thinking of Bloom's taxonomy. All the answers are written in simple sentences both in the learners' responses and the memo. For example, for Q2 Gladys says '*The story took place in Soweto, Johannesburg',* whereas the memo presented it as a phrase *'Wilson Primary School, Soweto'.* As shown in the memo, the learners are encouraged to recall information throughout. This kind of activity brings a construct of writing which is related to answering a set of questions related to a particular activity as well as copying answers from the memo which are written on the board as corrections.

Although the passage was introduced in advance in the reading lesson with similar questions being rehearsed before, all the learners did not write correct answers to the all questions. Gladys wrote corrections for Q1&2, Jennifer: Q2&5, while Nsuku & Ntombi wrote corrections for all the questions. Nsuku in particular did not even attempt to answer the last three questions. It is evident that the incorrectness of their answers can be attributed to a

syntactic disconnect between the learners' answers and those in the memo. For example, the answer for question 1 in the memo is written as *'On Tuesday afternoon'*, but Ntombi was marked wrong for writing it in a different syntactic form *'The story take the place in 25 October on Tuesday afternoon'.* The rejection of learners' attempts to write in full sentences implies an encouragement to write in phrases. As a result, a strong emphasis on syntactic similarity and accuracy of the answers, typifies reproduction which takes away learners' agency to employ different ways of expressing their answers.

5.5.1.2. Language Structures and Conventions

During this term the learners wrote five activities under the theme of Language Structures and Conventions. Oriented to grammar practice (Hyland, 2003), these activities were based on five different aspects of grammar: verbs, nouns, pronouns, prepositions and adjectives. In this theme, GPLMS employ explicit teaching of grammar aspects. Using an explicit approach to teaching grammar (Ellis, 1998) the main objective of this theme, as found in GPLMS, is "to explicitly teach learners a language structure or convention; to give learners the opportunity to practise using language structure and conventions" (GPLMS, 2012: 109). On the other hand, CAPS from which GPLMS draws, stipulates clearly that it intends in helping the learners develop a sense of "meta-language", which will help them to "evaluate their own and other texts critically in terms of meaning, effectiveness and accuracy" (2011: 12). In terms of the Intermediate schooling phase specifically, it also argues that "First Additional Language Learners will take more notice of . . . grammatical structures they are already familiar with from Foundation Phase, explore the way their additional language works and take some conscious control of it, and use this developing knowledge to check their use of language, especially in writing" (2011: 12). Considering the kinds of exercises done in this theme, there is a mismatch between what the learners achieved after writing these exercises and what CAPS says are the kinds of skills they must develop in Grade 5. The exercises, as seen below, do not enable the learners to use knowledge of language structure in context, instead it is oriented to practising grammar.

In these activities the learners were normally given 6 sentences in which the first four required them to identify and underline a grammar aspect depending on the activity. The last two required them to fill in gaps depending on grammar aspect focused on. This entails that the learners would eventually have written two words in each activity though they would write six short sentences, writing of those sentences were predetermined.

Identify Verbs in a Sentence

a) The boys speak in the library.	a) speak
b) The girl reads in the corner.	b) reads
c) The librarian types on her keyboard.	c) types
d) The children walk through the door.	d) walk
e) The boy _____ in front of the wall.	e) stands
f) The boy _____ on a piece of paper.	f) writes

In this activity the learners were being tested with regard to their knowledge of verbs in sentences. Using a structured input approach to teach grammar (Ellis, 1998), the teacher pre-selected and predetermined the kinds of words and sentences the children had to produce "to jump, sit, cry, smile, or clap" (GPLMS, 2012: 57) to demonstrate what verbs entail. The teacher then explained that the words she was calling out were verbs or actions words (doing words) and they are recognised by the word *'to'* which indicates what is being done. These instructions reveal a problem with the teacher's content knowledge because the word *'to'*, does not always signify verbs. Depending on contexts, it may be used as an indicative or preposition of motion or direction although, in other instances, it signifies infinitive verbs. Introducing verbs in this manner is problematic in activities which require the learners to identify verbs in any sentence. Certain sentences may have more than one verb where infinitive and finite verbs are included. The learners may tend to focus only on infinitives while failing to recognise finite verbs because of the lack of the word 'to'.

In this activity most of the learners appeared to understand what they are supposed to do and what verbs are. They were able to identify the verbs in the sentences and also fill in the gaps. For example, out of the six questions, Nsuku got the first two correct but she confused verbs with nouns in, *c) librarian* and *d) children*. She was also marked wrong for her verbs in the last two questions because they did not coincide with those stated in the memo: *e) The boy talks in front of a wall; f) The boy carries on a piece of a paper.* Nsuku was not the only person to be marked wrong for writing verbs in those two questions.

Gladys	**Jennifer**
a) The boys speak in the library. b) The girl reads in the corner. c) The librarian types on her keyboard. d) The children walk through the door. e) The boy walks in front of a wall. f) The boy writes on a piece of a paper.	a) The boys speak in the library. b) The girl ~~reads~~ read in the corner. c) The librarian types on her keyboard. d) The children walk through the door. e) The boy reads in front of a wall. f) The boy writes on a piece of a paper. **Corrections** *b) The girl reads in the corner.* *e) The boy stands in front of a wall.*
Nsuku	**Ntombi**
a) The boys speak in the library. b) The girl reads in the corner. c) The librarian types on her keyboard. d) The children walk through the door. e) The boy talks in front of a wall. f) The boy carries on a piece of a paper. **Corrections** *c) The librarian types on her keyboard.* *d) The children walk through the door.* *e) The boy stands in front of a wall.* *f) The boy writes on a piece of a paper.*	a) The boys speak in the library. b) The girl reads in the corner. c) The librarian types on her keyboard. d) The children walk through the door. e) The boy reads in front of a wall. f) The boy writes on a piece of a paper. **Corrections** *e) The boy stands in front of a wall* *f) The boy writes on a piece of a paper*

5.5.1.3. Writing and Presenting

For this theme the learners did two types of activities based on writing skills: process related activities and spelling tests. The former were intended to teach the learners writing strategies (Cremin and Myhll, 2012; Andrews and Flower, 2011), such as planning, using a mind map and drafting using a writing frame (a paragraph consisting of missing words which the learners should fill in). GPLMS states that the main objective of these activities, especially the process based skill, which will be looked at in more detail is "to teach learners to use mind mapping or writing frames as tools for writing" (GPLMS, 2012: 58). CAPS, from which GPLMS draws, elucidate on this objective and show that through consideration of the potency of writing and the recognition of multimodal ways in which communication is realised, writing should be "appropriately scaffolded using writing frames, produce competent, versatile writers who will be able to use their skills to develop and present appropriate written, visual and multimedia texts for a variety of purposes" (2011:11). In

addition, by recognising that learners take English as a First Additional Language, CAPS necessitates the use of a guided approach (Hyland, 2003) to teaching writing.

The notion of teaching writing that is employed by CAPS in process based activities contrasts with the reality of writing done in GPLMS. CAPS proposes the use of guided writing approach but this gets superseded by the use of writing frames that lead to the writing being controlled by the curriculum. The learners are not involved in the writing and all they do is fill in missing words in the gaps which takes away the sense of purpose and ownership in writing but encourages finding accuracy while avoiding risks (Hyland, 2003). This also undermines one of the strategies which CAPS puts forth for the learners to understand the writing processes in relation to context.

> "Learners need an opportunity to put this process in practice and they should decide on the purpose and audience of a text to be written and/or designed." (2011: 12).

From this examination of both CAPS and GPLMS it is clear that there is lack of consistency regarding the methods adopted to teach writing in relation to particular writing models. In short, in both curriculum statements, CAPS and GPLMS, different writing pedagogies which are not compatible to particular methods are being employed. These kinds of implementations of different pedagogies further manifest in the activities the learners did and the ways in which the teacher facilitated their production. The activities I analysed were based on the following topic: My Visit to the Library.

My Visit to the Library

Writing in this topic involved practising two skills: planning, using a mind map and drafting, using a writing frame. The learners were writing a factual recount of their visit to the library. To introduce the topic and the kind of text they would be writing, the teacher reminded them of the story they read at the beginning of the year: School Library Burns Down. By doing so she intended to show them some of the basic characteristics of a factual genre such as use of language and purpose. She asked the learners to mention the English tenses they knew and in this they were expected to say: past, present and future tense. In addition to that, she asked them to tell her the kind of tense used in the story or comprehension passage and they had to say it was a past tense story. She then told them that the reason for writing in past tense was because the text was factually recounting on things that occurred in the past. From these instructions emerges what I refer to as a 'taste without swallowing' approach to teaching

writing, where the teacher's learners are fed with information without being provided with a variety of examples that elucidate how the texts operate so that they can gain practical experiences of them. In addition, the learners were only introduced to the genre of factual reports: the use of past tense, but there was no explanation of how that use of language relates to the purpose and reader. As a result lack of further elaboration results in the telling rather than showing.

Planning

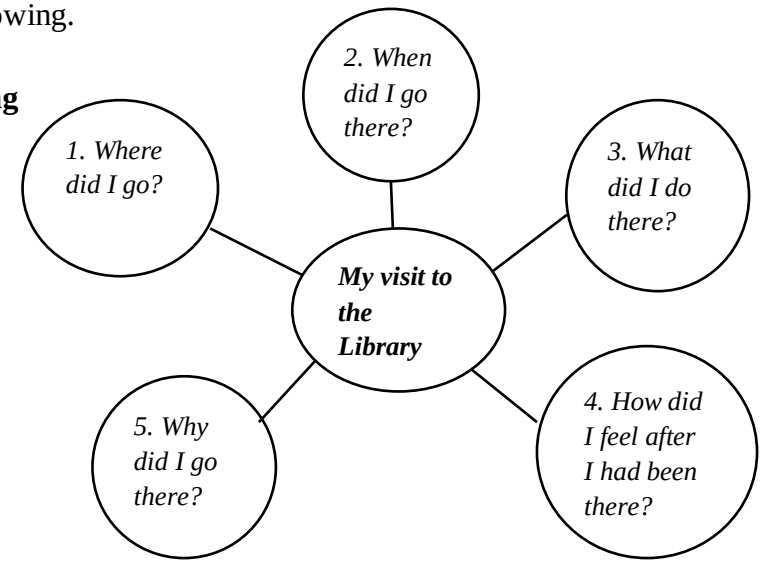


Figure 5.1: My Visit to the Library

The first activity in this topic involved planning their recount of visiting the library but due to the consideration that certain learners might not have been to a library before, the exercise became flexible and gave such learners the freedom to write about any other place they might have been to. The flexibility of the activity had a potential to enhance ownership in their writing (Lensmire, 2000) and this could open opportunities for personal engagement with the topic which would yield imagination and creativity. With these elements, Badenshorst shows that the learners would develop voice that would "give [them] writing strength, uniqueness, vibrancy, authority" (2010: 2). However, due to the teacher adherence to what GPLMS prescribed, she seems to have misunderstood the purpose of a mind map, which resulted in undermining the idea of process writing. She did not encourage the learners to regard the mind map as a guide in organising their ideas.

