

Grade 10 and 11 First Additional English rural teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in Acornhoek schools, Mpumalanga Province

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By

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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

This study is part of a larger research project titled *Conditions of teaching and learning that facilitate and/or constrain learning English in rural high schools*. The focus of the research project explores the conditions of teaching and learning English, and the contextual factors that facilitate and/or constrains learners' motivation and participation in learning, in five rural high schools in Bushbuckridge area. The current study focused on how grade 10 and 11 First Additional English rural teachers' conceptualise learning and teaching in Acornhoek schools, part of Bushbuckridge, Mpumalanga Province. Given the focus of the study the literature review detailed issues with development of rural education, teachers' conceptions of learning, teachers' conceptions of teaching, English as a First Additional language (EFAL) in South Africa and the spectrum of current pedagogical practices. The literature review highlighted significant gaps that are important for the this study such as a lack of research in Africa and South Africa focusing on teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching, particularly in rural schools. Furthermore the corpus of research conducted on conceptions focused on tertiary students' conceptions of learning, there is limited research in schools, with teachers and learners, especially teachers' pedagogical practices in relation to the conceptions. In addition the development of rural education and research in South Africa continue to be under-development, with most research perceiving rurality as a deficit paradigm.

Thus in order to address the literature gaps mentioned above the study engaged with six grade 10 and 11 rural teachers from Acornhoek, Mpumalanga Province. The sampling strategy was purposive, as only grades 10 and 11 EFAL teachers were the selected to participate in the study. In order to address the research questions and sub research questions, a qualitative research approach was used as it focuses on understanding socially and historically constructed meanings about experienced phenomena. Through the use of phenomenological methodology teachers' meanings and beliefs about learning and teaching were interrogated and problematized. In order to interrogate and problematize teachers' conceptions of

learning and teaching two data collection methods were used namely: semi-structured individual face-to-face interviews and non-participatory observations.

The semi-structured individual face-to-face interviews were used to address the following research questions:

1. What are grade 10 and 11 English First Additional Language teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching?
2. What shapes teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching?

The following research question was addressed by use the non-participatory observations:

3. How do teachers' conceptions influence teaching approaches, if at all, during English poetry and short story lessons?

In order to answer the above questions critical discourse analysis was used, to engage with participants' responses from their individual face-to-face interviews. Critical discourse analysis assisted with ensuring in depth engagement with participants' narrations, without taking any words for granted because meaning might be hidden in the selection of words. Thus critical discourse analysis enabled the critical identification of particular words used by the participants in order to gain insight to the underlying influences that shape rural teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in poetry and short stories lessons. As a result this involved an intense data analysis process, which incorporated the non-participatory classroom observations as well as the conceptual frameworks discussed from Bernstein, Alexander, and Scott and Mortimer.

Some of the major findings suggest that teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching are complex and complicated particularly if contextual issues are considered, as possible influential factors that shape teachers' conceptions. The findings indicated that rural teachers' conceptions of learning should be understood from early school learning to current teaching profession. The dominant conceptions of learning from early school and current teaching profession suggest memorisation, mimicking, and acquisition of information and little conceptions shows learning for transformation and change as a person. Various factors were identified to influences

the conceptions such as policy, lack of resources and overcrowded classrooms. In addition, findings on teachers' conceptions of teaching explicated the dynamics teachers face between ideas they hold about teaching and how they teach. The study indicated that some teachers mentioned 'banking' model of teaching that suggested teacher centred conception of teaching, which linked with some of the conceptions of learning. Most conceptions were about spoon-feeding, telling/giving learners information, and coordinating learning which link with conceptions of learning that promote surface learning.

Other conceptions promoted transformation, unlocking minds, and life-learning, to show that teaching is not only about giving information but also ensure that the information changes the way learners make sense of the social issues in relation to the world. It was noted that teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching seemed to have influenced how teachers teach poetry and short stories lessons, because irrespective of conceptualising teaching and learning in transformational and enlightenment but teachers used a unidirectional teaching approach. This teaching approach that all teachers used suggest 'normality' with using this way of teaching poetry and short stories, especially if the nature of poetry and short stories are taken into consideration. Without critiquing teachers' pedagogical approaches, of concern is that all observed teachers, irrespective of different schools, used similar teaching approach which was shaped by curriculum policy expectations, teachers' perceptions of learners, and the nature of the socio-cultural and economical context. Owing to some of the complexities mentioned above, further research on teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching, particularly in rural schools is needed, because embedded in teachers' conceptions lies their lived experiences and ideas about learning and teaching in rural school. Therefore if effective interventions are to be considered partnering with teachers and/or learners in rural schools to understand their conceptions, need to be seriously taken into account. The purpose is not to research *with* teachers rather than *for* teachers to enhance existing knowledge in partnership, rather imposing knowledge.

ABBREVIATIONS

ANAs	Annual National Assessments
ANC	African National Congress
B.Ed	Bachelor of Education Degree
C2005	Curriculum 2005
CAPS	Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement
DoE	Department of Education
EFAL	English First Additional Language
FAL	First Additional Language
FET	Further Education Training
HL	Home Language
MCRE	Ministerial Committee on Rural Education
NCS	National Curriculum Statement
OBE	Outcomes-Based Education
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
RoLI	Reflections on Learning Inventory
SACMEQ	Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Equality
TIMSS	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study
TIMSS-R	Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study-Repeat
TLCQ	Teaching/Learning Conceptions Questionnaire

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“But first and most importantly seek (aim at, strive after) His kingdom and His righteousness [His way of doing and being right—the attitude and character of God], and all these things will be given to you also. “So do not worry about tomorrow; for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own” (Matthew 6:33-34).

It is through these words I drew my strength and motivation, knowing that the Lord is with me at all times, that his character is within me and that I need not worry. It is these words that I had the strength to carry on even when worry and quitting was at my sight. It is to the Lord that I am here today but most of all that this dissertation is complete.

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*“An excellent woman, one who is spiritual, capable, intelligent, and virtuous, who is he who can find her?
Your value is more precious than jewels and your worth is far above rubies or pearls”(Proverbs 31:10)*

Thank you Dr Nkambule not just for my academic trajectory but also for your love for me to grow as an individual.

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DEDICATION

A LETTER OF SELF-LOVE:

**THIS STUDY IS DEDICATED TO ME FOR HAVING
THE WILL TO PERSERVERE AND PURSUE MY
DREAMS ON A JOURNEY TO BE A YOUNG
ACADEMIC**

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CHAPTER ONE

Context: A Variable Towards Quality Learning And Teaching

1.1 Introduction

The former and first democratic president of South Africa Mr. Nelson Mandela said that “Education is the most powerful weapon that can be used to change the world”, and he uttered these words at the launch of *Mindset network* (Mandela, July 2003, n.d). The above quotation signifies the importance of education in transforming a society and it is from similar perspectives that education is recognised as a fundamental human right globally. This means it has the power to impart knowledge and skills that can empower individuals to realise their full potential and abilities (Education for All Global Monitoring Report, 2014). It is also from this point of view that education has become a highly acclaimed possession that many countries globally strive to achieve, as a catalyst that aids the development of other goals essential for the progression and improvement of a country (Education for All Global Monitoring Report, 2014). Thus education is perceived as having the ability to reduce poverty, create job opportunities, and promote economic prosperity in general, particularly in places like farms and rural areas that continue to experience intense poverty and shortage of job opportunities (Balfour, Mitchell & Moletsane, 2008). Notwithstanding the value of education, I acknowledge that the system is complex and intricate, with many variables interacting with each other and inevitably affecting how learning and teaching takes place.

It is within this complexity and intricacy of education that my research positions itself, particularly in understanding some of the variables that affect learning and teaching. One such variable is the contextual location of the school, that is, urban, rural, semi-rural, or farm that can shape the process of learning and teaching. According to the Emerging Voices Report (2005) and Gardiner (2008), individuals that reside in urban areas, including townships, have better access to basic services, while individuals in farm and rural areas are highly disadvantaged because of lack of basic services

such as quality education. While the provision of quality education is important, it is also influenced by varying factors such as socio-economic circumstances, the nature of the curriculum, the quality of teachers, professional teacher development programmes, and availability of funding (Moloi & Strauss, 2005). Studies in Australia, United States of America, Zimbabwe and South Africa have shown that learners and teachers located in rural and farm areas have a high risk of poor access to education and face challenges such as lack of teaching aids, poor infrastructures, and shortage of qualified teachers (Hardré, 2009; Sharplin, 2012; Moletsane, 2012; Mukeredzi, 2013). Of concern is the paucity of research in sub-Saharan Africa and specifically in South Africa that seems to address some of the challenges, in particular research that focuses on teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in general, and especially in rural and farm schools. In addition, not much research has been conducted in South Africa and Africa to gain an insight into teachers' pedagogical choices in relation to their conceptions, especially in rural and farm schools. What is startling about the lack of research in rural and farm schools is that most provinces in South Africa have rural areas, with Limpopo, Eastern Cape, Kwazulu Natal and Mpumalanga having the highest number of rural and farm areas (Ebersöhn & Ferreira, 2012).

In general many schools in South Africa, including township and urban areas, continue to lack or not have enough infrastructural resources such as electricity, water, sanitation, internet and school libraries (Gardiner, 2008), however, the magnitude of this problem in farms and rural areas is of concern. It is because of this intensity that rural and farm area differ from other areas such as township areas, which are close to metropolitan city centres where some infrastructural resources are easily accessible and prioritized by the government. Considering the above factors, the contextual issues cannot be taken for granted as they shape the process of learning and teaching in rural schools for this study, a reason they form part of the research questions. Learning and teaching do not take place in a vacuum but, as mentioned earlier, are influenced by teachers and other interrelated factors. Thus, exploring and interrogating how rural teachers in Acornhoek, part of Bushbuckridge in Mpumalanga Province, conceptualise learning and teaching, and examining whether and how teachers' conceptions shape pedagogical choices in English poetry and short story lessons is vital. The reason to focus on teachers is because research

and various international, regional, and local tests – namely Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS), Southern and Eastern African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Equality (SACMEQ), and Annual National Assessments (ANAs) – have confirmed South African learners' continuing poor performances in English (Department of Education Report on the annual national assessment, 2014; van der Berg, Taylor, Gustafson, Spaull & Armstrong, 2011; Howie, van Staden, Tshele, Dowse & Zimmerman, 2011; Soudien, 2007), particularly in farm and rural schools, a reason for the focus on second English language teachers in rural schools. However, this does not mean that teachers are the cause of learners' continuous poor performance, but it is valuable to hear from their understanding of learning and teaching. Thus this research, which is part of a larger research project titled *Conditions of teaching and learning that facilitate and/or constrain learning English in rural high schools*, will contribute information on the aspect of English second language rural teachers.

It is important at this stage to explain the meaning of the main concepts in the study. Philippou and Christou (1999) posit that the meaning of conception is highly contested in educational research because it is composed of "... many different aspects mostly related to the affective domain" (p. 379). The affective domain can be said to comprise of beliefs, attitudes and subject matter orientation (Grossman, Wilson & Shulman, 1989; as cited in Philippou & Christou, 1999). Andrews and Hatch (2000) argue that there is no clear definition to understand the meaning of conceptions, because researchers tend to define the word based on whether it is viewed from a cognitive or an affective dimension. According to Marton (1981, p. 31) conceptions can be defined as "...the way of conceiving, understanding or experiencing particular phenomena", meaning that conceptions are closely related to one's experience in a set context. Cornbleth (1988, p. 85) states that "...conceptions and ways of reasoning ... reflect and shape how we think and talk about, study, and act on the education made available to students". Thus conceptions are not theoretical, but emerge and "enter into practice" (Cornbleth, 1988, p. 85), meaning they link with reasoning and practice. Cornbleth (1988)'s position is significant as it supports the assumption that conceptions can influence how teachers teach, which is a crucial reason for conducting this study. Thus Marton's and Cornbleth's meanings of conception are related, as they both make reference to conceptions

being a lived experience that is practical and shapes teachers' thinking in the classroom.

In addition to the above definitions, Thompson (as cited in Philippou & Christou, 1999, p. 380) defines teachers' conceptions as "...teachers' conscious or subconscious beliefs, concepts, meanings, rules, mental images, and preferences concerning the discipline". Considering the possibility of conceptions being subconscious beliefs that have the ability to shape behaviour, it is important to explore whether teachers are aware of their conceptions of learning and teaching in relation to their pedagogical practices in the classroom. Conceptions are individually constructed in relation to experiences and develop over time, depending on new information attained in time and space. In addition, conceptions are shaped by various factors such as society, family values, the classroom environment and one's experiences with knowledge of a particular discipline (Thompson as cited in Philippou & Christou, 1999). Considering this discussion, separating conceptions to denote either emotion or cognition limits the understanding of the words, as both the affective and cognitive domains are mutually effective in the study of conceptions. It is from the above discussion that it becomes imperative to gain an insight into rural teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in English first additional language (EFAL) in Mpumalanga schools, and how conceptions can influence their pedagogical choices in the classroom.

This study uses Thompson's, Marton's, and Cornbleth's definition of conception (as cited in Philippou & Christou, 1999; Cornbleth, 1988), because it is within the teachers' belief systems that insight can be gained about how they think and perceive the subject matter and its teaching. Thompson (1984) posits that any attempt to improve the quality of teaching must first understand the conceptions held by teachers, and how these conceptions relate to their pedagogical practices. It is for this reason that this study focuses on exploring and interrogating rural teachers' conceptions of teaching and learning, and examines whether these shape their pedagogical practices during English lessons. According to Wilson and Peterson (2006) the relationship between learning and teaching is complex because research that has been conducted has used the concepts separately. Another reason that has contributed to the complexity of the two concepts is the lack of guarantee that

learning is always taking place in a classroom, despite the best efforts of a teacher. Wilson and Peterson (2006) argue that the learning process for learners is dependent on many factors that are sometimes beyond the teacher's control. Some of these factors are interpersonal cognitive structures which a teacher has no direct access to, while other factors are external such as the consolidation of concepts outside the classroom by the individuals. Loughran (2010, p. 1) states the importance of teachers to begin seeing "...more deeply into the complex nature of teaching and learning", because it is in this complexity that "...the real understanding of pedagogy emerges..." Thus the beliefs and understandings that teachers have of learning, teaching and the knowledge discipline, have "...effects on the activities they carry out in their effort to learn or to teach" (Greeno, as cited in Philippou & Christou, 1999, p. 380). Therefore gaining an understanding of teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching can provide insight into whether and how conceptions influence the pedagogical practices in English poetry and short story lessons. This insight can further provide explanations concerning the attainment levels in EFAL in rural schools, as two of the secondary schools considered for the study are classified as underperforming (Mpumalanga Department of Education grade 12 examinations statistical report, 2014, p. 11).

1.2 Background of the study

As mentioned in the above discussion, researchers have thought of learning and teaching as two separate concepts. Contemporary theorists and researchers have worked at closing the gap between learning and teaching as dichotomous and separate concepts, and view them as interrelated and symbiotic to each other (Wilson & Peterson, 2006; Loughran, 2010). As new ideas emerge regarding learning and teaching through various curriculum reforms globally, the notion and understanding of learning and teaching has also evolved. For example, ideas that underpinned curriculum reforms have moved from perceiving learning as a passive absorption of information to learning as an active engagement process (Wilson & Peterson, 2006). Teaching has also moved from being seen as imparting knowledge, to teachers occupying various roles in the classroom such as facilitating learners (Wilson & Peterson, 2006). While there might have been curriculum reforms, it is unclear how teachers in Acornhoek perceive and experience them, particularly in

relation to teaching and learning, because reforms also expect teachers to rethink their pedagogical approaches. It is for this reason the study was conceptualized, to gain an insight into teachers' understanding of learning and teaching within the context of curriculum reforms since 1994 in South Africa. Since curriculum reforms require teachers to change their pedagogical practices, it is unclear whether research has been done to explore their conceptions of learning and teaching in rural contexts, considering teachers' training background during apartheid.