Gladys **Topic: My Visit to the Library** **1. Where did I go?** *Answer: I went to the school library* **2. When did I go there?** *Answer: I went on the 15 of January Wednesday afternoon* **3. What did I do there?** *Answer: I wrote my history book homework* **4. How did I feel after I had been there?** *Answer: I enjoyed writing my homework* **5. Why did I go there?** *Answer: I went there because I was bored*	**Jennifer** **Topic: My Visit to the Library** **1. Where did I go?** *Answer: Go to the library* **2. When did I go there?** *Answer: On 25 October ~~because I'm no doing eniting in the house~~(because I'm not doing anything in the house).* **3. What did I do there?** *Answer: I want photo copy the paper* **4. How did I feel after I had been there?** *Answer: I feel happy* **5. Why did I go there?** *Answer: There because I want to do my homework*
Nsuku **Topic: My Visit to the Library** **1. Where did I go?** *Answer: Where and go to the library* **2. When did I go there?** *Answer: The library dy home mkon* **3. What did I do there?** *Answer: I go in the wesdo (Wednesday)* **4. How did I feel after I had been there?** **5. Why did I go there?**	**Ntombi** **Topic: My Visit to the Library** **1. Where did I go?** *Answer: I go with a taxi* **2. When did I go there?** *Answer: 13 February 2013 Wednesday* ***Teacher's Corrections:*** *It was on the 13 February Wednesday afternoon* **3. What did I do there?** *Answer: I write my homework* ***Teacher's corrections:*** *I wrote my home-work* **4. How did I feel after I had been there?** *Answer: I enjoy to wrote my homework* ***Teacher's corrections:*** *I enjoyed to do my homework there.* **5. Why did I go there?** *Answer: Because I have a homework. I went the to wrote my homework.* ***Teacher's corrections****: because I was going to do my homework.*

The learners' Answers to the questions in the bubbles of the mind map.

Although part of the teacher's instructions indicated that they could write about any other topic or any place they had been to other than the library, she did not ensure that those who

wanted to write about different topics changed the topics in the main bubble. Part of the reason for the teacher's failure to encourage the learners to change the topic could be based on limitations caused by the subsequent activity: drafting a map that used a writing frame containing sentences related to the original topic. All this resulted in the learners' answers to the questions being based on the same topic: *My Visit to the Library*. This is noticed in the answers to the first, third and fifth question, where Ntombi said: *"13 February 2013 Wednesday; I wrote my home-work; I went the to wrote my homework"*. In a similar manner, Jennifer also indicated that she went to the library for the same purpose: *"There because I want to do my homework"*. Unlike the others, Gladys surprisingly provided an unpredictably different reason for going to the library '*I went there because I was bored'* and this was corrected when they wrote their drafts.

Due to the questions requiring the learners to recall information, most of their responses to the questions were typified by simplistic and lower order thinking, except for the question about why they visited the library which required them to use complex thoughts. The responses to the questions about: where, when, what and how they felt after visiting the library were written using simple sentences. This was evident in Gladys' responses: *'I went to the library; I went on the 15 January Wednesday afternoon; I wrote my history home-work; I enjoyed writing my homework'*. It was only on the question requiring the purpose where she wrote a complex sentence consisting of one subordinate clause marked by a subordinate conjunction 'because' that epitomised complex thoughts: *'I went there <u>because</u> I was bored'.* Since they were told that reports are written in past tense, most of the learners were able to maintain it. However, some lacked consistency and mixed present and past tense although in the instructions, they were told that the genre they were using reported things that happened in the past '*I write my homework'*. Another learner, Jennifer reported about how she felt in present tense: *'I feel happy'*, and this is inconsistent with the time in which the event occurred.

In ensuring that the learners' understood the way language is used while writing a non-fiction genre, the teacher corrected some of their grammatical mistakes for example: the sentence construction and tense. Most of these corrections were done on Ntombi's mind map. For example, for the second question, Ntombi wrote a very short answer, a phrase, '*13 February 2013 Wednesday'*, but her teacher made corrections so that the response could be in a full sentence *'<u>I was on the</u> 13 February 2013 Wednesday <u>afternoon</u>'.* In addition, for the fourth question, Ntombi wrote her response in present tense which the teacher corrected: *I ~~enjoy~~*

(enjoyed) to ~~wrote~~ (do) my home-work'. An interesting aspect from this sentence is the way the learner incorrectly used the infinitive in the sentence *'to wrote',* as this was taught in a Language Structures and Conventions lesson when they were introduced to verbs. The infinitive was the verb which the teacher subconsciously paid more attention to. However, the learner's mistake here can be attributed to the explicit or unclear teaching of grammar (verbs), which did not indicate that the tense of an infinitive is always present even when tenses change.

Drafting

Following planning, the learners had to write drafts based on the ideas developed in the mind maps. In order to write their drafts the learners firstly had to copy writing frames from the boards into their books and fill in 7 gaps using some of the answers in the mind maps. The content in the writing frame was only related to the topic, ***My Visit to the School Library***, which contradicts the teacher's initial instructions in which she told the learners that they had the freedom to write about any topic of their choice. This mismatch might be the reason why, during planning, all the learners wrote about visiting the library.

Activity: My visit to the school library	***Corrections***
1)._____ I went to the library at **2)**._____. I went there because **3)**._____. While I was there **(4)** _____I *(write down at least 3 things that you did).* I enjoyed/did not enjoy my visit to the library because **5).**_____**.** After my visit to the library I felt **6).**_____ because **(7).**_____**.**	**1).** Last week Wednesday I went to the library **(2)** at school. I went there because **(3)** I needed to return a book. While I was there **(4)** I returned my book, took out a new book and spoke to the librarian. I enjoyed my visit to the library because **(5)** it is such a happy place. After my visit to the library I felt **(6)** glad because **(7)** I had returned my book and would not get a fine.

Gladys 1. On Tuesday afternoon 2. Johannesburg 3. I was bored 4. I Wrote my homework, I learned to use a computer and asked for information 5. I learned many things 6. Happy 7. Everything was easy for me to do it ***Wrote corrections***	**Jennifer** 1. Tuesday afternoon 2.School 3.I'm going to write and read the information 4. 5.I find many things 6. To go at home 7.I'm finish to write ***Wrote corrections***
Nsuku 1. Last week Webnesday 2. School 3. I needed to returned my book 4. I took out a new book and spoke to the librarian 5. enjoyein 6. homework 7. the in ma library beteiful ***Wrote corrections***	**Ntombi** 1. It was on the 14 February 2013 Thursday afternoon.(teacher suggested underlined information). 2. School 3.I ~~have~~ had a homework 4. did my homework, I ~~pick~~ picked up some book, and read 5.i read my ~~favorite~~ favourite book 6. happy 7. I read my ~~favorite~~ favourite book ***Wrote corrections***

Since the topic of the activity appealed to the learners' personal experiences of visiting the library, their answers in the gaps were different and some of them related to those generated in the mind maps. For example, Ntombi filled in her first gap using an answer related to the second question of the mind map: '*It was on the 13 February Wednesday afternoon'.* As the teacher made corrections to the learners' sentence construction in their mind maps, for the gaps in particular, she (Ntombi) copied the suggestion provided by her teacher (see answers for the mind map above). For the rest of the learners, some only looked at the gaps and the information written in the sentences and made inferences about how they could fill in the

gaps. This was seen with Gladys who neither relied on the teacher's suggested answer and hers in the maps, but modified the answer to suit what she wanted to say. In answering the question about when she went to the library in the mind maps, Gladys said: *"I went on the 15 January Wednesday afternoon"*, whereas in the gap exercise she put it as *"On Tuesday afternoon"*. These differences in terms of answers were also typical in the other gaps: with regard to what they did at the library, their purposes for going there and how they felt during their visits. For the fourth gap which was based on what they did while at the library, Ntombi said: *"I did my home-work, I picked up some books and read".* On the other hand, Nsuku who seems not to have merely copied the answers provided from the corrections and pretended they were hers wrote *"I took out a new book and spoke to the librarian".*

In this activity the learners did not apply independence, but guided-control measures were applied to ensure that they followed what was said in the memo. Although what the learners wrote in the gaps did not break the meaning as intended with the writing frame, they seemed to copy all the corrections because their answers did not correlate with those in the memo. Writing the corrections undermined the learners' ability to work out the meaning using the writing frames. This also reveals how the teacher views writing in relation to being about accurate and inaccurate answers. Writing corrections typifies the kind of writing done at school. However, in the context of writing about a topic that evokes personal experiences "My Visit to the Library", writing corrections does not seem relevant since the ideas the learners write about are personal. Though this raises questions of whether the teacher understood the purpose of this activity and what counts as drafting, one would need to look at the limitations that occur with guided-controlled writing (writing frames), since in this instance the teacher merely focuses on the single words or phrases which the learners write in the gaps.

In the same term the learners wrote another activity which exemplified gap filling in a writing frame. In this activity the learners were required to provide descriptions of 'A Good Friend'. The learners were provided with a paragraph in which they had to fill in gaps. In this activity, although it required personal opinions, the learners were limited because of the accuracy expectations set up.

A good friend is someone who is _____, _____ and_____. My good friend's name is _____. He / She is a good friend because _____. My good friend makes me feel ____, _____ and _____. He/she does not _____. I enjoy spending time with him/her because _____

5.5.2. Term 2: 9 April to 21 June

The second term began on the 9th of April and ended on 21st of June. The writing activities which were done during this term were also based on the four themes, namely: Language Structure and Conventions, Writing and Presenting, Reading and Viewing, and Listening and Speaking. Similar to the first term, the activities done in this term also took the shape of comprehension tests, grammar practices, spelling tests and those based on process models of writing. The process based writing activities were intended to introducing the learners to different writing strategies, as also seen in the first term, like: planning, drafting, editing, and reviewing, and such activities drew from Hayes and Flower's process models of writing (Andrews and Smith, 2011), which are also ubiquitous in second language writing theories. Alternate to the first terms analysis being based on one text, the analysis done here looked at more than one text. For instance, under the theme of Language Structure and Conventions, in the first term analysis I only focused one aspect of grammar: verbs. Now I am examining three aspects of grammar: conjunctions, nouns and tenses. This will provide an insight, for the latter aspect in particular: tense, on how the sequencing and progression of activities creates links among different aspects of language and how such sequence help the learners to develop an understanding of the relationships between different aspects of grammar.

5.5.2.1. Language Structure and Conventions: Conjunctions

Under this theme, the learners did various activities focusing on different aspects of grammar: functions of antonyms and synonyms, conjunctions, pronouns, nouns and tenses. However, my analysis focused on three exercises in which the learners practised the functions of: conjunctions, nouns, and simple present tenses.

The first grammar activity I focused on was based on conjunctions. This activity was based on two exercises, classwork and homework. The main objectives of the activities done in this term were similar to those for the first term, understanding the functions and being able to identify a particular aspect of grammar in a sentence. For this activity in particular, as stated in the GPLMS (term 2) lesson plan documents, the learning objective was to help the learners to "understand the function of conjunctions" and to help them "identify and use conjunctions in a sentence" (2012: 58). In the first exercise the learners were required to copy a paragraph from the chalkboard into their books and combine sentences with conjunctions. The paragraph consisted of eleven sentences, ten of them were combined with three conjunctions: 'and', 'but' and 'because', to form five sentences. This resulted in forming two complex

sentences and three compound sentences. In the other homework activity, the learners were supposed to choose the correct conjunctions in four sentences.

In getting the learners to understand the aim of the lesson and the grammar aspect they were going to learn, the teacher read them a short paragraph consisting of short sentences that were not combined by conjunctions. After reading the paragraph, she asked them what they thought was wrong with it. They were expected to say that it had short sentences. In addition, the teacher then said that the paragraph was not connected by words called 'conjunctions', which would make it to sound and flow properly. The paragraph was as follows:

Sport	**Sport**
I like sport. My favourite sport is running. I like to run. It keeps me fit. It keeps me healthy. I run every day. I run in the morning. I run in the evening. When it rains I don't run. I get wet when it rains. I also like tennis. My best sport is running.	I like sport and my favourite sport is running. I like to run because it keeps me fit and healthy. I run every day in the morning and in the evening. When it rains I don't run because I get wet when it rains. I also like tennis but my best sport is running.

After this paragraph was read, the teacher read another version which had conjunctions. As she was reading she stressed conjunctions throughout. The learners were then told that examples of conjunctions are: 'and', 'because', 'but', 'so', 'after', and 'before'. For the activity, they were asked to copy the paragraph into their books and underline each conjunction. From this paragraph the learners were expected to identify two kinds of conjunctions: coordinating and subordinating conjunctions. Writing therefore involved underlining conjunctions in sentences: '*and, because,* and *but'*. The paragraph as a whole consisted of eight conjunctions, but they only had to focus on six. This excluded the conjunction 'when', which was used in the fourth sentence.

Gladys	**Jennifer**
Classwork I like sport *and* my favourite sport is running. I like to run *because* it keeps me fit *and* healthy. I run every day in the morning *and* in the evening. When it rains I don't run *because* I get wet when it rains. I also like tennis *but* my best sport is running. **Homework** a) I like to play soccer *but/*~~because~~ I do not like to swim. b) My friend plays tennis *and* netball. c) Sport keeps me fit *and* healthy. d) One day I want to be a famous sports person *because* I am good at sport.	**Gladys** **Classwork** I like sport and my favourite sport is running. I like to run because it keeps me fit and healthy. I run every day in the morning and in the evening. When it rains I don't run because I get wet when it rains. I also like tennis but my best sport is running. **Homework** d) I like to play soccer but/because I do not like to swim. *I like to play soccer but I do not like to swim.* b) My friend plays tennis and/but netball. *My friend plays tennis and netball.* c) Sport keeps me fit because/and healthy. *Sport keeps me fit and healthy.* d) One day I want to be a famous sports person because/and I am good at sport. *One day I want to be a famous sports person because I am good at sport.*
Nsuku	**Ntombi**
Classwork I like sport *and* my favourite sport is running. I like to run *because* it keeps me fit *and* healthy. I run every day in the morning *and* in the evening. When it rains I don't run *because* I get wet when it rains. I also like tennis but my best sport is running. **Homework** a) I like to play soccer *because* I do not like to swim. b) My friend plays tennis *and* netball. c) Sport keeps me fit *because* healthy. d) One day I want to be a famous sports person *because* I am good at sport.	**Classwork** I like sport and my favourite sport is running. I like to run because it keeps me fit and healthy. I run every day in the morning and in the evening. When it rains I don't run because I get wet when it rains. I also like tennis but my best sport is running. **Homework** a) I like to play soccer but/because I do not like to swim. b) My friend plays tennis and/but netball. c) Sport keeps me fit because/and healthy. d) One day I want to be a famous sports person because/and I am good at sport.

Looking at the learners' responses not all identified the conjunctions except for Nsuku and Gladys. The other two, Ntombi and Jennifer, only copied the paragraphs into their books without underlining the conjunctions. Although Nsuku and Gladys, were able to identify and

underline conjunctions, they failed to notice the conjunction 'when' which was used twice to form time clauses in the fourth sentence. This could be attributed to the teacher's instruction which provided few examples of conjunction use, and how they were related to the ones they were underlining in the paragraph. The conjunction 'when' was also omitted in the corrections, thus showing that learning conjunctions in this activity was only based on a few examples.

Because this activity involved identifying the conjunctions, the answers were also predictable. Therefore, writing in this sense was based on the correctness of the answers. In addition, the activity did not require the learners to engage in a meaning-related task; instead they were supposed to regurgitate information. Like the other grammar activities done in this term, this activity involved lower-order thinking. Thus, the learners did not get a chance to learn how different grammar aspects function in the construction of meaning of a text. Likewise, this lack of meaning within a text is shown in the homework, in which the learners were required to copy four sentences from the board into class work books, identify and underline the correct conjunctions in the sentences. Similarly, in this activity the learners' writing also involved lower-order thinking.

Activity 2: Nouns

Classwork

Common Nouns	**Proper Nouns**
Example: Car	*BMW Honda Mercedes*
City	Johannesburg; Durban; Tshwane
Person	Miriam; Joseph; Susan
Month	January; February; March
Chocolate/Sweet	Cadbury; Nestle; Beacon

Homework

Question
a) My name is Mary and I live in South Africa. b) One day I want to drive a Porsche. c) I go to church on Sundays. d) My friend's birthday is in March.

For this grammatical aspect, learners were looking at the differences between proper and common nouns. The learners had to do two activities, a class exercise and homework. The aim of the activities was to help the learners "understand the functions of proper nouns; identify and use proper nouns correctly" (GPLMS: term 2, 2012: 76). In initiating the activity and helping the learners understand what nouns allude to, the teacher held up different objects and asked them to tell her what each of them was: a shoe, books, pencil, pencil, flower, apple and so forth. She then told them that the words they mentioned are referred to as nouns. In addition, they were also told that there are two types of nouns: common and proper nouns. Common nouns refer to the name of a person, place or a thing. I feel that defining common nouns in this way, specifically by saying they refer to a name of a person may cause confusion when the proper nouns are being defined. This will be seen in the definition of proper nouns, in which they refer to 'specific name of a person or thing' and are always recognised by having a capital case on the first letter.

After being taught the differences between proper and common nouns, the learners wrote an activity in which they had to write proper nouns which related to particular common nouns. They were given a table consisting of two columns, the left consisted of a list of common nouns: *'city, person, month and chocolate or sweet',* while the column on the right was blank. The learners had to find a specific proper noun to which the common noun next to it alluded. For instance, with regard to the first common nouns 'city/town or place', Ntombi wrote *'Johannesbuurg and Orange Farm'* which are names of one of the biggest cities in South Africa, and Orange Farm being a name of a township within Johannesburg. On the other hand, for the same common nouns, Jennifer wrote *'Johannesburg'* as the name of a city and *'Limpopo and Kwazulu Natal'*, which are the names of two provinces in South Africa. On a positive note the learners also seemed to follow the rule given about proper nouns and began them with a capital letter.

In this activity, it is clear that writing was typified by copying words or recalling information in processes which, Bloom's taxonomy shows, involves lower-order thinking. In this sense, the learners were expected to recall that proper nouns refer to a specific name of a person or thing and that the first letter always begins in upper case. Likewise, in their homework they were also asked to identify the names of things: people or places (proper nouns), and begin them in capital letters. All the learners appeared to have mastered the rule about proper nouns: they are names of things and begin with capital letters, and they were able to recognise them from the sentences and apply those rules. With the writing seen in these

activity, it typifies scribing (Hendricks, 2005) which is also common in the following exercise of tenses analysed below.

Activity 3: Tense

Another aspect of grammar which I have explored is tense, focusing on 'simple present tense'. The main objective of the activity was to teach the learners "the function of the simple present tense [as well as to] identify and use the simple present tense in a sentence" (GPLMS: term 2, 2012: 104). In addition, with this activity the teacher intended to introduce three different tenses in English: the past, present and future tense. In order to show the learners how the three tenses differ, she asked them to tell her *'what the tense is when something happened or when it is going to happen',* and they were expected to say past or present tense.

To further elaborate the differences between the tenses, the teacher related them to a lesson where they learned about verbs in the first term. She asked them to do certain actions like to stand up, jump, sit or laugh. After those actions were done she asked them to tell her what the words used to tell them to do those actions are called, and they were expected to say *'verbs or action words'.* Then she explained to them that the way the verb is written in a sentence tells us whether the sentence is in the present, past or future tense. In illustrating how this works, she picked up a book and said: *'I like this book'*, and asked the learners to tell her what the verb was in that sentence, and they said *'like'*. She used more examples where they identified verbs. Thereafter, she asked them to tell her what they do every day such as: *'brush my teeth, go to bed, do my homework etc.'* (GPLMS: term 2, 2012). From their responses she told them that all the verbs they used were in simple present tense. In addition, she also said that *'verbs that are written in present simple tense are verbs that describe actions or things that happen every day or things that happen regularly'*.

Like in other language based activities, writing involved copying sentences into the books, underlining the correct grammar aspect and filling in gaps in the last two sentences. The learners were asked to copy five sentences from the board into their books. Each sentence had two verbs and they were supposed to choose one which would make the sentence be in simple present tense. For the fourth sentence they had to write any verb of their own and fill in a gap. In this activity the learners only wrote one word (Q4) with the other questions requiring them to underline.