In South Africa, learning and teaching has been affected by historical, political, and educational changes from the apartheid era to the democratic era¹. Considering the educational changes and the transition in ideology of learning and teaching, of concern is that rural and farm development and education has remained marginalised despite the transformation seen in urban settings (Emerging Voices Report, 2005). Moletsane (2012) states that 21 years since the democratic elections in South Africa, the education system is still faced with various challenges, "especially those who live, work and learn in rural, informal and other marginalised communities" (p. 1). Despite different interventions and initiatives, the rural communities and schools are yet to experience quality education and development to ensure sustainable transformation in a democratic South Africa (Moletsane, 2012). It is acknowledged that rural contexts and schools are diverse and complex, and present challenges for teaching and learning, as well as understanding the needs of teachers and learners. In order to understand the nature of teaching and learning in rural schools, it is crucial for researchers to address systemic challenges such as socio-political and socio-economic contexts that complicate real transformation in rural schools and classrooms (Balfour, Mitchell & Moletsane, 2008). This could be done by conducting research with teachers, not only to understand their meaning of learning and teaching and pedagogical approaches in English poetry and short story lessons, but also other related challenges in Acornhoek.

¹Learning and teaching during apartheid society emphasised procedural skills and indoctrination of the Afrikaner ideology. In the democratic society learning and teaching shifted to teachers facilitating everyday knowledge of the learners and promoting "learner-centeredness and co-operative learning" (Hoadley, 2010, p. 149).

This study believes that teachers can provide important information about their beliefs, meanings and experiences of learning and teaching in rural Acornhoek schools. It therefore appears that the way a teacher conceptualises learning and teaching could play a role in the way teaching and interactions with learners in the classroom take place. This study is important as it will help understand teachers' conscious or unconscious beliefs about learning and teaching in rural high schools, because they could possibly shape their pedagogical practices in the classroom.

1.3 Statement of the Problem

Teaching English is one of the important aspects, specifically in rural and farm schools, because it shapes the understanding, or lack thereof, of content and performances in other subjects. Hlatshwayo (2000, p.15) explains that before the democratic elections the government “confined the black child’s encounter with English to the classroom with teachers, themselves products of deprived learning experiences”, with little gained knowledge of teaching methods or competence in English from training colleges. The damage incurred by teachers during the apartheid regime has left some teachers lacking the linguistic proficiency, as they were taught by second language speakers (Mgqwashu, 2007). If this is the case, it is important to conduct research with rural Acornhoek English First Additional language teachers, because some of them were possibly trained during the apartheid era. According to Uys, van der Walt, van den Berg and Botha (2007), English teachers play an important role in helping learners gain proficiency in knowledge and skills required to read, write and speak English. However, the lack of proper teacher training in English before 1994 has had an effect on learners’ acquisition of English, even after the introduction of a different progressive curriculum in South Africa (Hoadley, 2012; Mgqwashu, 2007). This makes it imperative to continuously conduct research with teachers to gain an insight into their experiences of teaching English, in particular as some universities do not train teachers as EFAL teachers (Singh, 2010).

If this is the case, it is possible that some teachers were exposed to ‘under-training’ in English content and methodology. Actually, it is not only about understanding teachers’ conceptions of learning and teaching, but also whether they are aware of

the nature of English as a discipline and their reflection (or lack thereof) on pedagogical choices and practices during learning and teaching of poetry and short story lessons. As mentioned earlier, the importance of focusing on English as a subject and also as the language of learning and teaching is due to South African learners' continuous poor performance in international and regional language, mathematical, and science tests. For example, the 1995 TIMSS and the 1999 TIMSS-R placed South African learners at 44% below the mean scores of participating countries (Chisholm, 2004; Soudien 2007). The Annual National Assessments of 2012 to 2014 suggest that learner performance in English as a First Additional Language had not improved much for grades 4, 6 and 9. The national average for English as a FAL for grade 9 learners in 2012 was 35%, in 2013 the average dropped to 33% (Report on the Annual National Assessment, 2014, p. 63). The recent Report on the Annual National Assessments of 2014 (Department of Basic Education, 2014) states that performance in First Additional Level in all grades has remained on the lower side with the national average ranging from 34% in grade 9. The average percentage mark in Grade 9 First Additional Language for Mpumalanga from 2012 to 2014 ranged from 37.4% in 2012, 35.4% in 2013 and 34.2% in 2014 (Report on the Annual National Assessment, 2014, p. 63).

Although there might be reasons for learners' poor performance in English, the continuing challenges possibly point to the need for research with teachers. While I was searching for literature on teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching, particularly English First Additional Language teachers in rural high schools, I noticed that little research has been done in South Africa and Africa as a continent. This research gap shaped the conceptualizations and focus of this study, especially when Loughran (2010) states that it is important to understand teachers' awareness of the relationship that exists between learning and teaching as interrelated concepts rather than as separate concepts.

1.4 Rationale of the Study

This study was conceived because of the assumptions that if teachers are aware of their conceptions of learning and teaching, they could begin to reflect, modify and restructure how they teach English as a subject. They could also be aware of the

possible relationship between conceptions and pedagogical approaches in a classroom, considering that there is little existing research on this relationship. While Grade 10 is the beginning of the FET phase and a crucial stage in learners' lives as they are introduced to new content in addition to existing one, Grade 11 is also the beginning of the consolidation of grade 12 content and prepares learners to grasp abstract concepts in preparation for their grade 12 final examination. It was therefore important for me to engage with teachers who teach these grades, to make sense of how they think of learning and teaching because they might shape learners' engagement with tasks and learning. In addition, this study is shaped by the assumption that rural contexts could provide rich information and knowledge about the quality of education currently existing, and what is needed in order to enhance learning and teaching.

Although issues of learning and teaching in rural schools exist on an international and regional scales. At an international scale particularly in Australia there seems to be issues with regards to poor staffing and retention of quality and qualified teachers in rural and remote schools (Sharplin, 2012). Alternatively at a regional level in Zimbabwe rural schools are located in sparsely populated areas with lack of teaching and learning resources, and access to basic facilities and structural resources such as electricity and water (Mukeredzi, 2013). Despite the above issues experienced on an international and regional scale it is of interest to understand the extent of some of these issues in a South African context as well as how teachers exercise their agency regardless of challenges dominant in rural contexts.

When I was a teacher I used to wonder how learners learn and how teachers can adapt or modify their pedagogical practices to correlate with the way diverse learners learn. The underlying assumption is that through understanding teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching as a former language teacher and curriculum researcher I will be able to present an informed understanding of the issues concerning learner performance, and the quality of education in rural Acornhoek schools. As an emerging researcher in the field of rural education I am in a position to academically interrogate and problematize the nuances embedded in rural school and it from this positionality that this research can be a lens at which more insight is gained about what is happening in rural Acornhoek schools. The research is aimed

at developing intervention programme with teachers while doing PhD within a project, to work with the in-service teachers in Acornhoek on issues of learning and teaching they have identified as crucial and needing assistance. The research attempts to explicate some of these issues and identify areas of immediate concern for the teachers working in rural schools, considering the lack of research that exists in understanding teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching and pedagogic practices.

1.5 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the current study is threefold: firstly to critically interrogate English First Additional Language rural teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in Acornhoek high schools, Mpumalanga Province. Secondly, to explore whether teachers' conceptions influence their teaching of poetry and short stories. Lastly, the study also seeks to examine and problematize teachers' understanding of the nature of English as a discipline in rural schools.

1.6 Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study can be summarised as follows:

1. To interrogate Grades 10 and 11 English First Additional Language teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in rural Mpumalanga schools.
2. To explore factors that shape teachers' conceptions.
3. To explore whether and how teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching influence their teaching approaches during English poetry and short story lessons.

1.7 Research Questions

In order to achieve the research aim and objectives mentioned above, it is important to have appropriate guiding questions.

1.7.1 Main research question:

What are grade 10 and 11 First Additional English teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in Acornhoek secondary schools, rural Mpumalanga Province?

1.7.2 Sub-questions

1. What shapes teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching?
2. How do teachers' conceptions influence teaching approaches, if at all, during English poetry and short story lessons?

1.8 Conclusion

As indicated in this chapter, the introduction and background of the study has been discussed and it provides the rationale and premises of why conducting a study in teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching is important, particularly in rural South African schools. Furthermore, chapter one highlights some of the crucial areas that have little research in South Africa and Africa such as how teachers in rural schools understand the learning and teaching of English, especially with regards to poetry and short stories. Thus the succeeding chapter elaborates on these premises, synthesizes and identifies literature that has or has not been written on teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching, on the understanding of rurality and rural development in South Africa and the development of English as a First Additional Language in South Africa.

1.9 Structure of the Dissertation

CHAPTER ONE: This chapter outlines the introduction and background of the study including crucial information on the rationale and the problem the study is investigating.

CHAPTER TWO: Chapter two presents details of the literature review that focuses on understanding the meaning of the word conceptions', conceptions of learning and teaching, and meanings of pedagogy, English as a first additional language from a South African perspective as well as the development of rural education. This

chapter also discusses conceptions of learning and teaching from different authors as the analytical tools for understanding teachers' meanings.

CHAPTER THREE: This concentrates on providing a detailed and comprehensive discussion on the conceptual framework of the study. The conceptual framework in this study serves as an analytical lens for understanding how teachers' conceptions can influence their pedagogical practices during the teaching of English.

CHAPTER FOUR: With the title of the study in mind, this chapter outlines the methodology and research approach of the study, and discusses the reasons for choosing a particular methodology and methods. The chapter further provides details on the sampling strategy and the justification of the chosen sample, ethical considerations and research methods.

CHAPTER FIVE: Chapter five provides a discussion on the data analysis and findings of the study. The chapter integrates the data findings and the discussion using the conceptual frameworks, for a more robust and critical engagement with the findings that have emerged in the study.

CHAPTER SIX: It is the final chapter of the study and it discusses the recommendations and conclude the study, based on the findings that were discussed in chapter five.

CHAPTER TWO

Reviewing literature on rural teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching English First Additional Language

2.1 Introduction

The aim of the study is to research grade 10 and 11 First Additional English rural teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in Acornhoek schools, Mpumalanga Province. This chapter synthesises literature that exists on First Additional English teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching within rural contexts, and also debates the teaching strategies. It is through the synthesis that I can critically engage scholastically and locate my study in the various debates about the topic. Furthermore, it is from the discussion below that conceptual frameworks for the study are identified and discussed in chapter three.

The first section of the chapter provides a background on the quality and development of education in rural South African contexts. The quality of education, as mentioned in chapter one, is influenced and determined by the context in which a school is situated. The second section reviews literature and research on the development of English as a First Additional language in South Africa, particularly in rural contexts. The third section of the chapter addresses research and literature on teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in general. The last section of the literature review focuses on the spectrum of pedagogic practices in teaching, and also examines possible pedagogic practices that may transcend the teacher-centred and learner-centred binaries. It is through reviewing literature in the four abovementioned sections that conceptual frameworks for the study are developed, and discussed in detail in chapter three.

2.2 Rural Education and Development in South Africa

South Africa pre-1994 was under the leadership of a “highly segregated system of apartheid” (Hoadley, 2010, p. 144). According to Gardiner (2008) and Carrim (2006) the education system was further segregated according to race and language, with funding for resources being allocated to white people. One of the most distressing marks created by the apartheid system is that rural areas in South Africa were left in miserable and negative conditions, as these were former homelands isolated from big towns and cities (Gardiner, 2008). However it is startling that nearly 22 years after the first democratic elections rural areas still have not improved much (Balfour, Mitchell & Moletsane, 2008). The lack of improvement in rural areas is an indication that initiatives that are meant to bring social change have failed to address the systematic challenges such as poverty, poor quality education and sustainable development. Instead such initiatives have perpetuated ideologies that rural contexts are poor, old-fashioned and miserable (Gardiner, 2008; and Balfour et al., 2008), representing a deficit model.

In South Africa the flawed initiatives began post-1994 when government focused on instilling democratic changes and values, resulting in various policy documents advocating that all learners in South Africa have “access to same quality of learning and teaching” including equal educational opportunities (Gardiner, 2008, p. 7; The Millennium Development Goals Report, 2014; Education for All Global Monitoring Report, 2014). The problem with the above statement is that it overlooks the contextual differences between urban, township, rural and farm areas, because these contexts are governed by the same curriculum, same conditions of service, and national legislation, it’s a ‘one size fits all’ initiative (Howley, 1997). This proposal is also shortsighted because the urban middle class continues to achieve academically and compete in the global market, while those who reside in townships have better opportunities as compared to rural and farm areas that are still marginalised. In order to make an informed analysis of the rural areas, access to resources is critical in understanding the community or individuals who reside within these contexts (Balfour et al., 2008).

The general belief is that urban areas and schools are well resourced, have better infrastructures and are within city centres (Gardiner, 2008), with different opportunities. Meanwhile the definition of rural and farm areas and schools, from a South African perspective, is closely linked to structures that depict conditions of “oppression, deprivation, disadvantage and deficit” (Department of Education, 2005, p. 8). It is often from such definitions that urban, rural, and farm areas are compared, creating a strong dichotomy between the areas, with rural and farm areas being subjected to scrutinising initiatives from both international and local bodies (Masinire, Maringe & Nkambule, 2014). When rural schools are viewed as deficient settings, the tendency is to lack the insight of understanding the agency, diversity, and challenges that exist within each school. Thus for this research, rural is defined as “a space that sustains human existence and development outside the jurisdiction of metropolitan town authority” (Maringe et al., 2014, p. 148), for the purpose of understanding teachers’ experiences and existence. In addition to the above definition, rural can be understood “...in terms of its dispersion from three dynamic variables available to address its challenges, which are forces, agencies, and resources” (Balfour et al., 2008, p. 103). The definition by Balfour et al. (2008) moves away from comparing rurality with notions of cosmopolitan, but focuses on the three above mentioned variables, which concentrate on what is happening in rural areas as unique and independent settings. Forces focus on how rural life is a product of space and time, because individuals in rural areas often seek work elsewhere, however they return to their communities to bring knowledge and skills. Agencies regulate both space and time and refer to dispositions that an individual possess to transform, to leave or to intervene. Resources refer to material and emotional resources that are utilised and made available to the agents in the communities (Balfour et al., 2008).

The reason my study focuses on rural schools is to recognise the agency of the teachers in rural communities, and harness the assets available in the community to bring about social change and transformation in particular schools (Moletsane, 2012). However in order to achieve social change and transformation, a better understanding of rurality and rural education needs to be explored. Although post-1994 the ANC government’s aim was to reform and review the education system, schools in rural areas remained under-resourced, engulfed in poverty and poorly

developed (Gardiner, 2008; Masinire, Maringe, & Nkambule, 2014). The above does not overlook the damage created by apartheid ideology, in that there was a lack of quality teachers in the majority of black schools. However, even post-1994 the difficulties of attaining qualified teachers is still a challenge, especially in rural areas (Islam, 2012). Even now, the gap between urban and rural schools remains wide causing more discrepancies in the two contexts, despite various interventions programmes and policies implemented by the government such as the Ministerial Committee on Rural Education (MCRE) set up in 2004 (Masinire et al., 2014). As a result, government policies tend to focus on the view that a solution to rural education problems is through redressing past inequalities, overlooking that challenges of learning and teaching are not only an issue of past inequalities but of dominant characteristics of rural communities such as poverty and poor teacher training.

These programmes fail to recognise that strategies that mainly focus on allocating funds to resolve issues in rural education, undermine the role of agency of the individuals within rural communities. Rural communities are spaces abundant with “untapped cultural and indigenous knowledge systems” that can inform educational discourses and teacher training programmes (Masinire et al., 2014). For this study, to gain insight and tap into this knowledge systems it becomes important to work with teachers to have first-hand experience of the nature of the schools in this context. Thus being able to create sustainable rural education becomes imperative, in order to achieve rural development, particularly if issues of learning and teaching are to be addressed. One of the ways to create sustainable rural education is through researching with teachers in order to understand the conceptions they hold of learning and teaching, the factors that shape them, and also whether and how they shape teachers’ pedagogical choices in rural contexts. The next section explores how English as a First Additional Language has developed in South Africa and why research in this area is vital.