Questions	**Answers**
a) My dad reads/reading the newspaper.	a) My dad <u>reads</u> the newspaper.
b) My friend ate/eats cake.	b) My friend <u>eats</u> cake.
c) I watch/watching television.	c) I <u>watch</u> television.
d) My teacher_____ to me.	d) My teacher_____ to me.
e) I played with the ball.	e) I play with the ball.

Based on the responses the learners provided, most of them in this sample did not appear to have grasped how simple present tense works. It was only Ntombi who underlined the correct verbs in the sentences and she got most of the answers right except for Question 1 which had third person verb in present tense and a present participle of the verb 'read': *'My dad reads/<u>reading</u> the newspaper'.* For the fourth sentence, which required any reasonable answer or verb, she wrote the verb 'talk', which she was accepted *'My teacher <u>talk</u> to me'*. Since the activity was heavily controlled, with attention paid more to correctness of the answers, the learners had neither freedom nor ownership in their writing. Like the other exercises which were done in the first term this could be attributed to the learning of writing not being oriented to constructions of meaning. In addition, writing is not related to any text types whose production takes into account the learners' interests, motivations or experiences.

5.5.2.3. Writing and Presenting:

During the first term we saw that the writing activities analysed drew from process related models of writing that aimed at developing writing strategies such as planning and drafting. Some of the other texts which the learners wrote were based on developing their spelling and vocabulary. Considering that the process related activities which they did followed the same trends seen in the first term, my analysis for this term focused on the activities done for spelling test purposes.

As part of revision the learners wrote spelling tests in which they had to write ten spelling words and one dictation sentence. The tests were intended "to test the learners' sentence building and spelling, to reflect on learners' achievements, to provide the learners with time to complete corrections, to provide learners with the time to complete written work that was not finished, and to allow time for remediation and extension" (GPLMS, term 2, 2012: 119). In order to facilitate the test, the teacher referred to one of the core methodologies found in

the GPLMS lesson plans (term 2). Since the learners were tested on the spelling of ten words, they were told to firstly write numbers from one to ten. The teacher would call out the number and a word which they would write next to the number. Once the teacher was satisfied that the learners had written all the words next to their numbers, she repeatedly read out the dictation sentence. Since the whole activity involved reproducing certain words, the learners' writing did not related to any text type nor required them to use language to achieve a particular context related purpose. In one of the spelling tests which the learners wrote this term, they were supposed to write the following words and dictation sentence.

Spelling Words	
1. Sailor	6. Jump
2. Dolphin	7. Sails
3. Bottle	8. Disappear
4. Uniform	9. Another
5. Swim	10. Come
Dictation Sentence The fisherman catches a fish in the waves.	

Most of the learners in this sample wrote the correct spelling for all the words except for Nsuku and Gladys. Nsuku in particular could spell four words correctly but struggled to write the correct spelling for the following words: sailor – '*selay', dolphin – 'dolfin', bottle – 'botle', sails – 'sayls', disappear – 'dispalor' and come – 'came'.* Looking at the spelling mistakes in these words it can said that they are caused, in some instances, by over-generalisations of phonic sounds and graphemes. For example, for the word 'dolphin' Nsuku over-generalised the 'ph' phonic sound which, in some words, can be realised by the *'f'* letter, this also occurred when spelling the word 'sails', where the *'ay'* was written to produce the *'ai'* sound. This over-generalisation of graphemes can be traced in her encounter of words such as '*may'* or *'say'.* In terms of the dictation sentence, Nsuku did not only fail to write it completely, but also misspelled some of the words *'A Fishaman A Fishman'.* Incorrectly writing a sentence can be attributed to the fact that it was read out for them and the learner failed to memorise it, although the teacher read it out repeatedly. On the other hand, writing the words fisherman as *fishaman*, can be related to the fact that the phonic sound *'er'* can be written as 'a' like in the word banana. Writing activities like this one which do not relate to

any meaningful purposes inhibit the learners' opportunities for freedom within their writing. With too much attention paid to technical skills: spelling and writing involving reproducing information, the learners lack neither agency nor ownership in their writing.

The interviews conducted with the English teacher, English HOD, GPLMS coach and learners, show different perspectives through which writing development is understood as well as whether it was enabled or constrained by the GPLMS project. The English teacher, Flora, specifically advocated for the learners' development of technical skills: handwriting. She indicated that this was impossible to develop in the GPLMS due to a lack of time to implement the prescribed lesson plans combined with the learner's lack of independence to work on their own. In addition, having observed how unsuccessful GPLMS was, according to her view, she nostalgically suggested the incorporation of the old approaches to learning which she personally encountered before as a former student, or through her training to be a teacher.

In contrast, Selina shows that the GPLMS project was successful merely because the learners were able to subscribe to certain text functions in their writing. In addition, another positive attribute was the availability of lesson plans provided by the project for the teacher to implement. However, a look at the text produced in the project shows that the teacher was merely following the prescribed plan provided to her by the district, focusing on the accuracy of the learners' answers without focusing on the meaning.

The analysis of the learners writing focused on the texts they produced in the first two terms: term 1 and 2. The kinds of writing activities done in the two terms show patterns of what Hendricks (2005) alludes to as 'scribing'. The learners do not take full control of their writing, but instead reproduce knowledge in given questions with predetermined answers. In the activities belonging to the category of Language Structure and Conventions, the learners were expected to display an understanding of the functions of grammar aspects. They didn't apply those grammar aspects in extended writing; instead they had to regurgitate knowledge of grammar rules. Writing in such activities merely involved lower thinking skills of Bloom's taxonomy. This was also typical in the other activities based on the theme of Reading and Viewing where the learners had to identify information from comprehension passages. In terms of the theme of Writing and Presenting, the learners were being introduced to different writing strategies of Hayes and Flower's theory of process writing. The writing did not take into consideration the topic and how it related to learners' personal experiences, this therefore

limited their imaginations and creativity to construct any personal meaning within the texts. This kind of limitation is due to the teacher's use of over-structured writing frames with predetermined answer. Under this theme the learners also did spelling revisions which influenced the way the learners and their teacher conceived the writing development. During the interviews, the learners stated that spelling was a necessary tool for one to be able to write, this was echoed by the teachers and was one of their main focuses while facilitating their writing.

Looking specifically at the first theme: Language Structure and Conventions, its objectives were oriented to developing the learners' accuracy in grammar. This was realised through explicit teaching of grammar rules. The writing activities which the learners did were sequenced in a way that enabled the learners to focus on specific aspects of grammar within each activity. For instance, they wrote five sentences in which they identified verbs, pronouns, nouns or adjectives. In addition, because they were sometimes introduced to certain grammar aspects in previous lessons, the learners were able to identify them when they did their next activities.

A clear teaching progression provided the teacher with a framework that guided his steps when teaching different aspects around a concept. For example, while dealing with verbs in Term 1 they focused on its function as an indicator of actions, where it was defined as an action or doing word. In term 2, while introducing tenses: simple present tense, they also referred back to the verbs, but the focus was now on how it indicates a tense in a sentence. In term 3 they focused on a verb in relation how it changes depending on the number of subjects: concord. As a result the learners learnt the different dimension which one aspect of grammar can represent. However, as part of my critique for the writing pedagogy employed here, the learners got a chance to learn different grammatical rules, but they were not provided with opportunities to apply those rules in writing. For instance, they never had a chance to see how they could manipulate the verb, in specific, to construct a meaning. Instead everything was centred on sentences which were provided for them and this rendered writing as a reproduction of knowledge.

Secondly, the learners also wrote activities which were underpinned by the theme of 'Writing and Presenting'. Drawing on process related theories of writing (Andrews and Smith, 2011), which are adopted in second language writing theories, the activities the learners did involved some of the writing strategies which process writing theories propose: planning, drafting,

reviewing and editing. In the activities which the learners did throughout the year, the planning stage of writing preceded and was conflated with drafting. The learners would begin by planning their stories with the aid of mind-maps that had specific questions related to the topics, then draft using writing frames. The same pattern was followed throughout the year from the first to the fourth term. For instance, under the topic of 'People We Admire', the learners began by answering questions provided for them and then filled in gaps in the writing frames. What is interesting is that in the Mobile Literacies Project, the learners neither used writing frames or mind-maps as aids, but explored their own ideas, which granted opportunities for freedom and development of agency in their writing.

Under the theme of Reading and Viewing, the learners were mainly answering comprehension passages. Through prior engagement with the texts, the learners became more familiar with some of the questions which were asked for comprehension in their writing activities. That made it easier for them to answer them correctly.

Overall, the kind of pedagogy employed in the GPLMS lessons can be commended as effectively facilitating the learners' development in specific writing rules. However, the writing done was rigidly controlled and not related to any text type, affecting the learners' independent application of the skills which were being taught and no exploration of a texts meaning.

Conclusions:

This chapter provided a broad analysis of the learners' writing development in the GPLMS project. The analysis was based on different views raised during interviews by the learners, their Grade 5 English teacher, Language HOD in the Intermediate Phase (Grade 4-6), as well as the GPLMS coach who supervised the teacher in implementing the lesson plans. An analysis of the learners' texts written in their English exercise books was done to establish whether or not their writing developed from the project. The interview analysis, coupled with that of the texts, was intended to find out how the project enabled or constrained the learners' development of writing.

The analysis of the interviews saw a relationship between the ways in which the different participants: the learners, the English teacher, Language HOD and the GPLMS coach, conceptualised writing development and how it is framed in the curriculum statements, (CAPS and GPLMS used in their everyday teaching). For example, the English teacher,

Flora, the learners and the language HOD, Selina, presented similar views regarding what counts as writing and its development. Their views relied upon the significance of developing technical skills such as handwriting and spelling. The English teacher specifically, through the GPLMS workshops she attended and what is understood to be her personal experiences of learning to write at school, further expressed the need for the learners to write legibly (handwriting) and also complete their work. Flora, however, pointed out the effects of factors such as time constraints in implementing the lesson plans and learners' lack of independence in writing as important, wanting to revert back to more traditional approaches of rote learning to develop writing. On one hand, in their conceptions of writing development, the learners focused on spelling which is one of the aspects focused on in their GPLMS writing exercises. However, in other instances they pointed out how writing development involves recognition of text functions and writing coherent texts which is one of the focuses of second language writing theory (Hyland, 2003; Matsuda, 2009). This view coincided with the Language HOD's and GPLMS coach who showed that some of the signs of the learners' development of writing included being able to write meaningful texts that related to the topic. However, as discussed before, these views had been undermined by the kind of writing which they did in the project. Part of the conclusions I have drawn from the analysis focused on how, based on the writing that was done in the project, the learners' development of writing was enabled or constrained by the project.

The overall learners' writing in the project shows evidence of development in relation to technical skills such as grammar (spelling, vocabulary etc.) which was taught using form-focused approaches of Ellis (1998). For the first category from GPLMS, Language Structures and Conventions, which typifies a product-related model of writing (Andrews and Smith, 2011) of second language writing, the learners focused on different grammar aspects such as nouns, adjectives, pronouns, adverbs, tenses and verbs which were taught explicitly. The writing activities on these aspects involved production-practise, identifying these aspects in given sentences by underlining the correct ones or filling in gaps, of which most of them (the learners) were able to do. From one term to another, connections were built from one aspect of grammar to another. For instance, in the first term the learners dealt with 'verbs', and this was drawn from when 'tenses' were being introduced in the second term and the learners showed that they were able to recognise the relationship between the grammar aspects. In enhancing their linguistic development, explicit corrective feedback (Ellis, 1998) was being

employed and the learners could correct some of the questions they answered incorrectly in their activities.

In terms of Writing and Presenting, which drew from the process based models of writing (Andrews and Smith, 2011), the learners practised different writing strategies: planning, drafting, editing and reviewing. Often, in second language classrooms, these processes are introduced in a patterned order. Learners are firstly encouraged to begin writing by planning using mind-maps consisting of predetermined sets of questions; this is then followed by drafting using writing frames, followed by editing and reviewing activities. These activities involve lower-order thinking (skills of Bloom Taxonomy) and they also present the writing process in a linear-ordered way (taking one step after another sequentially) which is contrary to the basic principles of process writing that states that writing is a recursive process. Within these projects there also seems to be a misconception of process writing because learners only got an opportunity to practise the processes instead of actually using them.

Most of the learners were able to provide answers for the close-ended questions in the mind maps. However, despite the activities requiring the learners to fill in predetermined answers in the gaps, with drafting specifically, some of the learners were somehow not able to figure out the kind of answers required of them. Therefore, instead of their writing involving freedom to generate and communicate ideas, they were rigidly controlled by the activity. Explicit corrections, as forms of feedback, were also provided. This undermined the idea of process writing that requires freedom and self-discovery as a writer. Structured activities were also typical even in the Reading and Viewing category, where the learners responded to five close-ended comprehension questions.

By analysis of the writing, it can be said that, to a certain extent, the pedagogy employed by the GPLMS constrained the learners' development of writing as a meaningful activity. Firstly, most of the activities done required the learners to recall information and provide accurate answers. This overlooked the ways in which some of the skills taught were used in context. For example, most of the activities, for example grammar-based ones, were typified by a production practice approach which, according to Ellis (1998), involved partial use of grammar structures. In terms of the process-based activities, the learners were only shown a surface level of manipulating different strategies involved in writing but they were enabled to manipulate them according to their own means.

Some of the topics they wrote about in ‘A visit to the library’ for example, had the potential to enhance learners’ linguistic development. Such topics required them to draw from their distinct experiences of visiting a library which were particularly distinct according to an individual learner. However, this was undermined by control practices employed by the pedagogy. The teacher appeared to misunderstand what the activities required of the learners. This was witnessed when they were provided corrections for every activity regardless of what the requirements were. In addition, the learners were also exposed to the ideas of genre in writing, factual genre. However, a conceptualisation of writing in relation to genre was curtailed by using writing frames which undermined the basic tenet of the genre approach (Johns, 2008) which require learners to write in relation to a specific purpose in a given context.

The activities done in this project did not enable the learners to recognise the relationship between the skills they learned under the different categories: Writing and Presenting, Language Structures and Conventions, and Reading and Viewing. Each aspect was introduced and dealt with separately without being integrated in other activities of other categories. In the process of not relating the skills between the various activities, the learners were not made aware about how some of the skills, e.g. grammar, were related to meaning-making. The following chapter provides an overall conclusion on this study.

Chapter 6: Discussion of Findings and Conclusion

This thesis explored the writing development of Grade 5 learners who participated in two writing projects, The GPLMS (Gauteng Primary Literacy and Mathematics Strategies) and The Mobile Literacies Project, which were conducted at their school, Mayeke Primary, in 2013. The examination of the learners' writing development was based on written texts, which in the Mobile Literacies Project, were produced using a digital device, an iPod Touch, while on the other hand, in GPLMS, they were written in their English exercise books. In the Mobile Literacies Project an analysis of lesson observations and lesson plan documents was done in order to understand how the texts were produced. In addition, an analysis of interviews with the learners in focus groups, the teachers, the GPLMS coach and the Language HOD, was also done to find out how they view writing, writing development, and the extent to which the two projects enabled or constrained the learners' writing development.

The learners' writing development in the Mobile Literacies Project

In the Mobile Literacies Project, the texts analysed were produced from April 2013 until October 2013. From the analysis conclusions have been drawn regarding how much the approach used by the project can either hinder or enable learners' development of writing. Firstly, part of the approach adopted in the project was collaborative writing. This approach has been found to have positive and sometimes negative results in learners' writing and development as writers. In one instance it allows the learners to share responsibility in producing a text and enhancing meaning. However, depending on how learners related to the topic, they may choose to either produce a text collaboratively or to work individually. This was evidenced in one of the topics, 'Mothers' Day cards', in which learners had individualistic and personal interpretations of the message. Looking at the texts the learners produced, collaboration seems to enable one to evaluate only pairs of learners' writing development. However, it can be argued that collaborative writing does not provide evidence on how an individual learner has developed as a writer. Instead it only accounts for learners producing texts together.

Additionally in this project the learners' texts show sign of development in learners' writing. Most of them were able to show 'voice' in their writing by being able to express how they felt about something. This influenced their development of ownership in writing. Some of the texts they produced were related to particular genres. This enabled them to remain conscious

about writing for purpose, following certain ways of using language to construct meaning. In other texts they were able to follow the text structures and use different linguistic features, such as conventional greetings used in stories. This development could be attributed to the project not focusing on teaching learners a set of technical skills.

Lastly, the project proved to be well managed, in which learners' could develop a sense of creativity in their writing. In some of the texts produced, the learners displayed creativity by writing to imaginary audience using imaginary characters and this was realised by incorporating some of the colloquial ways of using language. This challenged the common conception of second language writing development of Hyland (2003) and Matsuda (2009) which does not include the ways in which learners can write creatively. Their writing benefitted by allowing the learners the freedom to own the meaning of their texts.

The teachers' conceptualisations of writing contradicted the ways in which the learners' writing developed in the project. The Mobile Literacies Project teacher's conceptualisation of writing was oriented towards learning spelling skills which the learners still did not seem to develop in the learners' texts. Although the devices had spelling check, the learners consistently displayed many spelling mistakes in their writing. This kind of contradiction about what the learners actually wrote and what the teachers and learners commented as signs of writing development shows a misunderstanding of the approaches which the project employed in facilitating writing development. With the project using approaches that are unprecedented, the teachers seemed to be stuck in past, more comfortable approaches.

The learners' development of writing in the GPLMS project

The writing which the learners did for GPLMS in their English exercise books was based on developing their technical skills such as: grammar, spelling, vocabulary and learning different writing strategies. All the writing they did was structured in terms of categories that are also found in the CAPS (2011) curriculum: Reading and Viewing, Writing and Presenting and Language Structure and Conventions. Each of these categories used different approaches in teaching and helping the learners develop as writers.

Learners' writing in these categories was heavily controlled by the teacher and this impacted on the use of their own voices, development of ownership and freedom to use different linguistic resources to enhance meaning. For example, in the first category, Reading and Viewing', they were asked to answer questions based on a particular texts. The answers

tended to be close-ended and predetermined in a memo. When looking specifically at the writing they did for the Writing and Presenting category, they were provided with a topic to write about, using mind maps and 'writing frames'. However, the teacher had pre-set expectations of the kind of information the learners had to write in the mind map, undermining the exploratory notion that process writing condones. In addition, gap-filling in paragraphs referred to as 'writing frames' result in the learners scribing (Hendricks, 2005) information. In this sense, the learners are also deprived of opportunities to use writing as a means of communicating their own ideas. When they wrote their own ideas the teacher marked them wrong. What also emerged from these exercises is that the teacher did not clearly understand what the notion of process writing involves.

In the last category, Language Structure and Conventions, teachers use form-focus approaches to teach different linguistic structures. This involves structured input, explicit grammar teaching, and production practice which are all done in de-contextualised activities (Ellis, 1998). The learners appear to accurately apply the grammar rules when doing them. However, this does not provide assurance as to whether they actually understand how such grammar rules are used for meaning in real life writing contexts. Learners are not provided with opportunities where they could use language to communicate meaning, which would serve as evidence of their linguistic proficiency development. As a result, the evidence of what the learners wrote based on the three categories cannot be relied upon in accounting whether the learners developed as writers since there was no actual writing which they were encouraged to partake in. Instead, the most common skill used was what Hendricks (2005) calls scribing, which is merely copying information or filling in gaps in teacher controlled activities in which the learners do not take part. This raises questions about what GPLMS conceive of as writing.

The conceptions of writing development which the learners, the English teacher, the Language HOD and the GPLMS coach reverberate the ways in which the project conceives of writing development. Their comments on whether the project enabled or constrained writing development hint on process, teaching grammar rules and technical aspects of language such as spelling.

There also tends to be contradictions in what can be considered as signs of development of writing. The Language HOD showed that the learners were able to write paragraphs, but this raises questions on what she actually means as a 'paragraph', while learners merely filled in

predetermined answers in gaps within the paragraphs. In addition she also pointed out that since the teachers had lesson plans provided to them as well as supervisors, they were able to implement the lesson plans. This shows how, even in a senior position, teachers do not critically question the lesson plan scripts provided to them by the department.

Implications and Recommendations

The different ways in which the learners' writing developed in the two projects and how learners and different staff members conceptualise writing development poses implications for the teaching of writing in second language classrooms. In the Mobile Literacies Project one of the shortcomings that emerged was lack of linguistic input that would accompany learners' production of texts. However, it at least allowed the learners the opportunity to produce texts in relation to context. This had a positive impact on their development of ownership in their writing. On the other hand GPLMS stressed the development of linguistic structure, but did little to enable the learners to apply the language rules in writing context where they can be the centre of meaning.