2.3 English First Additional Language in South Africa

As mentioned above, this section discusses how English First Additional Language (EFAL) has developed in South Africa, from pre-1994 to post-1994. In order to understand how learning and teaching of English First Additional Language (EFAL) was established in South Africa, it is important to engage with the historical background of English becoming the language of learning and teaching (Mgqwashu, 2007). Until the early 18th century the main language of instruction in South Africa was Afrikaans, however when the British took over from the Dutch colonisers, English was legitimated as the main official language (Mgqwashu, 2007; Msila, 2007). It was through the Smut's Education Act that English was legitimised to be a compulsory subject in schools (Mgqwashu, 2007; Msila, 2007). The reason was to use education as a means to spread their language and traditions to gain social control (Msila, 2007).

Prior to the introduction of the Bantu Education Act of 1953, black learners who attended mission schools were taught by home language speakers from Britain, and thus had first-hand experience with the English language (Clarence-Fincham, 1998, as cited in Mgqwashu, 2007). However the apartheid government was unhappy as this meant that black learners would be educated and revolt against the unjust apartheid system (Msila, 2007), because English was long associated with power. This resulted in the introduction of the Bantu Education Act of 1953 (later changed to Education and Training Act of 1978) and caused major issues in the learning and teaching of English, because teachers who taught English in Bantu schools lacked competence in the subject (Clarence-Fincham, 1998, as cited in Mgqwashu, 2007). According to Hoadley (2010), the teachers in "black' schools were issued with a strict syllabus and teacher manuals" in English, and they were closely monitored to ensure they adhered to the prescribed curriculum (p. 18). The training that black teachers received during this period has had some consequences that are still prevalent currently in the learning and teaching of English. Especially if learners' continuing poor performance in English in different tests, internationally and locally.

Considering the discussion above, the first democratic government focused on changing the education system and reviewed the apartheid government curriculum,

which was an oppressive education. It perpetuated practices that maintained the status quo and preserved the “master-servant relationship between the Africans and the white citizens” (Msila, 2007, p. 149). The first curriculum reform, C2005, was the radical shift that aimed at fostering human rights, democratic ideologies and re-inserting South Africa into the global context (Hoadley, 2010). Some of the educational changes that were implemented were to give in-service teachers autonomy over their teaching, and the erosion of a number of educational boundaries. Some of these boundaries entailed weak classification between education and training, and vertical and horizontal discourses between different subjects (Bernstein, 1971). However this was problematic as teachers lacked the competences to progress learners towards vertical knowledge. This resulted in a pedagogical shift from a powerful and imposing teacher of pre-1994 to the teacher² who could facilitate the everyday knowledge of the learners and promote “learner-centredness, co-operative learning”, outcomes-based teaching and a skills orientated curriculum (Hoadley, 2010, p. 149). These changes happened in all schools irrespective of context, although it is unclear of the changes, if any, that happened in rural and farms schools. As mentioned in the previous section, learner-centred approaches to teaching failed, resulting in teachers moving between teacher-centred approaches and learner-centred approaches, possibly creating hybrid teaching methods (Brodie, Lelliott & Davis, 2002). Despite all these changes, English remained the dominant medium of instruction, irrespective of research proving that learners were doing poorly in the subject (MacDonald, 1990; Hoadley, 2012; Uys, van der Walt, van den Berg & Botha, 2007), considering their diverse home languages.

According to policy documents, Home Language (HL) is the language first acquired by learners, and the First Additional language (FAL) is the language learners learn in addition to their HL (CAPS, 2011), that is English in this study. When EFAL is the language of learning and teaching the proficiency levels include proficiency in “abstract cognitive and academic language skills” in order to develop thinking and learning (DoE, 2002, as cited in Uys et al., 2007, p. 69). To illustrate the importance of learners gaining proficiency in EFAL both as a language of learning and teaching,

² Now termed an educator

Vygotsky's writings on language are crucial. They provide a framework to understand how language develops for individuals. Central to Vygotsky's theory is to connect the social and historical processes and the individual's mental processes. According to Wertsch (2007, p. 178), humans have the capacity to "internalise forms of mediation provided by particular cultural, historical, and institutional forces". This means people's mental functionings are situated and determined by their social world. However this contact between individuals and the world is not direct, but is mediated through the use of specific signs and tools, and one such tool is the use of language. For most South African learners it includes the English language, in addition to their mother tongues, and they have to use English to make meaning of their learning.

Of concern is that in 2014 learners continued to perform poorly in English, particularly in standardised international, regional and local tests. In a study by MacDonald (1990, as cited in Hoadley, 2012, p. 189), the research found that grade 5 learners knew only 700 words in English while the recommended number of words was 7000. The learners lacked the linguistic structure needed to make meaning of what they read, which presumably means they lacked the understanding of English language. According to Fleisch (2008, as cited in Hoadley, 2012), English as a language of instruction affects different social class groups differently, and widens the gap between those in rural, farm and urban areas, addressing issues of social class. The social class of the learners, according to Fleisch (2008, as cited in Hoadley, 2012), needs to be taken into account as this plays a role in how learners make sense of the content presented to them. Uys et al. (2007) argue that teachers who teach English play a vital role in providing learners with the knowledge and skills required to read, write, speak and listen; however, all teachers have a responsibility to improve literacy in all content-based subjects in addition to English. Considering the marginalisation of rural education and schools, it is important to gain an insight into rural teachers' conceptions and awareness, or lack thereof, of the nature of English as a discipline, particularly in the learning and teaching of poetry and short stories. In order to gain the above insight, literature on the conceptions of learning needs to be interrogated, especially if teachers are to be aware of their pedagogical choices in poetry and short story lessons.

2.4 Understanding Conceptions of Learning

Defining learning, as with the meaning of the word conceptions, is complex as there is no measure to 'accurately' evaluate whether learning has or has not been achieved. Regardless of some of this complexity, the perspectives and positions researchers and educational writers adopt to define learning locates them in a particular school of thought. In educational research the definitions of learning vary immensely, from those closely related to behaviourist theory, to those closely linked to critical pedagogy. The intention of this section is not to review literature on all these perspectives, however the focus is on three perspectives that are considered relevant and interrelated for this study, namely psychological, educational and social perspectives and their related learning theories. The discussion covers how each learning theory views or understands learning and how these views have been contested as the society progresses. It is important to locate the study within and between different perspectives, in order to address the main research question and the sub-questions as stipulated in chapter one.

2.4.1 Psychological Perspective of Learning

The psychological perspective is extensive in its discussion as it attempts to outline and detail the history of learning and the influence of psychology in the education sector. In most literature written within the psychological perspective there are two broad psychological families of learning theories, namely, the "behaviouristic family of stimulus-response conditioning theories and the Gestalt-field family of cognitive theories" (Bigge, 1982, p. 9). This section discusses the behaviourist theories first, followed by cognitivist theories. Although the two psychological families are shaped by different school of thoughts, some similarities and relationships between them will also be discussed.

From the behaviourist perspective, learning is defined as a means of change in observable behaviour, which links with the conception of learning as personal change in attitudes, beliefs and behaviour. (Franz et al., 1996, in Dahlgren et al., 2006, p. 8). Thus learning is the process in which the stimuli (the causes of learning, environmental agents) and responses (physical reactions of an organism) become related. Watson (1948, p. 457) states that the goal of psychology is the "prediction

and control of behaviour”, making psychology favourable to some educational researchers because teachers can be provided with tools to control and evaluate learners’ behaviour. In relation to the development of learning theories, B.F. Skinner is the first behavioural psychologist who developed the behaviourist theory of learning, arguing that learning is achieved through an accumulation of “atomized bits of knowledge” (Shepard, 2000, p. 5). Learning from a behaviourist perspective is strongly sequenced and hierarchical, and each objective or outcome is explicitly taught by the teacher.

While behaviourists and cognitivists are shaped by different schools of thought, there are some similarities. For example social cognitivists argue that elementary mental functions at the bottom of the hierarchy depend on the stimuli directly from the environment (Hasan, 1995). Higher mental functions are a result of self-generated stimuli which the learner achieves through the process of mediation, a “shift of control from the environment to the individual” (Hasan, 1995, p. 175). The purpose of highlighting these similarities between behaviourism and social constructivism is to show that learning is structured and occurs hierarchically, and that this view of learning is not limited to the behaviourist theory of learning but is also relevant in other perspectives of learning. I also acknowledge that the intentions of the theories are different. For Skinner (1964, 1968), the reason for learning to be sequenced and hierarchical is to change learner’s behaviour to the desired outcome. This means that one behaviour leads to another behaviour, as it is positively or negatively reinforced by the teacher until the desired behaviour is achieved. Learners are taught for a particular social role based on their capabilities which are objectively determined by tests that ensure each behaviour is mastered before proceeding to the next (Shepard, 2000). It appears like there are some features between this perspective and the apartheid ideology in education, which was designed to ‘produce’ particular behaviours, ideologies, and products. This kind of perspective to teaching and learning was taught to teachers in teacher training colleges, and most of these teachers are still teaching hence post – 1994 pedagogical reforms shaped by curriculum reforms.

This the means that in South Africa, given that a number of teachers were educated and trained during the apartheid system with a particular curriculum and behavioural

ideologies, there is a possibility that some teachers' conceptions of learning might be shaped by a behaviouristic ideology, promoting reproduction and regurgitation of knowledge. The problem with Skinner's ideology is the failure to acknowledge that learners come with pre-existing knowledge and that they are not a "black box" waiting to be filled with knowledge. In behavioural psychology, humans are perceived as not having a conscious mind but are rather viewed as passive leading to learners recalling knowledge (Shepard, 2000; Piaget, 1964). Skinner and other behaviour theorists overlooked that in education learners go to school with their own experiences (stimulus), and not all learners learn and respond in the same way (Heather, 1976).

This way of teaching and learning was popular during apartheid in South Africa, especially in Black African schools, a reason learning and teaching was changed post-apartheid. While in this issue, it is of concern that most research has been done with teachers and learners in Black African schools, and little is known of the existing practices and nature of teaching and learning in other racial schools, especially White schools as perceived to be providing 'quality education'. This is a research for future, so that research is not unidirectional but multidirectional. Continuing with the original discussion, Heather (1976) argues against the mechanistic approach of behavioural psychology because humans come with their own unique actions, thoughts, language and social norms of the culture that surrounds them. This links with the learner-centred approach of Curriculum 2005 (C2005), which recognized learners' socio-cultural backgrounds. While this approach makes sense, it was not easy to implement in South Africa because some teachers were used to behaviourist perspectives on teaching and learning. The above passive approach on learning led to a revolution known as the cognitive revolution, which reintroduced the concept of the mind back into learning (Shepard, 2000; Wilson & Peterson, 2006).

The cognitivists such as Chomsky and Heather brought the mind back to the learning process, a concept ignored previously by behaviourist theorists (Wilson & Peterson, 2006). The cognitivists led to the development of learning theories such as information processing theories, brain science learning theories, cognitive learning theories and multiple intelligences theories. The shift entailed seeing learners as being active constructors of knowledge, interacting with the environment and making

meaning while reading, or speaking (Moll, Bradbury, & Winkler, 2002; Wilson & Peterson, 2006). This is known as constructivism. This links with the ideology of C2005 and National Curriculum Statement (NCS), which were introduced to redress inequality, teacher dependent learning, and rote learning, and promoted teachers to encourage learners to participate in the process of knowledge construction, critical thinking, and meaning making. While the curriculum reforms happened nationally, it is unclear whether teachers in the nine provinces, especially in rural and farm schools, implemented the objectives of the reforms. This could be demonstrated by learners' ongoing poor performance in international and local tests, in specific subjects, which show challenges, which could be linked with teachers' pedagogical practices and content knowledge, learners' understanding of content and approaches to learning tasks, and the learning context. Thus constructivism focuses on a learner's ability to mentally construct meaning of their own environment and to create their own learning - a strong critique of the behaviourist learning theories that advocated that the learner lacks the ability to mentally construct knowledge (Forrester & Jantzie, 1998).

According to Fosnot (as cited in Yilmaz, 2008, p. 165), constructivist learning is "a self-regulatory process of struggling with the conflict between existing personal models of the world and...new insights..." Furthermore this process requires the learner to re-organize and reformulate previous conceptions of the world and make new ones (Fosnot, 1996). Although this is important in all grades, it is most important in grades 10 and 11 because teachers' pedagogical choices should help learners' engagement with tasks which show higher cognitive development. However, for this to happen it is important to firstly understand teachers' and learners' conceptions of teaching and learning, although this study only focuses on teachers.

A prominent cognitive constructivist theorist is Piaget who states that development and learning are two distinct processes, with "the development of knowledge..." being a "...spontaneous process, tied to the process of embryogenesis" (Piaget, 1964, p. 20). This means that the development of knowledge is embodied with the whole body as the individual grows, and development explains learning or precedes learning. This means that for an individual to show evidence of learning, certain mental structures need to be developed first. Piaget (1964) named these mental

structures 'operations', that is "...an interiorized action which modifies the object of knowledge" (p. 20). As a result, what a learner learns is dependent on the level of operational development and understanding (Lourenço, 2012). It is because of these operations that individuals are able to classify or put things in a series and be able to transform their understanding through a set of actions, since it is difficult to see what is in the mind. According to Piaget, learning becomes an internal process which can be judged through the workings of an operation, as this is the only way to observe the development, or lack thereof, of the mind. Thus for Piaget learning must be left in the hands of the learner to discover and try making meaning by themselves, however this does not mean that the learner cannot participate and engage with others as previously assumed (Crain, 1992).

It appears that for Piaget, learning should not be structured, sequenced, and organized hierarchically but that learners need to learn without being constrained by structure or sequence. Piaget does not necessarily disregard the teacher's role in the development of the learner, however he is strongly critical of the "teacher-directed instruction" because teachers tend to present school knowledge at a level beyond the learner's current developmental stage (Crain, 1992, p. 211). This form of teaching is based on behavioural ideologies and according to Piaget it might lead to learners' rote-learning and memorizing what they are told by the teacher, without fully understanding and making meaning of the concepts presented. This might possibly be a reason why behaviourist learning theories are still prevalent in education because they have observable outcomes and the teacher is involved in the learning process. Thus if a teacher behaves in a certain way learners might also behave in that way, as behaviourism is based on changing the behaviour of individuals (Wilson & Peterson, 2006). As a result this constrains the learner's development of concepts taught (Crain, 1992). In South Africa, C2005 was such a curriculum that fostered some of Piaget's ideas about learning. C2005 provided a pedagogical shift from a powerful and imposing teacher of pre-1994 to the teacher³ that could facilitate the everyday knowledge of the learners and promote "learner-centredness and co-operative learning" (Hoadley, 2010, p. 149). According to Jansen (2001, p. 243), the "teacher would disappear in a classroom plan where

³ Now termed an educator

learners and learning became the central focus of policy change under the new curriculum”, for learners to ‘take ownership’ of their learning.

It is important to note that although there has been a shift from behaviourism to constructivist theories in educational theory, behavioural theories are still dominant in the classroom. However, constructivist theories of learning have remained favoured by policy makers and researchers as they allow for individual differences to be recognized. Cognitive constructivist theories such as Piaget, on the other hand, have been criticised for undermining other influences that might be essential to the process of learning such as the socio-cultural setting of the learner (Crain, 1992; Yilmaz, 2008). Constructivist theories have currently become known to offer a more concrete definition of learning, and various forms of constructivism have emerged to integrate varying views, whereby both individual ways of learning and social ways of learning are recognized. Similar to the behaviourist perspective, it is of interest to find out if teachers in South Africa hold any constructivist views of learning and the variants they have adapted, particularly those trained during the introduction of C2005. Closely related to the cognitive constructivist view is the social perspective of learning, which is grounded on the notion of connecting the social and historical processes in the world with the individual’s mental processes.

2.4.2 Social Perspective of Learning

The social perspective of learning is one variation of constructivism that has challenged some of the ideas developed by cognitive constructivists. Vygotsky is one such theorist who viewed the development of an individual as dependent on others, and that the process of development is through social interactions with others. In this perspective individual activities are rooted in cultural settings and are mediated by tools and signs that are socially constructed (Lourenço, 2012; John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996). Considering this statement, it seems that curriculum design should not be a straight-jacket but should consider different contexts that represent different socio-cultural, economic, and historical contexts. However, other people might argue that it is the teachers’ responsibility to implement the same curriculum in their context, making this discussion complex because it is not as easy as being said with the implementation of curriculum. I think there are some factors that make the

implementation process difficult because each context has its own complexities, considering learner's cultural development, as mentioned in chapter one.

The cultural development of the learner happens in two stages: firstly, the natural line of development, which is the biogenetic foundation, and secondly, at the social level which is based on the sociogenetic foundation (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996; Hasan, 1995). According to Vygotsky, elementary mental functions of the mind are responsible for the earliest forms of memory and concepts, however they are not sufficient to develop human cognition as they are individually formed (Hasan, 1995). It is because of this limitation in the biogenetic foundation that Vygotsky attests to the need to develop higher mental functions which are realised through "social interactions with an acculturated other" (Hasan, 1995, p. 174). This means Vygotsky's approach to learning and development is based on taking note of the learner's socio-cultural context, as it plays a crucial role in how a learner learns and develops higher mental functions. This is a crucial point to note and it disputes previously mentioned claims that Vygotsky ignores the individual, and only views development and learning solely from a social perspective (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996).

For Vygotsky, knowledge is not internalized immediately, but it is through the use of "semiotic mechanisms" (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996, p. 193), which is the basis for all the knowledge co-construction. Semiotic mediation includes the use of various socially constructed tools and signs, such as language, speech, maps and works of art such as painting (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996). It is through the use of some of these mechanisms that a learner can connect the external social world with the internal mental structures. It is this aspect of Vygotsky's theory that education finds its base, and for this study this aspect addresses the assumption that teachers in rural schools might hold unique conceptions of learning which are shaped by their social context. For Vygotsky, the development of a learner's knowledge becomes a representation of the shared knowledge of a particular culture, and the learners make sense of this knowledge through a process of internalization (Loughran, 2010). Internalization is similar to Piaget's concept of self-regulation, where a learner takes the knowledge they have learned in social interactions and transforms it into an internal mental process. For Vygotsky, internalization can be understood better by

reference to the zone of proximal development, which is the gap between what a learner currently knows and what they can know with the assistance of someone more knowledgeable (Crain, 1992). As much as a teacher cannot prescribe the curriculum, the teacher is responsible for prompting learners and designing activities that will help them understand the concepts to a point of doing the activities without any assistance. When a learner can perform tasks and activities without the teacher's assistance, it is then that they have internalised the knowledge.

It is within the zone of proximal development that Vygotsky differs from Piaget's and Skinner's theories. Unlike Piaget, although the teacher does not prescribe to a strict curriculum, they still assist when learners encounter problems. Similar to Skinner, the teacher is an important aspect of the learning process. However for Vygotsky, the teacher does not impose the activities on the learner but works with the learners to design appropriate activities, which might have been the intentions of curriculum 2005. It is because of social interaction and learning through someone more knowledgeable that the social perspective of learning is important in this study, especially in rural classrooms where overcrowding and a lack of learning resources are prevalent. Of interest for this study is to observe how teachers in rural schools use social interactions, context and activities to help learners reach higher mental functions in poetry and short story lessons.

As a result of Vygotsky's theory of sociocultural constructivism, other theories have emerged, in particular situated cognition, which develops Vygotsky's concepts further by analysing learning within communities of practice and situated learning. According to Lave (1991, p. 65), learning is not about socially shared cognition, but it is a process of one becoming a member of a "...sustained community of practice". Learning is about one forming an identity as a member of a community and gaining knowledge and skills while participating in that community (Lave, 1991). It would be interesting for this study to find out if any of the teachers' conceptions of learning are that of a community of practice and if they identify themselves as a member of the community. For Brown, Collins and Duguid (1989), learning is based on construction of knowledge through active participation rather than engaging in learning activities, and they believe that learning and cognition are situated and context bound. For this study this means that the knowledge that learners are taught might be strongly

influenced by their teacher and the context which is rurality, making place-based curriculum and teaching important to research. It is possibly within this learning theory that marginalized contexts such as rural and farm schools could benefit from such learning, because learners individually or with the teacher might form communities of practices in their grade 10 and 11 classes where they work at building knowledge in poetry and short stories, to link with the modern world. Particularly given the shortage of reading material in rural schools, this form of learning will help learners gain knowledge in areas they are not competent by observing and participating in poetry and short story community of practices.

2.4.3 Educational Perspective of Learning

The educational perspective of learning is underpinned by psychological ideologies which can provide teachers and educational researchers with a language they can use to discuss practical issues relating to education. The popularity of educational psychology is the theories of learning that derived from the results investigated and collected in classrooms, as well as explaining concepts observed within a classroom setting in order to inform learning and teaching (Entwistle, 1988). In addition, schools and teachers can also create the spaces and classroom settings for learners to learn how to “resolve practical, moral and social problems through joint activities and collective decision-making”, relating to socio-cultural theory (Carr, 1998, p. 335; Lave, 1991). In relation to this study this means that the context of a school is important in identifying and understanding challenges and solutions affecting learning and teaching in rural context. Hence understanding teachers’ conceptions of learning and teaching in rural schools might provide insight into education, especially teaching and learning in such contexts. Thus the educational perspective of learning is shaped by both the psychological and social perspectives of learning. According to Schunk (2011), educational practices and learning theories complement each other, because theories found in psychology provide a framework when making educational decisions.

According to Schunk (2011), educational practice influences theories of learning and provides a lens to modify theories when what is researched conflicts with what practitioners’ experience. Prior to the first cognitive revolution, theories of learning

did not take into account various factors that affect school learning, until cognitive psychologists during the rise of Piagetian theories began to “study school content, personal and situational factors” (Schunk, 2011, p. 21). Thus learning according to the educational perspective is grounded in various theories of learning, particularly psychological learning theories as they are prominent. However, what is unique with the educational perspective of learning is that learning is informed by an integration between theory, research, and practice. Learning in this perspective is about merging different learning principles with research findings in and out of school, in order to make informed educational decisions (Schunk, 2011). The definitions of learning outlined above engage with varying perspectives in developing a working definition of what constitutes learning.

Therefore for the purpose of this study, learning is defined using a mixture of the three perspectives discussed above. For the psychological perspective learning is viewed as a change of individuals’ insights, perceptions or behaviours, which is possibly the purpose of teaching and learning to read word and the world (Freire, 1970). When there is a change of insight and behaviour, individuals form an identity as a member of community or society within particular subjects, in this case English, which means gaining knowledge and skills while participating and engaging in that community, drawing from the social perspective. Since the research also investigates how teachers’ conceptions of learning shape their pedagogical choices, the educational perspective plays a significant role in drawing from educational practices that might influence how individuals learn. Since learning is formulated within the three perspectives of learning, it is important to explore how rural teachers in rural schools perceive learning to be. The above discussion on different perspectives of learning provides a foundational base for exploring different influences and beliefs that teachers might hold of learning. The discussion below synthesizes some of the existing literature on conceptions of learning from different demographic orientations.

2.5 Research on Conceptions of Learning

Given the discussion on what constitutes learning from different perspectives, the move from behaviourism to cognitive theories brought about many changes; one such change was to think of learning as an information processing process. This meant understanding learning as a process of how individuals make sense of information learnt. The most prominent research on understanding how individuals process information was conducted by two theorists, Marton and Saljo, in 1976 (Loughran, 2010). They conducted interviews with adults about what they thought learning was about, and identified five different conceptions, namely:

- a qualitative increase in knowledge,
- memorizing,
- the acquisition of facts and methods for use when necessary,
- the abstraction of meaning,
- an interpretative process aimed at understanding reality.

From these conceptions, Marton and Saljo concluded that students could be categorized into one of two groups: those who processed information by memorizing important facts, and those students who tried to determine the authors' argument and develop some form of understanding from the text. They further labelled the two approaches to processing information as the surface learning approach and deep learning approach respectively. According to Loughran (2010), surface learning is often linked to memorization or rote learning of information, whilst deep learning is often associated with developing understanding and creating meaning from the given information. The above conceptions of learning are often placed hierarchically, and are further organised into two distinct major groups, transforming conceptions of learning and reproducing conceptions of learning (Brown, Lake & Matters, 2008). The individuals who hold transforming conceptions of learning perceive learning as making meaningful connections between new and old ideas and information, similar to Piaget's concepts of assimilation and accommodation. Learning is understood as relating, critical processing of new information, abstracting meaning making, and learning as changing a person. Often transforming conceptions of learning are associated with the deep learning approach (Brown, Lake & Matters, 2008). On the other hand, reproducing conceptions of learning is learning as memorization and

remembering facts and is often connected to the surface learning approach which is usually associated with behaviourist theories of learning. It is important to state that both transforming and reproducing conceptions are important in the process of learning in education, because they play different roles and also in specific subjects (Hugo, 2013; Wang, 2010). As discussed earlier, change of insights, perceptions, and behaviour is encouraged in schools that are transforming, because learners are expected to think differently and critically about the everyday situations in and out of school.

This study also acknowledges that not all memorization of information leads to surface learning, especially if studies in Hong Kong and mainland China are taken into consideration. According to Wang (2010), studies in Hong Kong and mainland China have found that Chinese learners and teachers view memorization and understanding as complementary processes. There is a difference between “mechanical memorization and memorization with understanding” (Wang, 2010, p. 53). Memorization used for understanding is a method that can help learners retain what they have learned as well as achieve deep learning. Thus for whichever approach, the teacher, student, and socio-cultural context play particular roles for these ways of learning to be chosen and to occur. Of importance and related to the current study is that teachers’ conceptions of learning and teaching might shape students’ understanding of learning and their approach to the learning process. The above approaches provide an interesting discussion on whether teachers’ conceptions of learning can possibly shift over time from transformative to reproductive and vice versa, a significant point neither Marton and Saljo (1965) nor Brown, Lake and Matters (2008) seem to have addressed. While this might be the case, Loughran (2010) cautions that it is important to avoid making conclusions that surface learning is bad and deep learning is good. The reason to avoid such a dichotomy is because to monitor and control processes of thinking both forms of learning are necessary, especially if metacognition is to be realized.

The reason the two approaches of learning are discussed above is to move away from the dualism that exists between behavioural forms of learning and the constructivist way of learning. Secondly, it is to discuss how these two approaches led to the development of more research on conceptions of learning, from different

contexts, although little research exists in South Africa. Thirdly, the two approaches provide a baseline analysis of literature written on conceptions of learning, especially on how the context of the study can yield different conceptions for individuals. According to Saljo (1975, in Marton, Hounsell & Entwistle, 1984) the reasons students belong to one of the two groups is because the participants bring with them different perceptions and past experiences regarding the text, and the students have preconceived ideas of what constitutes learning. An understanding of these preconceived ideas that individuals have is of importance in this study, as teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching can be influenced by these ideas and experiences and be transferred to their pedagogical practices, an important aspect not adequately addressed by authors in other research.

In addition to Marton and Saljo's first research on individual conceptions of learning, in later years Marton and his other colleagues (1993, in Dahlgren et al., 2006) established a sixth conception, in addition to the five conceptions, namely learning as change. This sixth conception of learning has been viewed as the most elaborated concept, since it is inclusive of change of attitudes and values, showing that conceptions can change and transform over time and experience. The six conceptions of learning have been the most well corroborated conceptions of learning. Marton and Saljo's conceptions of learning can provide the study with an analytical tool of how teachers conceptualize learning and possibly teaching, and also how the conceptions are a means of reasoning and reflecting on what is transmitted to learners during teaching and learning in English poetry and short story lessons (Cornbleth, 1988).

Furthermore, Dahlgren et al.'s study (2006) analysed existing literature conducted on conceptions of learning. It is from this literature that parallels and similarities are drawn between the different studies in order to show the prominence of Marton and Saljo's conceptions of learning as a framework for all other studies. Two of the studies are detailed below in a table alongside Marton and Saljo's initial conceptions. The first study was conducted by Bruce and Gerber (1995, in Dahlgren et al., 2006) on lecturers' understanding of their undergraduate students' learning; the study resulted in six conceptions of learning being formulated. The second study reviewed was by Franz et al. (1996, in Dahlgren et al., 2006) an interdisciplinary study on

lecturers' and students' conceptions of learning in specific learning and teaching academic faculties. The participants were from different faculties and schools at the Queensland University of Technology, the faculties included Built Environment and Engineering, Health and Caring and Arts and Science. The findings from both lecturers and students were compared and seven conceptions of students were identified which are also represented in the table below (Franz, Ferreira, Loh, Pendergast, Service, Stormont, Taylor, Thambiratnam & Williamsson 1996, in Dahlgren et al. 2006, p. 8). Through analysing the two studies detailed above, I was able to make the following similarities presented in the table below.

Table 1: A comparison of international literature on conceptions of learning with those of Marton and Saljo

Marton and Saljo's conceptions of learning	Bruce and Gerner's conceptions of learning	Franz et al.'s conceptions of learning
A qualitative increase in knowledge	developing the competencies of beginning professionals	
Memorizing		Memorizing, absorbing unit specific content, learning as doing what the teacher expects,
The acquisition of facts and methods for use when necessary	Acquiring knowledge through the use of study skills,	Learning as an object of study.
The abstraction of meaning	The absorption of new knowledge and being able to explain and apply it,	Understanding where the emphasis is on making the information a part of something you can use,
An interpretative process aimed at understanding reality	The development of thinking skills and the ability to reason,	Developing professional competence including the capacity to minimise risk, emphasising performance in real-life practice situations Learning is viewing the world from different perspectives.
Learning as change	Changing personal attitudes, beliefs or behaviours in response to different phenomena	Learning as personal change in attitudes, beliefs and behaviour,
	A participative pedagogic experience	

The table above illustrates the centrality and importance of Marton and Saljo's research on conceptions of learning. Although the other two studies were conducted in different contexts, the results yielded similar findings as those originally found by Marton and Saljo. These are but two studies that have shown the initial five

conceptions by Saljo and have been used to think more deeply about learning (Brown, Lake & Matters, 2008).

Of interest though is that the conceptions of learning and the two approaches stated above have been found to be held by both teachers and students alike. However in the interdisciplinary study by Franz et al., lecturers' and students' conceptions of learning in specific learning contexts were compared and the seventh conception of learning was identified (Franz et al., 1996, in Dahlgren et al. 2006), which is learning as personal change in attitudes, beliefs and behaviour correlating with Marton and Saljo's sixth conception which is leaning as change. In addition, there was one conception of learning that was unique to teaching, the lecturers viewed learning as a "participative pedagogic experience" (Bruce and Gerber, 1995, in Dahlgren et al., 2006, p. 5). This means that the way teachers or lecturers think or conceive of learning has implications on how they understand their classroom practices and assessment choices (Brown, Lake & Matters, 2008). A similar study was also conducted with preschoolers in Sweden by Pramling (1983) and was the only study of this kind to investigate conceptions of learning with children under the age of 7 years. In this study learners' conceptions of learning progressed from the ability of learning to do something, like writing to having the ability to know something like how to answer specific questions and finally being able to understand something such as mathematical operations. Recently, Jaidin (2009) conducted a study with upper primary children in government schools in Brunei Darussalam focusing on their conception of learning, however research of this nature continue to be scarce globally.