Since the approaches employed by the two projects have importance in the learners' development of writing, this raises the need to harmonise structured grammar teaching and writing for fluency. Teachers need to begin considering teaching grammar in relation to context of writing since teaching language rules in isolation contradicts how language is learned. Children in real life contexts learn to speak by experimenting with linguistic aspects, therefore this should also be done in the teaching of writing. This will enable the learners to experiment with different ways of using grammar for meaning instead of reproducing knowledge. In addition, this will benefit not only their linguistic development but also their cognitive development because they will constantly use language for complex thinking instead of recalling.

A further implication involves how teachers should draw a line between when the learners should write individually or collaboratively, depending on how learners relate to a specific topic.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Learner-Interviews
Questions relating to using the iPod touch for text production

What have you enjoyed about writing using the iPod Touch?

What kinds of topics did you write about?

How were these topics chosen? Did you or your teacher choose them?

Did working in pairs help you to write? How?

Did your teacher help you generate ideas and organise them? If yes, please explain how.

Did the writing you have done in your class help you improve as a writer? If yes, please explain how.

What do you need to know to be able to write well?

Did you make any texts that included writing and other media (photos, video, voice recorder)?

What did you learn from making these texts?

What did you enjoy about making these texts using the iPod touch?

Learner-Interviews – Questions repeated with regard to work done in the GPLMS project

What have you enjoyed about writing in your languages exercise books?

What kinds of topics did you write about?

How were these topics chosen? Did you or your teacher choose them?

Did working in pairs help you to write? How?

Did your teacher help you generate ideas and organise them? If yes, please explain how.

Did the writing you have done in your class help you improve as a writer? If yes, please explain how.

What do you need to know to be able to write well?

Did you make any texts that included writing and other media (drawings, diagrams, photos)?

What did you learn from making these texts?

What did you enjoy about making these texts?

Appendix B: Interview Schedule for Grade 5 Mobile Literacy teacher and the languages teacher

How do you recognise improvement or development in children's writing?

What would you expect of a Grade 5 learner who has developed as a writer? What kinds of skills would you expect of them?

What method(s) did you use to facilitate learners' writing and writing development in the project? Please describe one lesson in detail to illustrate this method.

What do you think were the advantages and disadvantages of the methods you used?

Do you think the method you used helped or hindered learners' writing development? Please explain how.

Do you think the tools used in the project helped learners' develop as writers? If yes, explain how.

How do you think the writing pedagogy employed in the project helped you develop as a teacher of writing?

Do you have any suggestions as to how the project could change to help learners develop as writers more effectively?

Appendix C: GPLMS Coach Interview

Do you think the teachers successfully implemented the lesson scripts in their writing lessons? If yes, please explain how.

Do you think the writing pedagogy employed in the GPLMS lesson enabled or constrained learners' writing development? If yes, please explain how.

What would you expect of a Grade 5 learner who has developed as a writer? What kinds of skills would you expect of them?

Do you think the writing pedagogy employed changed learners' understanding of what is expected of them as writers in Grade 5? If yes, please explain how.

Based on the text learners produced, do you think learners developed as writers? Please explain how.

Appendix D: Language HOD interview

How do you think the two projects helped teachers develop as writers and teachers of writing? If yes please

What do you see view as the major differences between the two projects in terms of pedagogy and the kinds of writing produced by students?

Do you think the GPLMS teachers in specific successfully implemented the lesson scripts in their writing lessons? If yes, please explain how.

Do you think the writing pedagogy employed in the GPLMS and Mobile Literacy lesson enabled or constrained learners' writing development? If yes, please explain how.

What kinds of writing skills would you expect of a Grade 5 learner who has developed as a writer?

Do you think the writing pedagogy employed in both projects changed learners' understanding of what is expected of them as writers in Grade 5? If yes, please explain how.

Based on the text learners produced in both projects, do you think learners developed as writers? Please explain how.

Appendix E: Mobile Literacies Teacher's Interview

Interviewer: How do you recognise improvement or development in children's writing?

Thobeka: In relation to the project I would say learners' improvement of writing manifests through the development of independence, improved spelling, and their enjoyment in using the devices. This enjoyment comes as a result of the device's ability to correct learners' spellings.

Interviewer: What would you expect of a Grade 5 learner who has developed as a writer? What kinds of skills would you expect of them?

Thobeka: A learner whose writing has developed is confident to express themselves in writing. They are also able to write fluently. Expressing oneself in writing plays a role in boosting self-confidence which is important for writing.

Interviewer: What method(s) did you use to facilitate learners' writing and writing development in the project? Please describe one lesson in detail to illustrate this method.

Thobeka: I used to recap on what was done during a previous lesson; I would then build on what was done by making links with a current lesson. Sometimes I would demonstrate on the board how a certain text is written. Take for instance when they were writing a recipe I would show them where to write the ingredients, methods and everything else. Sometimes I would also encourage them to choose their own topics which I think helped a lot.

Interviewer: What do you think were the advantages and disadvantages of the methods you used?

Thobeka: Yes, it's always an advantage because learners are able to make links and build on different aspects or topic and the learners were able to see exactly how certain texts look like before they write.

Interviewer: Do you think the method you used helped or hindered learners' writing development? Please explain how.

Thobeka: Yes, it did help them. I think this has been answered already.

Interviewer: Do you think the tools used in the project helped learners' develop as writers? If yes, explain how.

Thobeka: The iPod helped the learners to learn spelling and to understand that writing can be done using different tools like photos and videos. That is why sometimes I told them to go out and take photos and write about them.

Interviewer: How do you think the writing pedagogy (teaching methods) employed in the project helped you develop as a teacher of writing?

Thobeka: the project helped me to gain more understanding of how I can teach learners to write. I learned that learner must be given a chance to work together as writers like they did in pairs where they can help each other in correcting things like spelling mistakes. Normally, they like in the other subject the learners write individually in their books.If they grapple with something they need to ask me as the teacher, but the project helped me to understand that they can become teachers of writing as long as you have shown them how they need to write. I also learned that I must use different tools which the learners can relate what they write about to.

Interviewer: Do you have any suggestions as to how the project could change to help learners develop as writers more effectively?

Thobeka: As the project was run during the Life Skills lessons, it should use topics relate to life skills, and all the writing done should be based on Life Skills' topics. It should also allow teachers to be on the same level with the curriculum.

Appendix F: Language HOD interview

Interviewer: How do you think the two projects helped teachers develop as writers and teachers of writing? If yes please

Selina: When I look at **Mobile literacies,** it is done in the period of Life Skills which makes it difficult to tell if teachers are developing as writers and teachers of writing. It would be better if it was in an English class. Another thing is that teachers are not literate enough to use the gadgets. Some of them only experience technology devices likes iPods at school.

Interviewer: What do you see view as the major differences between the two projects in terms of pedagogy and the kinds of writing produced by students?

Selina: the Mobile Literacies used digital technology, while GPLMS had lessons prepared for teachers which specified what they needed to teach. At the same time, the teachers also had coaches who supervised them regularly on their teaching.

Interviewer: Do you think the GPLMS teachers in specific successfully implemented the lesson scripts in their writing lessons? If yes, please explain how.

Selina: I think GPLMS did achieve its implementation of its lesson scripts because lessons were already prepared for teachers and they were constantly monitored by their coaches.

Interviewer: Do you think the writing pedagogy employed in the GPLMS and Mobile Literacy lesson enabled or constrained learners' writing development? If yes, please explain how.

Selina: Mobile Literacies has not yet developed learners' writing. Learners need more opportunities to familiarise themselves with writing using the iPods. The number of periods they have per week is not enough. On the other hand learners have developed as writers because they were able to complete their activities and topics.

Interviewer: What kinds of writing skills would you expect of a Grade 5 learner who has developed as a writer?

Selina: learners need to be able to writer texts like letters, paragraphs and reports and make summaries.

Interviewer: Do you think the writing pedagogy employed in both projects changed learners' understanding of what is expected of them as writers in Grade 5? If yes, please explain how.

Selina: Yes, learners now can write different texts such as letters and summaries. They also can edit their work well.

Interviewer: Based on the text learners produced in both projects, do you think learners developed as writers? Please explain how.

Selina: Not yet, learners lack a motivation to write. For instance, they only experience an iPod at school. At their level most learners can only draw. I feel that the Mobile Literacies can motivate learners by allowing them to have ample opportunities to use the gadgets regularly even after school. The digital technology can enhance learner motivation because it provide a tool that varies from the traditional technology such as: paper and pen, a chalkboard which may limit learners' engagement with their writing.

Appendix G: Grade 5 English teacher interview

Interviewer: What would you expect of a Grade 5 learner who has developed as a writer? What kinds of skills would you expect of them?

Flora: They must be able to complete their work, and handwriting is also important. But this was difficult to achieve with GPLMS because of lack of time or insufficient time for learners to focus on developing their handwriting.

Interviewer: What method(s) did you use to facilitate learners' writing and writing development in the project? Please describe one lesson in detail to illustrate this method.
Flora: I used different materials which learners would copy, but they did not have time on themselves to do so. Some of them would not do any work when they got home, because of lacking independence.
Interviewer: What do you think were the advantages and disadvantages of the methods you used?

Flora: There is always a disadvantage, because time is the biggest problem. Due to it, their work is rarely well done or complete. The learners were also slow. Maybe the old ways of teaching, where lots of repetition was done, would be better and suitable for them.

Interviewer: Do you think the tools used in the project helped learners' develop as writers? If yes, explain how.

Flora: Yes, they did. Learners got to see how different texts are written, but there was not enough time to implement everything.

Interviewer: How do you think the writing pedagogy (teaching methods) employed in the project helped you develop as a teacher of writing?

Flora: They gave us workshops where we got to understand what writing is all about. We were even taught some important writing skills such as writing in cursive.

Interviewer: Do you have any suggestions as to how the project could change to help learners develop as writers more effectively?

Flora: Learners need serious attention and GPLMS needs more time for implementation. Learners must also have a special period for handwriting.

Appendix H: Focus Group interviews

Focus Group 1

Questions relating to using the iPod touch for text production

Interviewer: what have you enjoyed about writing using the iPod Touch?

Valerie: I enjoyed commenting to other people, and, and, writing, and to see how to comment with people. I enjoyed commenting to other people, and, and, know how to comment and view the other things that people have wrote.

Thuli: I enjoyed playing games during iPod time.