In comparison to studies on conceptions from around the globe, finding studies conducted in Africa on conceptions of learners and teachers proved difficult, signifying firstly the importance of researching this area in education and secondly the evidence that there is little research that has been conducted on both learners' and teachers' conceptions of learning. After searching for literature in South Africa with regard to teacher or learner conceptions, the following three studies were reviewed and the findings are detailed in the table below.

The first study, titled *On the operationalisation of conceptions of learning in higher education and their association with students' knowledge and experiences of their learning* is by Meyer and Boulton-Lewis (1999). What is unique about this study is that unlike Marton and Saljo's phenomenological studies on conceptions, this study utilized a quantitative approach to analyse students' conceptions known as the *Reflections on Learning Inventory (RoLI)*. The original study by Meyer (1995, as cited in Meyer & Boulton-Lewis, 1999) comprised pre-service postgraduate diploma and fourth year BEd student-teachers from Australia, a sample of Indonesian postgraduate students and samples of South African second year nursing college students as well as first-year teacher education students from two Technikons. The findings of the study are detailed in the table below and they include variations of learning such as "how learning is known to have occurred, and how it is experienced, influenced and conceived" (Meyer & Boulton-Lewis, 1999, p. 293).

The second study titled *Using phenomenological psychology to analyse distance education students' experiences and conceptions of learning* by Makoe (2008) was selected on the basis that the sample consisted of distance education students from the rural communities. The context of the sample is important for this study as little research has been conducted to understand teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in rural contexts, a crucial component of this research study. The third study selected for review was titled *The loci of learning in focus: a qualitative study of grade 7 students' conceptions of 'school' and 'learning'* by McConnachie (2000). McConnachie's (2000) study was of grade 7 learners from two primary schools, one suburban and the other a township school.

Through analysing the three local studies detailed above, the following similarities and differences are presented below in a table alongside Marton and Saljo's conceptions.

Table 2: A comparison of local literature on conceptions of learning with those of Marton and Saljo

Marton and Saljo's conceptions of learning	Makoe's conceptions of learning	McConnachie's conceptions of learning	Meyer and Boulton-Lewis's conceptions of learning
A qualitative increase in knowledge	Gaining knowledge	Increasing one's knowledge	Knowing as thinking rationally
Memorizing	Contributing to the community	Memorizing and Reproducing	Knowing as thinking independently
The acquisition of facts and methods for use when necessary	Practical application	Learning as Being Taught	Knowing as recalling
The abstraction of meaning	Social interaction	Learning as Reading	Knowing as not knowing
An interpretative process aimed at understanding reality	Improving oneself	Learning and Applying a. Jobs - Learning for Future Employment b. Learning in order to Teach Others	Experienced as rewarding
Learning as change	Skills acquisition		Experienced as being in control
	Active process		Experienced as a duty or obligation
			Influenced by example
			Conceived as accumulation
			Conceived as seeing differently

From the table above there are some similarities between the three studies and some of the findings from Marton and Saljo. Meyer and Boulton-Lewis (1999) found the following data from the first-year teacher education students in South Africa. Similar to Marton and Saljo, Meyer and Boulton-Lewis (1999) found that conceptions of learning can be divided into two categories: accumulative conceptions of learning and transformative conceptions of learning. Accumulative conceptions refer to students' qualitatively understanding information without internalising it. On the other hand, transformative conceptions are when learners reconstruct the knowledge and make meaning for themselves, similar to Piaget's concept of self-regulation.

However a noticeable difference is that Makoe (2008) identified a key conception that is unique where students viewed learning as a contribution to the community, although they were distance learners, because of the belief that learning also

contributes to the community. Learning as a contribution to the community echoes the perspective that education can change society especially rural communities as discussed in chapter one. McConnachie (2000) alternatively identified a different conception from the grade 7 learners where learning is seen to be reading. The three studies from a South African perspective contribute valuable knowledge to the study on conceptions, particularly when conceptions are viewed to be community based and social, an aspect neither Marton nor Saljo have identified in their studies.

Regardless of the numerous studies conducted internationally and locally, the six conceptions of learning by Marton and Saljo provide a framework for both teachers and learners to understand learning, and also to realise that both transforming and reproducing conceptions of learning are important to understand how individuals process information (Brown, Lake & Matters, 2008). Of interest though is that McConnachie (2000) found that both suburban and township learners perceived learning as reproducing knowledge, which often leads to high levels of surface learning. However through further questioning and probing some learners were able to demonstrate deep learning which is transformative and is associated with meaning making, resulting in understanding of information which rests solely on the individual to make sense of and internalise. This change signifies the importance of teachers in the learning process, as shown in the above study, because they assist with learners' self-regulating and internalising information.

For this study, Marton and Saljo's conceptions of learning are a guide to analysing teachers' conceptions of learning in Acornhoek, rural Mpumalanga. It is however unclear in the studies above how the context (except for one), past educational experience and beliefs shape the conceptions, if at all - an important aspect for this study. In addition, there is no discussion on how conceptions can influence pedagogical practices. Although Marton and Saljo's study did not necessarily focus on the influences of these conceptions, it can be assumed that they are possibly shaped by the learning and teaching experiences of teachers, a reason it is important to interrogate teachers' conceptions in relation to pedagogic practices. Furthermore, the lack of research on conceptions in South Africa and Africa is cause for concern, especially when most research is still conducted at university and not at

school level. The following section interrogates conceptions of teaching and whether or not there are similarities or differences with those of learning.

2.6 Understanding Conceptions of Teaching

Given the discussion on learning and conceptions of learning as outlined in the previous sections, this section presents definitions of teaching and the literature on conceptions of teaching. This is to understand whether and how conceptions of teaching are formulated and if they are similar or different to those of learning. Finding a working and objective definition of teaching is complex, and this complexity is complicated when the term 'teaching' is used synonymously with the term 'pedagogy' (Loughran, 2010). It is important for this study to explain both concepts to identify whether or not there is a relationship between the two concepts, as they are both important in the current study.

Loughran (2010) argues that understanding what constitutes teaching, teachers need to make an effort to consciously be aware of the skills needed for teaching because it includes the use of many skills, whether consciously or unconsciously. It is through consciousness that teachers are able to critique "what we do in our practice is in accord with what we actually do", which is not an easy task to achieve (Loughran, 2010, p. 3). For Loughran (2010) teaching begins with teachers being able to observe their own behaviours and those of others, so that they can consciously develop suitable strategies and approaches to teaching that can be beneficial to high quality learning. While this is crucial, of interest for this study is whether teachers are aware of their teaching, let alone observing their colleagues. I acknowledge that sometimes it is not easy to observe one's own teaching, possibly because it has not been a practice or is one of the things that is taken for granted due to different pressures. It is unclear whether teachers are encouraged to observe their colleagues teaching as a way of improving their teaching, and whether teachers reflect in their teaching. According to Hendry and Oliver (2012), peer observation is beneficial in that it can provide teachers with new strategies and confidence to try what they observe in their own lessons. However Hendry and Oliver (2012) also note that some teachers are not always comfortable with receiving feedback on their lesson, making the process challenging.

Gunersel and Etienne (2014, p. 405) define conceptions of teaching as a “way in which educators conceive of, or understand, teaching and learning”. While teaching approaches can be defined as “educators’ actual teaching strategies and intentions”, conceptions of teaching involve ideas, beliefs and attitudes that teachers hold of learning and teaching (Gunersel and Etienne, 2014, p. 405). Considering the above definition, this study will use Gunersel and Etienne’s (2014) understanding of teaching which takes into consideration ideas, beliefs, and attitudes and also Loughran’s (2010) emphasis on self-observation of behaviour, which is continuous reflection. The reason for highlighting the difference between conceptions of teaching and approaches to teaching is due to the argument that the way teachers conceptualise teaching influences approaches of teaching.

In a cross-cultural comparative study conducted by Alexander (2009, p. 11) titled *Five Cultures*, six versions of what constitute teaching were concluded. Teaching can be summarised as *transmission, initiation, negotiation, facilitation, acceleration, and technique*. However only teaching as negotiation, facilitation, acceleration and technique are discussed in detail as they expand on the three perspectives of learning mentioned earlier. The purpose of linking these versions of teaching with the perspective of learning is to attest to the dominance and influence of the perspectives on how teachers develop their conceptions of learning and teaching. Teaching viewed as negotiation is linked with situated learning which is a reflection of Deweyan’s idea that teachers and learners jointly create knowledge, and Lave’s (1991) understanding of a democratic learning community or community of practice (Alexander, 2009). Teaching as facilitation is guided by principles of development, linked to Piagetian theories, rather than principles that foreground culture or epistemology. This view of teaching emphasises and nurtures individual differences and places learning on the learner, and the teacher plays a passive role in the learning process. Teaching as acceleration, is grounded on Vygotskian principles in that education is planned and guided, as opposed to teaching as facilitation where the teacher facilitates the natural development of the learner. The teacher outpaces development rather than following it. Teaching as a technique maintains a neutral view on society, knowledge and the learners. The emphasis in this perspective is on the efficiency of teaching irrespective of context, structures, economic use of time

and space. What is important are the tasks, regular assessment and clear feedback and not notions of democracy, autonomy and development (Alexander, 2009).

Gunersel and Etienne (2014) posit that conceptions of teaching fall within two forms of orientations, namely teacher-centred orientation and student-centred orientation, and teachers who hold these two orientations also display the same approaches to teaching. Teachers who held teacher-centred conceptions of teaching approach teaching in a lecturing format, and view themselves as transmitters of knowledge to their learners with the focus on the subject matter and content, an orientation often associated with behaviourist theories (Samuelowicz & Bain, 1992, in Gunersel & Etienne, 2014). However, teachers who hold learner-centred conceptions take into account learners' existing conceptions and facilitate student learning with interactive classroom activities. This orientation can be associated with cognitive and social constructivism dominated by Piagetian and Vygotskian ideologies (Prosser & Trigwel, 1999b, in Gunersel & Etienne, 2014). The two orientations are presented in the form of a binary as if they are exclusive from each other, however, the aim of this study is to understand whether they exist and how, if at all. Shepard (2000) makes an interesting observation, and although the study is on assessment it is still relevant for this study. The conflict is that many policy makers advocate for learner-centred curriculum reforms thus suggesting teachers change to constructivist teaching, however some teachers continue to assess using teacher-centred methodologies. This is particularly interesting as some of the teachers in the study might still hold on to belief systems derived from traditional and behaviourist theories due to teacher training, but policy documents advocate teaching to promote "active and critical thinking" not rote learning (Shepard, 2000; Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statement grade 10-12 English first additional language, 2011, p. 4).

A study by Aguirre, Haggerty and Linder (1990) asked student-teachers about their conceptions of the nature of science, learning and teaching. The findings suggested two conceptions of teaching which are: teaching as knowledge transference or teacher as a guide. In addition, teaching was also viewed as an activity that influences or changes understanding. These findings closely correlate with conceptions of learning found by Marton and Saljo in their study. Knowledge as transference relates to what Brown, Lake and Matters (2008) refer to as reproducing

conceptions of learning, as conceptions consist of imparting knowledge and memorising facts to be used later. On the other hand, teaching as an activity that influences or changes understanding is what Brown, Lake and Matters (2008) regard as transforming conceptions of learning. The importance of this relation is to substantiate Loughran's (2010) claim that learning and teaching are not separate concepts but interrelated. The above link between conceptions of learning and teaching is vital as it poses the possibility that teachers in Acornhoek who hold reproducing views of learning share similar views with regard to teaching, however the purpose of this study is to explore the possible existence of the above.

Although the above discussion shows correlations between conceptions of learning and teaching, there are however findings that show that some conceptions of learning are distinct from those of teaching. The advantage of showing the differences between conceptions of learning and teaching is that it offers the foundation to interrogate and problematize the complex nature of learning and teaching, particularly to understand some of the underlying factors that influence both conceptions. However, a common flaw that has been noted in the literature reviewed on conceptions of teaching is that these conceptions are often not presented, but are discussed in the same pretext as learning. For instance Chan's (2004) paper titled *Preservice Teachers' Epistemological Beliefs and Conceptions about Teaching and Learning: Cultural Implications for Research in Teacher Education*, discusses conceptions of teaching and learning symbiotically, presenting the two conceptions as if they are the same. Chan's (2004) findings were based on a Teaching/Learning Conceptions Questionnaire (TLCQ) which led to two dimensions: traditional and constructivist conceptions of teaching/learning. Chan (2004) concludes that there are not many statistical differences in conceptions about teaching and learning held by Hong Kong education students. The findings are presented as teaching/learning not as indicated in the title teaching and learning which is problematic, as the reader might expect both conceptions of teaching and learning to be presented separated instead of as one.

Similarly Donche, De Maeyer, and Van Petegem (2007) in their paper titled *Teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching and their effect on student learning*,

also conflate the two conceptions and present them as one. The findings on teachers' conceptions of teaching and learning were presented as follows:

- Intake of knowledge
- Construction of knowledge
- Use of knowledge
- Stimulating education
- Cooperative learning
- Discovery oriented learning

The findings were not presented separately however they were conflated to apply to both learning and teaching similarly. This is amongst a corpus of literature written on conceptions of teaching and learning, but there is limited academic work that investigates conceptions of teaching separately. A possible reason is because research on theories of teaching is difficult to find, and the implication is limited research that focuses on conceptions of teaching in South Africa. Considering the discussion, it is important that research continues to be done in the classrooms with teachers, to understand how they are teaching, why they teach in particular ways, and whether they are reflective of the way they teach. This is particularly pertinent when our learners in different grades continue to perform poorly in English, Mathematics, and Science, and the reasons are unclear. However, this study prioritized observing teachers to understand their different pedagogical practices in English lessons. Therefore it is for the above reason that the next section on pedagogic practices is important to engage with so that more knowledge can be gained on the spectrum of pedagogic practices that exist.

2.7 Spectrum of Pedagogic Practices

According to Alexander (2009), up until now definitions of pedagogy have been through inference. One reason for this inference might be due to the dearth of existing research in classroom-based studies. Research conducted in classrooms has been heavily criticised for being “small-scaled, qualitative and lacking in methodological rigour” (Hoadley, 2012, p. 187). The nature of this study is on a relatively of small scale because it is a masters with dissertation and qualitative, but

the methodological approach is rigorous to ensure credibility and trustworthiness. Even though it could be considered small, it is going to contribute contemporary knowledge to the existing knowledge on rural teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching, in relation to their pedagogical approaches in English poetry and short story lessons. Thus, what classroom-based research (mainly using observation methods) provides is a more interesting insight into pedagogical practices to move away from the learner-centred and teacher-centred binaries (Hoadley, 2012).

Alexander (2009) states that it is imperative to realise that pedagogy is a term that includes both "the act of teaching and its contingent theories and debate" (p. 4). Pedagogy can therefore be defined as a "discourse with which one needs to engage in order to teach intelligently and make sense of teaching" (Alexander, 2009, p. 4). Discourse in this instance refers to the theories, beliefs, policies and debates that inform and justify different decisions of teaching (Alexander, 2001). This means that for the act of teaching to take place, the appropriate discourses also need to be in place. Pedagogy and teaching are interdependent because without teaching, discourses of pedagogy would be difficult to observe during instructional or lesson time, which is possibly the reason why formulating theories of teaching have been difficult for scholars. In conclusion, pedagogy in this research study will be defined as an:

...observable act of teaching together with its attendant discourse of educational theories, values, evidence and justifications. It is what one needs to know, and the skills one needs to command, in order to make and justify the many different kinds of decisions of which teaching is constituted (Alexander, 2009, p. 5).

Given the definition, the complexity involved in teaching is understandable, particularly as the act of teaching contains embedded beliefs, experiences, policy and interpretations that are enacted during instructional time (Alexander, 2009). Therefore pedagogy as a practice consists of teaching, a setting, methods and learning, hence the theoretical perspectives of teaching provided in earlier sections.

This section discusses some of the possible pedagogic practices that can be observed in a classroom, particularly in rural schools. According to Naidoo (2012), teachers' pedagogic practices are multiple and varied, and the variation has been

conceptualised by Bernstein (2003) by distinguishing pedagogic types on their visibility of epistemic and social criteria that is taught in the pedagogic practice (Naidoo, 2012). Naidoo (2012) conducted research on two geography classes of six grade 11 teachers. The aim of the research was to study pedagogic practices of geography through using Bernstein's concepts of visible and invisible pedagogy. The discussion details findings for two teachers in the study. According to Naidoo (2012), both teachers showed explicit control of the regulative discourse (rules of social order, character and manner) and discursive discourse (these rules symbolise progression and imply pacing rules and also relate to criteria rules which legitimizes communications or social relations). The control of the communication, relations, sequence and pacing of the lesson were made explicit, therefore the pedagogic practice demonstrated by both teachers was indicative of visible pedagogy (Naidoo, 2012). However during the second data analysis stage some discrepancies were noticed in that although both lessons met the indicators of visible pedagogy, the framework could not measure the "...quality of meanings mediated..." leading to an exploration of another framework to analyse these meanings (Naidoo, 2012, p. 53).

Similarly Sikoyo (2010, p. 251) used Bernstein's theory of pedagogic discourse and focused on drawing a "distinction between competence and performance models of pedagogic practice as theories of instruction". These models formed the conceptual framework of the study. Sikoyo's (2010) research comprised 16 fifth and sixth grade science teachers from eight primary schools in urban and peri-urban areas in the Kampala district, Uganda. Sikoyo (2010) reported that teachers in Uganda had difficulties with competence models because these contextual factors at the school and national policies presented challenges that prevented the teachers from implementing competence models. The study suggested that there was tension between the prescribed curriculum realities in the educational context, including classroom contexts.

Although I have discussed the two modalities in the form of a binary, it was to highlight how each modality is constructed. However when the two modalities – visible and invisible pedagogies – are combined, a variety of pedagogies can be created which are liberal, conservative or radical, hence competence and performance models. Even though Bernstein's conceptualisation provides an

analytical lens for understanding the spectrum of pedagogic practices, invisible pedagogies advantage learners from middle class backgrounds as they require costly resources, and include hidden demands on teachers (Sadovnik, 1991; Sikoyo, 2010 and Naidoo, 2012). With regard to visible pedagogy, discursive rules are explicit and Bernstein believes that this is important for the success of learners from working class backgrounds (Naidoo, 2012).

However, according to Hugo, Bertram, Green and Naidoo (2008), Bernstein missed a vital aspect in his conceptualisation of pedagogic practices, the importance of context, and that different social classes reside in different contexts which vary from developed to developing countries and within the country itself. Contexts are not the same and what takes place inside the classroom cannot be predicted, irrespective of whether regulative rules and/or discursive rules are explicit or implicit. According to Hugo et al. (2008) in a study conducted in South African schools, Bernstein's conceptualisation of visible and invisible pedagogies was challenging. The study indicated that Bernstein's conceptualisation of pedagogy needed to move beyond whether pedagogy is competence or performance modes, but rather a question of whether there is any knowledge being transmitted in the classroom (Hugo et al., 2008). This criticism against Bernstein is a concern for my study as the study is based in rural schools where there is a high shortage of resources and teachers to implement these pedagogies.

Notwithstanding the criticism against Bernstein, his conceptualisation of pedagogic practices moves research to a deeper and more detailed understanding, compared to the teacher-centred versus learner-centred debate. Bernstein (2003) argues that it is rare to find pedagogic practices that are exclusively visible or invisible, instead invisible pedagogies are embedded in visible pedagogical practices, thus creating a nuanced framework of the spectrum of pedagogical practices that teachers can work with, particularly in English lessons.

2.8 Conclusion

The reviewed literature provides extensive insight into the importance of how conceptions of learning and teaching relate to pedagogic practices during teaching and learning. I discussed different views of learning from three different perspectives, to locate the position of the study. Although teachers' conceptions are subjective, it is clear from the literature that the social context where the teachers reside has the potential to shape one's belief system and in turn how one thinks about learning and teaching. Although not that popular, but the existing research detailing conceptions of learning held by both teachers and learners has been done internationally and little in South Africa, and Marton and Saljo's six conceptions of learning remain the dominant conceptions discussed in different literature on the studies.

However, there are still major gaps in the literature in developing theories of teaching, understanding English as a subject in rural contexts, and rural contexts as places with agency. Studies conducted on conceptions of teaching are often overshadowed by the research on conceptions of learning. This imbalance in literature undermines the importance of understanding how teachers think about their own teaching and learning. Therefore further research needs to be conducted in classroom-based studies in order to obtain insight into how teachers' conceptions can influence pedagogic practices, particularly since South African learners' performance in English, Mathematics and Sciences continues to depreciate in national and international benchmark tests. There needs to be a shift in research to include research on teaching, as this research might help inform and deconstruct the complex nature of learning and teaching. The purpose of this study is not to underplay the importance of researching learning, actually the study attempts to understand both learning and teaching as important concepts in ensuring quality education in South Africa, particularly in rural and farm contexts. The literature review has highlighted the importance of conducting research in rural schools, especially since little research exists on learning and teaching, and even less research on teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in rural schools.

Furthermore, the literature has also highlighted a shift in terms of pedagogical choices that teachers can choose from. Bernstein's framework on modalities

challenges the binary that exists between teacher-centred and learner-centred pedagogues. Bernstein (2003) moves away from defining pedagogical choices in terms of common sense and power relations, however he considers other guiding factors such as discursive rules to define modalities. The reconceptualization of pedagogical practices is important in this study as it is common for researchers to assume that teachers in rural and farm schools default to teacher-centred approaches which are often viewed negatively. Bernstein's (2003) framework challenges researchers to look deeper into the pedagogical relation that exists in classrooms. Critiques against some aspects of Bernstein's conceptualisation of pedagogic practices provide useful insights that are important to consider in a South African context. Hugo et al. (2008) question the aspect of context when applying visible and invisible modalities, particularly that there is a possibility of zero pedagogy where there is no transmission of knowledge in the classroom.

Another important aspect with regard to the reviewed literature is the development of English as a First Additional Language in South Africa. According to Mqgqashu (2007) the development of English as a FAL has been filled with historical and political motives. These motives have resulted in many issues in the learning and teaching of English, hence the continuous poor learner performance in the subject. Even 22 years after the first democratic elections and various language policies, there are major shortfalls in terms of teacher training since the majority of English teachers are First or Second Additional language speakers and learners. Due to a shortage of skilled content subject teachers in rural and farm schools, the learner performance in English as a FAL in these schools is worse compared to urban or township schools. Given the above discussion the literature reviewed reinforces the need and purpose for this study to be conducted. The gaps that exist in understanding teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in rural contexts have implications for learner performance in core subjects, in particular English. Moletsane (2012) proposes that researchers should begin engaging deeply with people who reside and work in rural contexts in order to gain insight into the body of knowledge that exists. This is valuable for my research as it provides me with a new lens to engage with research in rural contexts as dynamic and knowledge rich settings that can develop effective intervention programmes. Thus it is for this reason

that the next chapter discusses the conceptual framework of the study in order to identify frameworks that provide insight in understanding classroom practices.

CHAPTER THREE

Conceptual Framework

3.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss the conceptual frameworks that were used to analyse and understand the pedagogical practices in English poetry and short story lessons. Most classroom research that has been conducted has focused on binary analysis of pedagogic practices between teacher-centred and learner-centred pedagogies (Shepard, 2000; Chisholm, 2005; Wilson & Peterson, 2006; Hoadley, 2010). In order to understand the complexity of pedagogical practices during learning and teaching, Bernstein's framework on visible and invisible modalities is used. In addition to Bernstein, Alexander's model of teaching, and Scott and Mortimer's communicative approach are also used. The reason for three conceptual frameworks is to provide an integrated and nuanced analysis of the pedagogical choices evident in poetry and short story English classroom.

Bernstein's (2003) framework on visible and invisible modalities theorises pedagogy as a structuring of rules, time, space, and contexts in the classroom to address social class inequalities. It means the framework provides the holistic observation of the nature of the classroom and the practices that take place in it. In talking about modalities, this approach also moves away from the binary characterisation of teacher-centred and learner-centred teaching practices.

3.2 Pedagogical Rules

The discussions and research conducted on teaching styles and existing pedagogical practices make distinctions between teacher-centred and learner-centred approaches, traditional versus progressive pedagogies or market versus knowledge oriented pedagogies (Hoadley, 2012; Bernstein, 2003; Gunersel & Etienne, 2014). Irrespective of which pedagogy is discussed, pedagogical practices often present some class inequalities (Bernstein, 2003). For example, pedagogies

that focus on learners' experiences and localised knowledge require certain cultural and economic prerequisites that learners must bring with them to the classroom. Bernstein (2003) proposes a shift in the focus on how pedagogy can be both a production and a reproduction of culture, through understanding the inner logic of pedagogical practices. This is a significant point, particularly since this study is situated in a context which some researchers might define as disadvantaged and marginalised.

According to Bernstein (2003) the inner logic of pedagogical practice is a "set of rules that come before the content to be transmitted" (p. 196). These rules are hierarchical, sequencing, and criterial rules. Before engaging with the definitions of the rules, it is important to note that in any pedagogical relation there is an acquirer (learner) and a transmitter (teacher) and this relationship is often asymmetrical in nature (Bernstein, 2003) irrespective of social class. Therefore, to understand any pedagogical relation it is important to understand the three aforementioned rules underpinning any relation, because it is from the interplay of these rules that visible and invisible modalities are formulated (Bernstein, 2003). Of the three rules, the hierarchical rule is the most dominant in any pedagogical relation because this rule is a prerequisite to the establishment of any pedagogical relation as it sets rules and boundaries between the teacher and learners. The rules are firstly discussed in general, and then in relation to visible and invisible modalities.

Firstly is the hierarchical rule, also known as the regulative rule, and refers to the acquirer learning how to be an acquirer and the transmitter learning to be a transmitter. For hierarchical rules it is important for the learner and teacher to understand the different roles they play in the classroom, to acquire the rules of social order, character and manner that shape the appropriate behaviour in the pedagogical relationship (Bernstein, 2003). This addresses the asymmetrical pedagogical relationship that occurs in the classroom, which possibly shapes the reproduction of unequal social class. In relation to this study it would be insightful to observe the varying roles that learners and teachers in rural secondary schools play, particularly how these roles shape interactions, behaviours and learners' characters.

The sequencing rules is characterised by the notion that if there is transmission there is a form of progression in the process. Thus to establish any pedagogical practice certain sequencing rules apply in the form of pacing rules. According to Bernstein (2003, p. 198) pacing rules can be defined as the “rate of expected acquisition of the sequencing rules, that is, how much you have to learn in a given amount of time”. This rule focuses on the time learners are given in order to acquire the taught knowledge in the classroom. This rule makes assumptions about the learners’ ‘rate’ and ability to learn and it is questionable how the “rate of expected acquisition” is determined, particularly when learners come from different home contexts (Bernstein, 2003, p. 198). However, this rule is significant because it provides lenses to understand teachers’ conceptions of learning and teaching and also observe and analyse how teachers pace their lessons, tasks and activities during poetry and short story lessons. Especially that teacher’s pace and sequencing seems to be determined by the curriculum policy, as it stipulate what they need to teach for what period, overlooking the different learners that exists in the classroom. It is therefore sometimes not the teachers that determine the pace and sequence but the policy, and teacher have to abide by the rules. The criterial rule consists of the criteria required for the acquirer to take and apply to their practice and that of others (Bernstein, 2003). The criterial rules enable the acquirer to know what counts as legitimate or illegitimate communication, social relations or position. In other words, the criterial rules allow for the establishment of a particular discourse or register within a specified practice, which is important in learners’ performance. For instance, since the study is on EFAL teachers, a particular register and discourse in poetry and short stories should be evident during the lessons. Both sequencing and criterial rules are also known as discursive rules. It is also noted that the rules can either be explicit or implicit depending on what factors are at play.

In terms of sequencing rules, if they are explicit learners of a particular age are expected to have acquired certain competences, and are expected to be aware of what their capabilities entail. Such rules are based on developmental stages by theorists such as Piaget (1964), who argue that children view the world differently

from an adult. Thus the ability to learn at different ages is based on how well children can cognitively or individually construct their “new knowledge within their stages and resolve conflicts” (Ültanır, 2012, p. 203). There is a relationship between Bernstein and Piaget when sequencing rules and developmental stages are concerned, because what a learner acquires has meaning in relation to a particular stage, and the meaning changes as the learner progresses subsequently to the next stage. Of the four stages by Piaget (1964) the final developmental stage known as formal operational is crucial for the study. The child demonstrates development of higher levels of thinking and uses abstract ideas to solve problems (Ültanır, 2012). Considering that grades 10 and 11 teachers were observed, it will be interesting to explore how they engage and approach learning and teaching with learners in this age group. So it will be insightful to see what skills and competences learners demonstrate, because it will depend on teacher’s assumptions of learner’s level of thinking as played out during pedagogical approach.

Since the study focuses on teachers’ conceptions of learning and teaching, it’s important that teachers are able to monitor the cognitive development of their learners as this shapes the understanding of content, tasks and activities that a teacher sets for learners. Additionally, criterial rules which are also discursive rules, focus on external information given to the learner to meet the prescribed requirements. When criterial rules are explicit the learners know the end product of a task, and are also aware of the criteria because the rules are clear and specific. When there are implicit criteria the learners have the spontaneity to create any text with minimal criteria, which relates to unguided teaching and it might be difficult to judge what the learner can or cannot do (Bernstein, 2003). Along the same line of discussion, Piaget believes in minimal guidance, which relates to implicit criterial rules, and that learners cannot be given information by teachers, they must construct their own knowledge which they eventually come to know (Ültanır, 2012). It is however unclear whether this applies in all Piaget’s stages and whether a teacher is ever important in sharing knowledge with the learners, as the teacher is perceived as a facilitator of the knowledge. Again, this information makes assumptions about the different learners and their socio-cultural and economic backgrounds, because some learners might rely on teachers’ guided lessons and prefers explicit rules than implicit

rules. In contrast, Vygotsky believes that teachers play a vital role in helping learners progress, especially with school knowledge, and can be linked to explicit criterial rules. For theorists like Vygotsky, the teacher is responsible for prompting the learners and designing activities that will help them understand the concepts, until such a point is reached where the learner can do the activities without any assistance (Crain, 1992). The above discussion on explicit and implicit criteria is important for the study as it offers lenses to observe the pedagogical approaches that teachers use while teaching, which might link with their conceptions.

When hierarchical rules are explicit, the power relations between the transmitter and acquirer are very clear (Bernstein, 2003), and when the rules are implicit the power relation is masked. The reason for the latter is because the teacher creates the context for acquisition to take place and does not engage directly with the acquirer due to certain knowledge or contextual assumptions about learners. The teacher organises the context for the acquirer to gain the required knowledge without the involvement of the learners (Bernstein, 2003), possibly because the teacher is aware of the level of knowledge that various learners need to achieve. In some instances, this happens without learners knowing their level of knowledge they own or need, which can be an advantage for the learners because the teacher can provide the necessary resources to help them. While this is possible, in a classroom of 40 - 50 learners it is difficult to see the possibility of a teacher knowing the level of knowledge that each learner needs to achieve and provide the necessary assistance, considering the strict pacing rules the curriculum has prescribed to the teachers. Particularly in secondary schools where teachers do not spend much time with the learners due to period settings, to fully understand learner's challenges individually. It is through hierarchical rules that an understanding of classroom dynamics and interactions are observed, especially if research in rural contexts is to be developed to address issues concerning learning and teaching.