Bonisiwe: I enjoyed writing stories.
Nomsa: I enjoyed writing on the iPod and commenting on the other people's views, and see what they have wrote.
Nsuku: I like to play games.
Gugu: I enjoyed when we did the drama.
The interviewer makes a follow up on Bonisiwe's response:

Interviewer: You said you enjoyed writing stories, what kinds of stories were they? (The interviewer makes a follow up on Bonisiwe's response)
Bonisiwe: We were writing about Mothers' Day
Interviewer: Why did you enjoy that one specifically?
Bonisiwe: Because you have to write about your mother.
Interviewer: What did you enjoy about writing about you mother?
Bonisiwe: Because she takes care of me.
Interviewer: In the drama what did you like about writing about the drama?
Gugu: I liked it when everyone was doing his dramas
Interviewer: What did you like about that?
Thuli: liked that people did good dramas

Interviewer: What kinds of topics did you write about?
Thuli: Monster Match

Valerie: Prodigal Son

Nomsa: Mothers' Day

Gugu: Abuse

Bonisiwe: Nelson Mandela

Nsuku: Monster Match

Interviewer: How were these topics chosen? Who chose them?

Valerie: It was us, we all chose them, we chose them

Interviewer: Did working in pairs help you to write? How?

Valerie: yes because some of the people don't know spellings, so in pairs we can help each other with spellings.

Nsuku: If I don't know spelling she helps me.

Nomsa: She helped me to correct my spelling when they are wrong, and I will also correct her.

Bonisiwe: what I liked about working with a partner is because helps us think and come up with ideas.

Gugu: my partner helped me with the spellings if I don't know the spelling.

Thuli: It helped me to talk the words loud.

Interviewer: Did your teacher help you generate ideas (or plan what you wrote) and organise them? If yes, please explain how.

Nomsa: If we did ...I beg your pardon, (the interview repeats the question), she did, like when we didn't know how to explain what she's trying to tell us, she helped us.

Valerie: The teacher helped us when we don't understand how to plan but we have the idea about the story that we write.

Bonisiwe: Our teacher helped us by giving titles on our story.

Thuli: The teacher helped us when we wanted the drama she told us which drama we must do.

Interviewer: did the writing you have done in your class help you improve as a writer? If yes, please explain how.

Valerie: Yes, it makes us improve very well because it taught us even in the class when we want to write a story we know where should we start. We write from the title and we write

where and what are the people who are involved in the story it helped us a lot. I can have many ideas and help other children who cannot do this thing so that they can... iPod taught me that we should help each other so that we can all know the thing.

Nomsa: it did help us when we write, we can think very well. If you don't have a story that you wrote in the iPod you know by heart. Then you can write it there in your book. And now I can write a story on my own and think the story on my own.

Bonisiwe: it help us very well because it shows, it taught us how to set a story. What I also improved is that I learned I must think on my own.

Gugu: It helped how to know English very well.

Interviewer: what do you need to know to be able to write well?

Valerie: You have to know to write how . . . how to pronounce words and how to write when the article start. When you end you have to put full stop so that you're, your work has.....and you have to write things that have meaning. You don't have to write anything that comes to your mind. (What makes a text or writing have meaning).

Nomsa: What you must know when you write is, you have to know the spelling. Think what you are going to write, think before you write and write correctly. Even if they are not correct they must see what you have written.

Interviewer: did you make any texts that included writing and other media (photos, video, voice recorder)?

Valerie: yes we did.

Interviewer: what did you learn from making these texts?

Nomsa: It helped us, when you take a photo, then you talk about that photo. You can see things in that photo then you talk about the things that are there in that photo.

Valerie: When a photo or you take a video, it helps us even when you can't write the spellings. It helps you when a person tries to read your story. . . . There you were trying to say something he can say I can see what he or she was trying to say.

Bonisiwe: It helps us a lot because we have to talk about the photos and what is in the photo, and it was too easier to write about the things that you see in the photo.

Thuli: It helps you to write about the thing that makes sense.

Valerie: It helps you to write what is in the photo and told you what to do in the photo.

Learner-Interviews – Questions repeated with regard to work done in the GPLMS project

Interviewer: what have you enjoyed about writing in your languages exercise books?

Nomsa: We do enjoy because when the page is full we turn to the next page.

Bonisiwe: I didn't enjoy because when you make a mistake you have to scratch and makes your book look dirty.

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Interviewer: what kinds of topics did you write about?

Valerie: Mr Giraffe, the Tiny Mouse

Nomsa: The Paralysed boy

Bonisiwe: Moon in the sun, the Wild Boy

(So what did you write about under these topics?)

Interviewer: did working in pairs or individually help you to write? How?

We worked individually.

Nomsa: We worked individually. It helped us a lot because when you are a person you have to think on your own because there is no person

Interviewer: did your teacher help you generate ideas and organise them? If yes, please explain how.

Valerie: She didn't help us, the teacher does read for us then we have to read after her then we have to make our own stories. She didn't help us find answers

Nomsa: We had to answer on your own, but sometimes she shouted at us because others did not do the right thing.

Interviewer: Did the writing you have done in your class help you improve as a writer? If yes, please explain how.

Valerie: Yes, it helped us when a story is not a statement it's a question. We understand where should we put capital alphabets.

Appendix I: Focus Group 2

Questions relating to using the iPod touch for text production

Interviewer: What have you enjoyed about writing using the iPod Touch?
Ruth: I like to submit that we were writing and reading about things that people were writing.
Tshegofatso: I like to write stories in the iPod and read other stories.
Khetha: what I like about the iPod is to read other people's documents and comment on them because it is a lot of fun, a lot of fun because it's a funny thing to do.
Rirhandzu: Writing in the notes.
Ntombi: I enjoyed writing in the iPod class because when you wrote the wrong spelling they show you the right spelling.

Interviewer: What kinds of topics did you write about?
Ntombi: We wrote about Mother's Day
Deliwe: People we admire, Rose's Story and Going to the airport. Rose's story is about Rose who was helping children who are going to school because she saw them that they are hungry. She started to make food for them every morning and children started to go and found a special supper for their families, and the church clothes.
Khetha: Nelson Mandela
Ruth: Child Abuse, Family
Tshegofatso: Fishing Day**Deliwe:** Telling an adult

Interviewer: How were these topics chosen? Did you or your teacher choose them?]
Deliwe: the teacher kind of helped us to choose other topics and she gave us examples, but some of them we chose them ourselves

Interviewer: Did working in pairs help you to write? How?
Deliwe: working with my partner it was helping me to write because if I had forgotten something she tells me what I have forgotten; to put the punctuation marks and other things that I need to put to the topic.
Ntombi: my partner helped me when I made mistakes in spellings.
Rirhandzu: I enjoyed working with my partner because she always reminded me about spellings
Tshegofatso: I enjoyed working with my partner because sometimes when we write she always helps me with all the things that I forgot.

Interviewer: Did your teacher help you generate ideas and organise them? If yes, please explain how.

Deliwe: the teacher revised things that we did in the past by reminding us.

Ntombi: She helped us to prepare it more and more until we don't look at it and we put it in our minds.

Interviewer: Did the writing you have done in your class help you improve as a writer? If yes, please explain how.

Deliwe: by correcting us when we are wrong with spelling and punctuations.

Khetha: by reading it until it got into my mind.

Interviewer: What do you need to know to be able to write well?

Deliwe: I need to learn first thing before I write and I need to think before I act. I must think about the things I have learned so that I can write about it.

Interviewer:: Did you make any texts that included writing and other media (photos, video, voice recorder)?

Deliwe: We took pictures and made paragraphs about the pictures and what they were talking about.

Rirhandzu: We were looking at the pictures and write about them.

Ruth: We were looking at the pictures and write a story about that picture.

Interviewer: What did you learn from making these texts?

Ntombi: I learned that using pictures was fun because the pictures told me everything and I can see everything and talk about it.

Questions repeated with regard to work done in the GPLMS project

Interviewer: What have you enjoyed about writing in your languages exercise books?

Ntombi: I enjoyed learning in the language class because that language we learned I'm fluent in it than other languages. I enjoyed reading the posters and we did sentences and we go to the poster and point which sentence is that.

Khetha: I enjoyed reading because if we have finished reading a story we would make a story.

Interviewer: What kinds of topics did you write about?

Ruth: Visiting the Library

Ntombi: Mind map

Interviewer: How were these topics chosen? Did you or your teacher choose them?

Deliwe: the teacher

Interviewer: Did you work in pairs or individually? How did it help you to write? How?

Deliwe: Individually

Interviewer: Did your teacher help you generate ideas and organise them? If yes, please explain how.

Khetha: yes, by giving examples

Tshegofatso: by correcting spellings and show you how to write that spelling.

Deliwe: by showing us how to write spelling. Like when you write jump she says it in a way learners do.

Interviewer: What do you need to know to be able to write well?

Deliwe: You need to know punctuations

Ntombi: common nouns

Rirhandzu: adjectives

Appendix J: Focus Group 3

Questions relating to using the iPod touch for text production

Interviewer: What have you enjoyed about writing using the iPod Touch?

Vusi: We were enjoying tapping and correcting others their spellings.

Ntsako: I enjoyed touching the ipod because it is fun, and the iPod teaches a many things, like if you have written the wrong spelling it will appear as the right spelling.

Rifumo: I learned on iPod and correct people when their spelling are wrong and learn to write English and correct spellings

Tisetso: I enjoyed iPod because it made me learn how to use the iPod and how to write the sentences with the iPod. And I enjoy, and I enjoy sending the letters to the others, when we were writing the sentences of the things that we are writing about.

Nestar: I like talking about iPod. Something that is fun about the iPod, I like when we played the game and make a new comment.

Kulani: I like to play with the iPod because it teaches us many things and to write spellings in English.

Interviewer: What kinds of topics did you write about?

Vusi: Mary Feeds hungry children and a topic about the people who do not come to school.

Tisetso: School trip to holiday.Another topic was about the visiting and the travelling in the airport.

Nestar: A Christmas day

Ntsako: about abuse and the topic about the children, who their mothers abuse them.

Interviewer: How were these topics chosen? Did you or your teacher choose them?

Vusi: us.

Interviewer: Did working in pairs help you to write? How?

Nestar: It was helping us to write. When we were writing wrong spellings it shows. And it makes us to do work.

Vusi: when we were teaching other people the spelling that is right and us they are teaching us to write the spelling that is right. When we wrote it wrong, there is a spelling that shows it red and you copy that spelling and write it right.