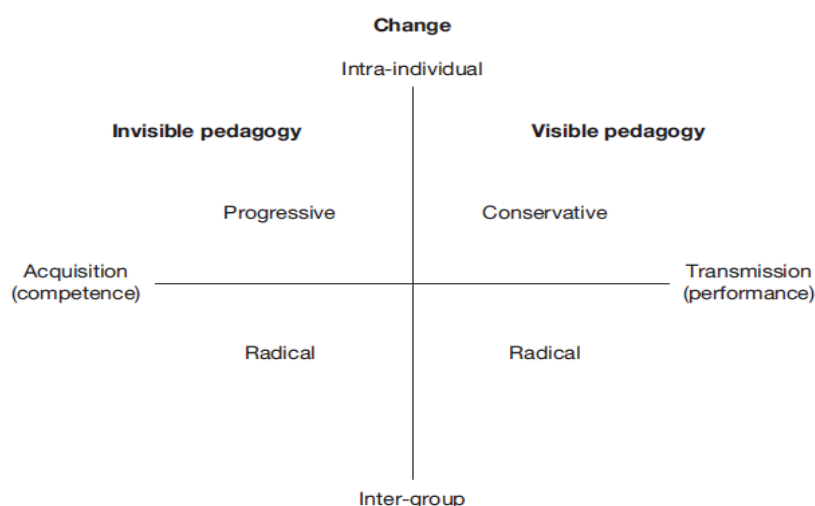
Due to the explicit or implicit nature of the three rules above, Bernstein (2003) argues that certain pedagogical practices can be created. Bernstein (2003) argues that two generic modalities of pedagogical practice, which are visible and invisible

pedagogy, can be distinguished within the rules. Although the study is based on the establishment of the two modalities, other practices emerge from the two distinct modalities. Through developing pedagogical practices based on the rules mentioned earlier, I am able to see why reducing pedagogical practices to merely teacher-centred and learner-centred pedagogies is problematic. The rules provide insight and possibility of overlaps and integration. However the overlaps and integrations are dependent on which rules are made obvious to the acquirer, and also which rules are implicit to the learners during learning and teaching. The usage of particular rules might, consciously or unconsciously, suggest particular teacher's conception of learning and teaching.

Thus according to Bernstein (2003) visible pedagogical practices take place when regulative and discursive rules are explicit, and the emphasis is placed on evaluating the performance of the learner. The acquirers or learners are graded according to a specific set of criteria and the extent to which they meet these criteria. Visible modalities create differences between children and they consist of stratifying practices of transmission (Bernstein, 2003). The learners are judged against a set of criteria and how well learners perform in external assessments. This does not mean that implicit rules are not evident, but that meaning making for this modality is based on the context and rules established for a visible pedagogy. Given that the context of this study is rural schools, there are possibilities that learners are stratified on the basis of their performance in specific subjects due to shortage of skilled and qualified teachers. Alternatively, when discursive rules are implicit and only known to the transmitter, such pedagogical practices are known to be invisible. Invisible pedagogies are less concerned with norm referencing of learners, which is judging learners against the class average, however they focus on procedures internal to the acquirer such as cognitive structures based on the learner's experience with a particular text. The procedures of acquisition are considered to be the same for all learners, although each learner will interpret the text differently due to differing contexts. Invisible pedagogies promote middle class ideologies, thus working class children might not be able to interpret the texts as the study is based in rural schools. The emphasis is on how well the learners understand the meaning needing to be

conveyed, thus invisible pedagogies are competence oriented and not performance oriented.

Unlike teacher-centred and learner-centred pedagogies, the two modalities proposed by Bernstein (2003) provide a rich framework for analysing pedagogical practices beyond just the pedagogical relation, but also by analysing how the contents to be acquired and context in which it is acquired are systematically organised. The two modalities mentioned above allow for the development of other practices that can be liberal, conservative and radical in nature depending on which rules are emphasised. The two modalities can either create pedagogical practices that bring about change in individuals or social groups, or focus on the acquirer or transmitter. Irrespective of where the changes occur, different pedagogical practices are developed. The model below illustrates the vast pedagogical practices that can emerge from the two modalities mentioned earlier.



Model 1: Model of Bernstein's framework of pedagogical practices

Source: Bernstein, 2003, p. 202

If pedagogical practices desire to cause change between different social groups, the teacher is likely to be working on the bottom left-hand quadrant where acquisition is between inter-groups (Bernstein, 2003). This type of pedagogy attempts to address prejudices and differences that individuals might have brought from their own

community or society. The teacher then attempts to assist the learners by making them aware of the prejudices they might hold and helps them change their preconceived ideas if necessary. Alternatively, a teacher might attempt to produce change in the top right-hand quadrant resulting in intra-individual transmission. These pedagogical practices develop from “behaviourists’ theories of instruction” which are often viewed as conservative (Bernstein, 2003, p. 202). The pedagogies focus on how the learner is demonstrating and meeting set criteria and adhering to them. Although I have discussed the two modalities as a form of a binary, it is important to see the possibilities that can emerge when the two modalities are integrated. This integration by Bernstein (2003) moves research on understanding pedagogical practices to a deeper and more detailed understanding, compared to the teacher-centred versus learner-centred debate. The shift in pedagogical practices is important as most pedagogical practices in rural schools are still dominated by teacher-centred approaches, reflecting the mismatch between policy and practice (Shepard, 2000; Mukeredzi, 2013). Bernstein (2003) argues that it is rare to find pedagogical practices that are exclusively visible or invisible, instead invisible pedagogies are embedded in visible pedagogical practices, thus creating diverse pedagogical practices discussed above. In conclusion, what is important is understanding how the different ordering principles – hierarchical, sequencing and criteria – are made explicit or implicit, in order to be informed about what is happening in the classrooms.

3.3 A Generic Model of Teaching

Bernstein’s (2003) framework on analysis of pedagogical practices has been highly influential in analysing observed classrooms in South African (Hoadley, 2012). However, Bernstein (2003) does not emphasise on a practical level what shapes these pedagogical practices, as well as the interactions that are at play during learning and teaching. Thus Alexander provides insight on what teaching is and what happens when pedagogical practices are active and enacted in a classroom. In order to create a conceptual framework that can be used to analyse the discursive rules and how a teacher organises and thinks about the tasks, activities, judgements and interactions during learning and teaching, Alexander’s model of teaching is

discussed. However, not all concepts will be discussed in detail, only concepts that are relevant to this study will be discussed in depth.

For Alexander (2009) teaching involves methods which are capable of crossing boundaries of time and space, combining tasks, activities, interactions and judgements into a framework. While the combination is important, there is no coherence and meaning, thus needing the element of understanding the setting where the teaching process is located. Furthermore, teaching requires structure and form which manifests itself during the lesson, providing a frame for the teaching act. Teaching is then governed by time, also defined as the pacing rules, which provide frame in a lesson (Bernstein, 2003; Alexander, 2009). The frame looks at the way a classroom is organised, disposed and resourced and also influences how tasks, activities, interactions and judgements are achieved and completed (Alexander, 2009). For instance, when tables and chairs are placed in rows the learners know it is individual work, however this is not the case in rural schools where there is a shortage of resources and textbooks and learners rearrange the tables themselves. This rearrangement affects the effectiveness of tasks, activities, interactions and lessons. Some learners sit in pairs, others in groups of three, while some learners face the back of the classroom so they can share textbooks. Furthermore, how students are organised – whether in groups, whole class or individually – affects the form that the lesson takes. The manner in which tables and equipment are organised in a classroom creates a certain ambience, even before the lesson can take place, because it is from this organisation that the teacher's and learners' movement can be observed (Alexander, 2001). One of the concerns in rural schools is overcrowded classes with limited tables and chairs resulting to some learners writing on the laps due to shortage of tables, which impedes the movements of the teacher and learners in the classroom. This poses issues of how the teacher engages with learners during teaching and learning in the classroom.

Notwithstanding the above discussion on organisation, it is important to always be aware that teaching is not only framed temporally (time) and spatially (space), but that a lesson is also part of a broader curriculum (Alexander, 2005). This reflects on the values and assumptions held on knowledge that the individual needs to

conceptually understand within a broader societal context. This frame provides a broader purpose of why teaching is such a valuable act. Teaching is an integrated act that requires both learners and teachers to engage *with* and *in* part of it. Alexander (2009) defines this collaboration as a micro-culture, similar to Bernstein's regulative rules, because in any pedagogical relation there should be procedures for regulating the complex interactions between teachers and learners governed by law, customs and public morality in society (Alexander, 2009). These procedures, according to Alexander (2009), are called routines, rules and rituals, and are part of the ethical frame involved in teaching. From the above discussion by Alexander (2009) it is important to understand in-depth the framework of analysing pedagogical practices during learning and teaching, particularly for this study, as these practices may or may not be influenced by teachers' belief systems, past experiences and tertiary education. Below is Alexander's (2001, p. 325) generic model of teaching;

A generic model of teaching		
<i>Teaching, in any setting, is the act of using method x to enable students to learn y</i>		
Frame	Form	Act
Space	Lesson	Task
Student organisation		Activity
Time		Interaction
Curriculum		
Routine, rule and ritual		
		Judgement

Source: Alexander 2001, p 325

Model 2: Alexander's generic model of teaching

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Below is the discussion of the different aspects of Alexander's generic model of teaching as indicated in the model above.

3.3.1 Lesson structure and form

According to Alexander (2001), lessons are framed by time, and can vary from 30 minutes to 60 minutes each. As a result the structure of lessons can be summarised as the following: lessons that are strict on time frames usually become predictable and formal as the length of the lesson is predetermined by the school and this limits

the teacher on the time they have per lesson. In general lessons include an introduction, development and conclusion. In some cases the development of the lesson is long because it is often at this stage that a teacher engages with the lesson content and knowledge and activities that learners have to complete, however this varies according to the teacher. There are two forms of lesson structures, unitary and episodic lesson structures. The unitary lesson structure focuses on a single task in the lesson, whilst in an episodic lesson structure there is a sequence of tasks. To be noted is that with any lesson structure the teacher and learners experience it as it unfolds and they cannot anticipate how the lesson and tasks will progress. It is of interest for this study to observe the lesson structures that teachers use while teaching, in relation to the time frame. Unless there is a video-camera in the classroom that can capture the moment by moment engagement during the lesson, teachers do not have a way to understand and evaluate how well their lesson progresses. Additionally, one of the ways teachers can understand their lessons is through the use of lesson plans, although some 'experienced' teachers go to the classroom without a lesson plan.

3.3.2 The frame of teaching

As mentioned in the lesson structure, lessons are governed by time. However there are other important elements that frame a lesson such as space, learners' organisation, curriculum, routine, rules and rituals.

3.3.2.1 Learners' organisation, space, routine, rules and rituals

Learners' organisation and space are concerned with how teachers and learners use the space within the classroom, whether the class is organised in groups, individually or as a whole class, and how the furniture, equipment and teaching aids are put together. The organisation and space gives the classroom a certain ambience before the lesson begins (Alexander, 2001) because, for example, if the classroom is not well organised and desks are untidy this might signify lack of professionalism and seriousness by the teacher and learners for learning and teaching. In addition, routine, rules and rituals, form a relationship which is partly hierarchical and contingent (Alexander, 2001). A routine, according to Alexander (2001), is a procedure that "through habit and use becomes unvarying" (p. 380), and might result in taken for granted practices. In order to explain routine effectively it is important to

understand that it is part of a rule. Rule is an explicit requirement or regulation that needs to be obeyed, although sometimes it is not obeyed but challenged by learners and teachers. Thus routine is a weaker version of rule as this is created or adapted by the teacher and learners in the classroom and it varies from class to class (Alexander, 2001). Rituals, on the other hand, are prescribed and usually are established as a ceremony such as mass or assembly (Alexander, 2001). As time and the year progresses rules and routines become internalised and both learners and teachers engage and do them habitually. For teachers this includes the internalisation and taking for granted of time, organisation of the classroom, teaching, planning of the lessons, or (lack thereof), and conceptions of learning and teaching. Thus observing how teachers teach, the use of time in the classroom, and the organisation of the classroom before teaching begins is important for this study as this explicates underlying factors that teachers hold of learning and teaching. The concepts explained above form the frame of the lesson, which are similar to the regulative rules discussed by Bernstein (2003) earlier, because they determine what is a socially acceptable manner of behaviour in the classroom. Considering the discussion, there is a possibility that teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching might shape routine, rule, rituals, and the act of teaching in a classroom.

3.3.3 The acts of teaching

The act of teaching consists of tasks, activity, judgement and interaction. Tasks are concerned with the actual task, whether oral or written, that learners have to engage with at the end of their lesson. Thus tasks become the “conceptual component” within a lesson structure, which is the means a teacher uses to make links to the knowledge learned previously and what learners currently need to know (Alexander, 2001, p. 251). Alexander (2001) posits that tasks can either be unitary or episodic. Unitary tasks are when there is one task per lesson and they can either be closed, whereby it needs to be completed by the end of the lesson or before the teacher can proceed to the next section, or open ended, where a teacher has the control to stop the task where appropriate (Alexander, 2001). Episodic tasks happen in a sequence and follow each other. They can be self-contained and isolated or they can be linked to each other. This means the tasks are cumulative or build on to each other; failure to link them will result in lack of meaning being developed (Alexander, 2001). For this

study, although the focus is teachers' conceptions of teaching, it is also important to observe how teachers select, allocate and present tasks during lessons, because they link to their understanding of learning and teaching as interlinked.

Activities consist of smaller units that build up a task to be achieved and completed within specified sequencing rules. A learning task, as noted in the above discussion, is concerned with the conceptual component of learning; a learning activity is concerned with the practical aspect of the task. A learning activity focuses on how the teacher can make the conceptual link from what has been learned to what the learner needs to learn currently (Alexander 2001). Classroom activities vary from collaboration between learners to reading silently and learners reading for the whole class. In this study, it is also important to observe how a teacher makes the conceptual links and what kind of collaborations take place during teaching and learning, because it might link to the teacher's conception of learning and teaching as it sometimes happens unconsciously. Considering that activities are smaller units to ensure that the unitary or episodic task is achieved, the teacher decides on the suitability of the activity in order to meet the outcomes of the task. Thus the teacher makes a judgement on the effectiveness of an activity and/or task. Judgement looks at the criteria a teacher utilises in order to understand the level of tasks and activities which learners undertake, and the forms of learning that learners have achieved through the use of assessments (Alexander, 2009).

Judgement, according to Alexander (2001) consists of differentiation and assessment. Differentiation refers to the process whereby a teacher identifies differences between learners in order to determine how, where and what they should be taught. Assessment, on the other hand, is a continuation from where the differentiation process ends, as it judges how and what the learners have learnt. To understand differentiation, learners are often differentiated according to age, ability, special educational needs, behaviour, and gender. In order to link the discussion with the act of teaching, differentiation can be classified into six different contexts or forms (Alexander, 2001). There is differentiation according to subjects, that is streaming learners, which places learners of the same age group with the same cognitive level together, or learners can be differentiated in terms of their subject choices-learners who are doing the same subjects are placed together according to

their allocated grades. Alternatively, teachers can differentiate learners according to the activity; learners working on the same task might be given different activities, or be required to work in groups or whole class (Alexander, 2001). All these forms of differentiation form part of the judgements teachers are required to engage with in their lessons, particularly when initiating tasks and activities. Of importance to note is that differentiation can also involve time and attention as well as giving learners' different assessment criteria. In terms of time, some learners get more time with the teacher in the classroom compared to others, other groups will be given more attention by the teacher compared to others, depending on whether learners meet the discursive rules set out by the teacher. The forms of judgements teachers make during the lesson are important in this study due to the possibility that these judgements are influenced by underlying conceptions they have on learning and teaching.