Ntsako: my partner used to correct me about spelling and I used to correct him. We were correcting each other.

Kulani: we were helping each other, if the spelling is wrong we correct each other. Then it correct us how to write.

Tisetso: me and Rifumo we used to write the letters and when we wrote wrong we correct each other even if the spelling was wrong.

Rifumo: we were learning about words that we found in the dictionary and when we get home our parents also helped us with spellings.

Interviewer: Did your teacher help you generate ideas (or plan what you wrote) and organise them? If yes, please explain how.

Kulani: yes because it was very interesting topics and the teacher gave us correct spellings.

Ntsako: the teacher was helping us when we don't know how to write our heading, and she told us to write about headings that are fun and we must write in full.

Kulani: she helped us how to submit and said we must write in full sentences.

Vusi: my mom teaches me to write the spelling and correct the spelling.

Tisetso: when I go home and did not know the correct spelling my mom helped me. My teacher helped me to write paragraphs, and if you are done writing she told us to write full-stops and commas.

Interviewer: Did the writing you have done in your class help you improve as a writer? If yes, please explain how.

Rifumo: it helps us to write to other subject that we need.

Vusi: It helped us to write to the books, when we write ANAS we write neatly and the madams can see our handwritings. When we write objects, madam asked you: you want to write a spelling right? And we say yes, then then he would correct you.

Tisetso: It helps us when it comes to English; it helps us to write the sentences and to write the full-stops and the spelling that I didn't know. But I learned them from the iPod, when I wrote them in the book I always write them right.

Nestar: it helps you to know how to comment and to submit.

Interviewer: What do you need to know to be able to write well?

Ntsako: You must know how to write spellings and comment to the other people to check with others and correct them when they are writing wrong things. You will say if he or she his story is good.

Vusi: when other children wrote the spelling wrong you correct them and say his spelling is good or is wrong and you correct them. Madam also said you must start with a capital letter.

Tisetso: when you always write a letter you will always have good sentences and good spellings and the letters we write we must always put a full-stop and when we write a story we must always put a paragraph. When you start writing you must put capital letters. When you are starting to write you must have headings that have meanings.

Kulani: and the teacher said before we write we must write our names and we must write a title.

Rifumo: Madam said when you finished your text you must read your text and correct it when the spellings are wrong and correct when other people are writing.

Interviewer: Did you make any texts that included writing and other media (photos, video, voice recorder)?

Nestar: Yes, we take a photo of Mandela then you write about it and that he made us to learn as born-frees.

Vusi: When we are taking a photo of Nelson Mandela we said he is a great-father in our best lives and did for us something we don't know.

Rifumo: we wrote about the cups that are in principal's office. They remind us when we play with other schools and we win.

Ntsako: When we take the Mandela picture, we wrote that he is the person that we admires because Mandela gave us freedom and Mandela helped us and fought for the black people.

Kulani: we see mandela's picture and write about how we love Mandela and to respect Mandela.

Interviewer: What did you learn from making these texts?

Nestar: I learned how to spell words and comment to other people.

Questions repeated with regard to work done in the GPLMS project

Interviewer: What have you enjoyed about writing in your languages exercise books?

Tisetso: I enjoyed learning English.

Vusi: I enjoyed English when write spelling test, because it teaches me to be clever and know the words.

Nestar: In English class I enjoyed reading books.

Rifumo: In English I enjoyed reading and when we had spelling time we wrote spelling words.

Interviewer: What kinds of topics did you write about?

Ntsako: the bull and the mouse.

Rifumo: I learned about Mr Benz, the topic when we learned about cars.

Kulani: The topic that I remember is The Lazy Mandla. We were talking about a lazy boy who liked to eat and he was fat. He did not exercise and one day he found that his brothers and sisters were burning but he could not run because he was too fat and he could not save his brothers.

Interviewer: How were these topics chosen? Did you or your teacher choose them?

Rifumo: We found them in the book, and the teacher told us to write about them.

Interviewer: Did working in individually help you to write? How?

Kulani: We were in groups and the teachers ask us questions and the teacher said we must answer in groups. But we would write on our own books individually.

Interviewer: Did your teacher help you generate ideas and organise them? If yes, please explain how.

Rifumo: He was sitting with us and showed us how to write sentences about Lazy Mandla, and he describes how he was doing and how he was acting.

Interviewer: Did the writing you have done in your class help you improve as a writer? If yes, please explain how.

Rifumo: Yes, by spelling words and write sentences about people who are in a story and main characters.

Ntsako: and the stories teach us to not be lazy.

Kulani: how to write in English and how to read.

Tisetso: it helped us because we did not know how to spell the words and how to read, but when we were busy writing we learn more.

Interviewer: What do you need to know to be able to write well?

Ntsako: when he writes he must be honest.

Vusi: When you write a spelling that is wrong, you were taking to that button and that button would write in red.

Ntsako: you must know how to write a paragraph and spell words. And when you write a story you must start with a heading, and end a full-stop and your story must have capital letters.

Interviewer: Did you make any texts that included writing and other media (drawings, diagrams, photos)?

Tisetso: No, but we did write as an exercise.

Appendix K: Focus Group 4

Questions relating to using the iPod touch for text production

Interviewer: what have you enjoyed about writing which was done using the iPod Touch?

Gladys: We enjoyed when we wrote sentences and statements and the iPod would correct us if we wrote incorrect spellings.

Brian: We enjoyed about writing a a story about your friend and how your friend is like.

Tendani: I enjoyed iPod when you write a spelling, we wrote a wrong spelling, it appears as a right spelling, and it wrong spelling to anyone.

Sarah: I enjoy writing and we were acting and write that thing, we, we act.

Cliff: I enjoy when we write in Mobile Literacy. I enjoy to write about my friends.

Leon: I enjoy writing about every game.

Interviewer: let's go to the second question, what kinds of topics did you write about?

Sarah: the prodigal son

Cliff: Happy Valentine's Day to our Mother, eish, no I made a mistake it was Happy Mother's Day.

Brian: We wrote about many topics. [The Interviewer asks which?] I don't remember.

Gladys: We wrote about the topic of Rosie and her mother and helping children.

Tendani: I remember my topic was Happy Birthday to my father.

Interviewer: How were these topics chosen and who chose them? Was it you or your teacher?

Gladys: We chose them by ourselves, other topics we. . .we copied them from the book. When we read about the story then we take it to iPod.

Brian: these topics we take it from the book when we write it. Then we write them to the iPod, to the Mobile Literacy.

Interviewer: You were working in pairs, right? Did working in pairs help you to write? How?

Leon: because when you were writing the wrong spelling they will tell you, when you skip the line.

Gladys: When we work in mobile literacies it taught us how to send messages and write the correct spelling. We helped each other, if one of us did remember the thing that we write about I would help her and if we write an incorrect spelling the iPod would help us.

Interviewer: so did your teacher also help you generate ideas (or plan what you wrote) and organise them? If yes, please explain how.
Sarah: the teacher helped us to find I ideas.

Interviewer: How Sarah?
Gladys: Yes out teacher helped us, when we go to photos. When we see a picture we can memorise it and write sentences about it. The teacher helped us how to go into Mobile Literacies, and how to enter your password. She also helped us by correcting us. She was looking when we are busy writing. She also checked when we are writing correct spellings and we are writing about a correct story.

Interviewer: did the writing you have done in your class help you improve as a writer? If yes, please explain how.
Brian: yes, yes...because it makes us learn about things that we don't know and write a right spelling when we write something that we can't write and it will tell you that when you write a wrong spelling it will write a right spelling at the bottom of it.
Gladys: when we wrote in Mobile Literacies it taught us to write our own stories working with our minds and not copying from anything.

Interviewer: so what do one need to know to be able to write well?
Brian: you, you must know the spelling, and... and know the spelling and know to write the story that you want to write.
Sarah: you must read and practice to write everyday.
Leon: when you write you must start with a capital letter and write a story in full sentences.
Gladys: When you want to write a story, you must start with the heading and follow with what happens and your story must have paragraphs.
Tendani: If you want to write a story you go to Mobile Literacy and write any word. If you write a spelling wrong it will show a correct spelling
Cliff: When iPod taught you how to write, if you want to write a story you must with the the middle, and the end. When you write a story you must put a full-stop, commas.

Interviewer: Did you make any texts that included writing and other media (photos, video, voice recorder)?

Gladys: we sometimes checked the photos and write about them. Some of them were about mountains, Christmas trees and lots of light.

Interviewer: What did you learn from making these texts?

Gladys: We learned about writing stories and adding something that we have copied and saved without copying anywhere and writing a story about the photo.

Sarah: I learned to use our own sentences.

Interviewer: What did you enjoy about making these texts using the iPod touch?

Gladys: We enjoyed writing stories and different things. Because when we write we learn more about writing stories by just looking at the photo.

Sarah: I enjoyed writing in the notes and in the Mobile Literacies

Brian: I enjoyed to write in your own sentence

Tendani: I enjoy about to write something and no-one tell us the spelling.

Questions repeated with regard to work done in the GPLMS project

Interviewer: Now we are looking at your writing in the English language class. What have you enjoyed about writing in your languages exercise books?

Sarah: I enjoyed because I like to write about good thing. When I remember in the English book, I remember. When I write I remember. . .

Gladys: Yes I enjoyed writing in the English books, because when I was writing in the iPod I remember other words which I can't write correctly. But when we write in the English books, it teaches us lots of things. It teaches us English.

Interviewer: What kinds of topics did you write about?

Brian: we write about the iPod.

Interviewer: How were these topics chosen? Did you or your teacher choose them?

Gladys: we chose them ourselves, the teacher used to put a picture which we could see and do sentences of our own.

Interviewer: Did working in individually help you to write? How?

Gladys: Yes it helped us. If there is something we don't understand we asked the teacher and the teacher would tell us just like in the iPod when we write the wrong spelling it would give us the correct spelling. We also learned about present tense and future tense sometimes we wrote about them when we write sentences.

Interviewer: Did your teacher help you generate ideas and organise them? If yes, please explain how.

Brian: yes, the teacher finds something into the book and tells us about it and we write it into the iPod and we write it in the exercise book.

Interviewer: Did the writing you have done in your class help you improve as a writer? If yes, please explain how.

Gladys: when we read about stories when we write in our classwork books we write paragraphs and summarise the story with our own words not copying in the book.

Interviewer: Did you make any texts that included writing and other media (drawings, diagrams, photos)?

Gladys: sometimes when we saw pictures on the storybooks, the teacher would say that we write our own story.