As stated earlier, assessment proceeds from differentiation and there is formative and evaluative feedback and assessments. Formative feedback provides learners with information to ensure that their understanding progresses through engagement with the comments. Evaluative feedback gives learners praise or criticism on their work with no information on which areas learners need to improve. The type of assessment that a teacher uses is sometimes shaped by the tasks and/or activities of the lesson, and it is not that one form of assessment is better than the other. Thus assessment varies from making a mark or score on the task or activity to providing learners with detailed written comments on which areas they can improve. Without sounding pessimistic, due to time constraints, sometimes teachers do not have time to engage with learners' work for the purpose of providing informative assessment. At the same time, even though some teachers might use informative assessment, from my experience as a teacher, learners seem not to engage with the comments and rather focus on the mark they are given. The discussion on assessment is complex because of the usage of score as a determinant of performance, rather than familiarising learners with engaging with comments that are given. In this study the two abovementioned processes, differentiation and assessment, can be used as reflection stages during the lesson, firstly to check and monitor whether the lesson objectives have been met and secondly to evaluate areas requiring improvement. It

is also in these processes that knowledge can be gained on how teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching influence their pedagogic choices.

Interaction constitutes ways in which a teacher presents, organises and sustains learning in order to achieve the tasks and activities given to learners. One important factor in the generic model of teaching is the importance of dialogue and interactions, in order to evaluate which pedagogy is being enacted and also to evaluate the effectiveness of the pedagogic relation between the transmitter and the acquirer. Since most classroom observations include interactions and dialogues between transmitters and acquirers, it is important to engage with this aspect as it has the potential of trapping researchers into defining and identifying pedagogic practices based on classroom talk. According to Alexander (2005, p. 8) classroom dialogue is usually explicit and involves making "attention and engagement mandatory and to chain exchanges into a meaningful sequence". This means that it is through classroom dialogue that meaning of transmission of the pedagogic practices is made, as well as how the teaching model connects the teacher and learners during teaching and learning. As discussed earlier, the effectiveness of the generic teaching model outlined by Alexander can be judged in the lesson through classroom interaction and talk, as this is one of the ways to evaluate which rules are visible and which rules are invisible.

Alexander (2005) is critical of classroom talk and interactions, and provides a framework to analyse interactions through two components, namely interaction participants⁴ and interaction mode. The interaction mode consists of categorising teachers and learners' interactions in the following categorisations: 'monitoring', 'instructional', 'routine', 'disciplinary' and 'other' (Alexander, 2001, p. 396). The above categories offer a sound starting point when analysing classroom interactions as they focus on specific forms of interactions at various stages of a lesson. Thus the use of Scott and Mortimer's communicative approach framework provides a deeper understanding on furthering classroom interactions, particularly on eliciting which pedagogical rules are made explicit and implicit. This aspect might be important for the second sub-question of the study; How do teachers' conceptions shape pedagogical choices in the English classroom? This can be achieved by evaluating

⁴ The participants' interactions vary from "teacher and class, teacher and groups, teacher and individuals, pupils and class, pupils and pupils and pupils and teacher" (Alexander, 2001, p. 396).

and analysing which ideas are presented in the classroom, by whom and how are the ideas presented and why are those ideas presented? The combination of the four elements becomes the building blocks for teaching and they are the core acts of teaching. It is these four elements of teaching that are key principles in achieving the objectives of this study. These four elements provide a lens to analyse different practices in the classroom, which might be influenced by the conceptions teachers' hold of learning and teaching.

I have also noticed that Alexander's (2005, 2009) model of teaching which consists of frame, form, and act is embedded in Bernstein's framework, as it provides a practical analytical framework to analyze and understand the extent of visible and invisible modalities in the classroom. This means the model of teaching provides an analytical lens on understanding what teachers do in the classroom and how different components of the classroom interact with each other, particularly the learners. In order to articulate the discourses of the interactions in the classrooms, Scott and Mortimer's (2005) communicative approach is used. The communicative approach consists of two dimensions, the dialogic-authoritative dimension and the interactive-non interactive dimension, which give rise to four classes of communicative approaches.

3.4 The Four Classes of the Communicative Approach

Scott and Mortimer's (2005) communicative approach developed through an attempt to make meaning through understanding language and modes of communication in a science classroom. They conducted research based on a socio-cultural perspective, which viewed learning as a way of "negotiating new meaning in a communicative process where different cultural perspectives meet each other", in order to provide mutual growth between the participants (Scott & Mortimer, 2005, p. 395). Scott and Mortimer (2005) have been able to provide a framework on analysing how teachers work with learners to develop new ideas in the classroom. Unlike Alexander, Scott and Mortimer's (2005) focus is on the interplay of ideas in the classroom, and they have identified two dimensions, namely the dialogic-authoritative dimension and the interactive-non interactive dimension. Within these two dimensions, four classes are identified which provide a broader and richer analysis of classroom interactions.

The first dimension is known as the *dialogic-authoritative* dimension, and Scott and Mortimer (2005) identify two contrasting approaches, namely the authoritative and dialogic approaches. In the *authoritative* approach “the teacher’s purpose is to focus the students’ full attention on just one meaning” (Scott, Mortimer & Aguiar, 2006, p. 610). Although there is acknowledgement of the possibility of a dialogue, the purpose of the *authoritative approach* is for the teacher to present one idea or meaning of the content being taught. Contrasting the *authoritative approach* is the *dialogic approach*, where a teacher attempts to take into account a wide range of students and their ideas during the lesson. The purpose of the *dialogic approach* is to acknowledge other individuals’ points of view (Scott, Mortimer & Aguiar, 2006.). In hindsight, the *authoritative approach* can be compared to teacher-centred teaching styles, where the teacher is viewed as the disseminator of knowledge and learners as passive acquirers. This statement does not critique this approach because it does play a particular role in the process of teaching and learning, especially when the content and concepts are new for learners, particularly in certain subjects. However Scott and Mortimer (2005) add a second dimension which focuses on the degree of interaction of ideas in the classroom.

The second dimension focuses on *interactive-non interactive* approaches of the communicative process. This dimension is based on the level of participation in the classroom. Classroom talk can be *interactive* in that more than one person is allowed to participate in the communicative approach. This interaction is more prevalent in group or whole class discussions where any learner can participate. Alternatively, classroom talk can be *non-interactive* in that some individuals are excluded from participating. However, combining the two dimensions, which are the *dialogic-authoritative* dimension and the *interactive-non interactive* dimension, four classes of the communicative approach emerge, namely *dialogic* or *authoritative* on one hand, and *interactive* or *non-interactive* on the other (Scott, Mortimer & Aguiar, 2006). The table below illustrates the diverse range of classroom interactions.

Table 3: Scott and Mortimer's four classes of communicative approach

	INTERACTIVE	NON-INTERACTIVE
DIALOGIC	A. Interactive/ Dialogic	B. Non-interactive/Dialogic
AUTHORITATIVE	B. Interactive/Authoritative	C. Non-interactive/ Authoritative

Source: Scott & Mortimer, 2005, p. 398

To illustrate the diverse range of classroom interactions as identified by Scott and Mortimer (2005), in the table above one combination of the communicative approach that can be created could be between the *interactive approach* and the *authoritative approach*. In this combination the teacher comes with a set of instructional questions which can be linked to explicit discursive rules mentioned by Bernstein (2003), and the teacher focuses on various learners' suggested answers. Eventually the teacher leads the learners to the desired outcome and response, acknowledging answers from different learners. This approach appears like the traditional teacher approach, where a teacher controls the ideas and outcome of the lesson. Only one meaning is accepted because the teacher knows the required outcome for the lesson; this is the authoritative approach in the communicative process. However the communicative process is interactive in that the teacher acknowledges various answers and the learners are not restricted as to who is allowed to participate and who is not. With this in mind, it is worth noting that there is no communicative approach that is uncomplicated. The above communicative approach combination can be complicated by how the teacher selects learners' responses and the feedback given to learners. The teacher might present some bias and take responses of learners whom they know always participate in the classroom, and overlook some learners. In addition, the teacher might not provide feedback to learners' responses, leaving learners feeling despondent as they are not sure of the correctness of their responses.

Furthermore, the communicative approach can be complicated by teachers' underlying perceptions of learners such as viewing learners as individuals who need to be imparted with knowledge and also the lesson purpose might influence the

choice of which communicative approach is used. It is for this reason that Scott and Mortimer's (2005) four classes of communicative approach are important for this study, as the framework does not take for granted the complications embedded in classroom talk. Additionally, the framework explicates invisible factors that influence how a teacher interact with their learners, irrespective of the context of the school, as the framework also looks at whose ideas and knowledge are presented in the classroom.

The above framework by Scott and Mortimer (2005) presents an appropriate lens to analyze classroom interactions and learning and teaching processes. Scott and Mortimer (2005) present a conceptual framework that can be useful in analysing not only power relations in class but also whose ideas are being presented, how they are presented, and what does this says about teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching. This framework provides a lens to interrogate what happens in the classroom during lessons and problematizes critiques of teacher-centred approaches, because teacher-centred approaches are perceived to be negative due to *authoritative* in nature, resulting in strong teacher control. Of interest to note is how Scott and Mortimer's (2005) communicative approach can be an effective tool to analyse the different pedagogic practices mentioned in Bernstein's (2003) framework on modalities, as it depends on what rules are made explicit or implicit, and classroom interactions are also affected, as detailed by Alexander (2009).

3.5 Conclusion

The above discussion on conceptual frameworks by Bernstein (2003), Alexander (2005, 2009) and Scott and Mortimer (2005), provides an analytical tool in identifying and interpreting data collected through classroom observations. The three frameworks offer different lenses to the complex nature of understanding pedagogical practices that might emerge in a lesson. The frameworks place minimal emphasis on the learner-centred and teacher-centred dichotomy, instead try to show the complexity of teaching and learning, and being aware of new modalities that can emerge in the contexts of the current research. Classroom dialogue is always important in analysing pedagogical practices, however all authors discussed above provide a juxtaposition that takes into account the rules that underpin pedagogic

practices. In addition, the structuring of Bernstein's rules provide a framework that allows for different factors to enact themselves in the classroom, which are both external and internal to the transmitter's and acquirer's knowledge. Furthermore, the authors provide a detailed lens to evaluate and critically engage with different interactions and dialogues during lessons, which are far more complex than teachers' talk and learners' talk. The conceptual frameworks assist in problematizing and interrogating teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching by observing how they teach at various stages of the lessons. It is with an assumption that the conceptual framework detailed in this chapter will yield a deeper and more intricate analysis of classroom-based research studies, especially in understanding the teachers' position within the classroom and the judgements they make in order to provide quality learning and teaching in rural schools.

CHAPTER FOUR

Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

People have always been concerned with how the world works and they attempt to make sense of the different phenomena presented to them. One way of understanding these phenomena is through research (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). Research is a way in which one tries to add new insight about a phenomenon to their body of knowledge, and that of others, by following some form of methodical process (Howard & Sharp as cited in Bell, 2005). Alternatively, if the term research is hyphenated to re-search, it can imply that the subject matter has already been researched and is known, however it needs to be studied again for various reasons (Postlethwaite, 2005). Drew (as cited in Bell, 2005) adds that research is a systematic method of enquiry whereby various ways are implemented to collect and analyse information. However within the education paradigm, and possibly research in general, ideas and different phenomena are always changing, thus requiring research to be constantly conducted (Postlethwaite, 2005).

Thus educational research extends from general research since it is not limited to adding new knowledge to a body of knowledge, it also seeks to improve practice and inform current and existing policy debates (Creswell, 2012). It is important to note that although educational research has grown over the years and has become valuable, it has limitations. Some of these limitations include, but are not limited to, contradictory findings and results, and questionable results due to participants lacking the insight to help answer the proposed research question. Given the above limitations or problems, educational researchers should attempt to “seek to reconcile different findings and employ sound procedures to collect and analyse data and to provide clear direction for their own research” (Creswell, 2012, p. 7). By systematically utilizing the methods of enquiry stated in this chapter, I am able to develop a comprehensive study that provides insight into Grades 10 and 11 First Additional English Language rural teachers’ conceptions of learning and teaching

and pedagogical practices during poetry and short story lessons in Mpumalanga schools. It is through employing the sound procedures that appropriate approaches to this research study are selected to meet the desired purpose.

4.2 Contextual Background of The Study

The context of the study is Acornhoek secondary schools, located in rural Bushbuckridge, in Mpumalanga Province. While it has been challenging to understand whether it is rural or semi-rural, according to four participants Acornhoek was classified as a semi-rural area because there are developments and a plaza where the community shops. Two participants categorized it as rural because poverty is still intense in the area, suggesting challenges to define rurality, as mentioned in chapter one. Of importance for this study is to conduct this research with the teachers as part of the community, to bring about social change (Moletsane, 2012). As mentioned in chapter one, the concern has been the viewed of rurality as deficit, with the focus on research that measures under-performance with regard to development in education, poverty and health. Seldom does research focus on the “dynamic interactions of the people who live... in these communities” or, furthermore, seldom does research engage with and shape the lives of the people within their own environment (Moletsane, 2012, p. 3). From the discussion above it is important to understand the significant role the context of the study plays, particularly within educational research whereby social realities of the participants are created and developed within the specific context. Below are photographs detailing the context of two of the three schools in the study.

Maru High School



Image 1: Dilapidated Classroom



Image 3: New Technology & Science Classroom



Image 2: Library



Image 4: Science Classroom

Photograph 1: Maru High School

Naledi comprehensive high school



Image 1: School grounds



Image 2: Vegetable Garden



Image 3: Dilapidated Classroom



Image 4: Kitchen



Image 5: Soccer field



Image 6: Classroom 2

Photograph 2: Naledi Comprehensive high school

As mentioned above, the context where the study is conducted is crucial in providing the researcher with the desired setting where different factors play themselves out. As can be noticed in the two photographs above, both schools are in Acornhoek however different developments can be noted in each school. In Maru High school (see Photograph 1), some classrooms are not used as they are dilapidated, and the school library is just used as a store room filled with books rather than a centre of knowledge. However new classrooms have been added to the school for science and technology, but the classes are not yet used for various reasons. In Naledi Comprehensive high school (see Photograph 2), the school is surrounded by veld, and some students travel to school on bicycles that were donated. Similarly some classrooms need renovations, and also the school kitchen has no electricity. What is interesting to note is the vegetable garden where the school grows their own vegetables, as compared to the first school that does not have vegetable garden. Image 5 shows what the school uses as a soccer field, however the soccer field as shown in the image is consumed with overgrown grass. This seem to suggest that schools can be located in the same social context, but be different due to management amongst other factors.

4.3 Research Approach

Research design is a crucial part of any study. It provides the overall strategy that is needed to integrate the different components of the study in a coherent and logical process, in order to effectively address the proposed research problem. When research design is conceived this way, it becomes the blueprint of the study (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). Different research questions need a specific research design in order to answer them (de Vaus, 2001). For this study the choice of approach is dependent on the following criteria: firstly the research occurs in the natural setting of the participants. The data is collected at the site where the participants experience the problem of the study (outlined in chapter one). The close interaction mentioned above allows the researcher to engage with the participants personally and observe their behaviours within their natural setting. Secondly, the researcher is a key instrument of the research, as they collect and analyse the data themselves (Creswell, 2007).

Creswell (2003) states that research design consists of different approaches; embedded in each approach is different underlying assumptions on the nature of reality, epistemology, values and methodology. The assumptions the current study made is that teachers construct their own meanings in a specific social setting, and it is through understanding these meanings that insight can be gained on how to achieve quality learning and teaching. Thus it is through a combination of these underlying assumptions that this study use qualitative approach.

In educational research qualitative and quantitative research approaches are widely used depending on the subject disciplines and intention of the research study. As mentioned above, this study uses the qualitative research approach because the aim is to understand rural teachers' conceptions and pedagogical approaches in the classrooms. The study also acknowledges the use of mixed-methods in education research, which combines both qualitative and quantitative research approaches, however is still in a developmental stage. Research design that is qualitative allows researchers to bring with them their own worldviews and set of beliefs to the research project (Creswell, 2008), which the quantitative approach does not encourage to ensure value research. Therefore qualitative research can be defined as an approach whereby the inquirer or researcher makes knowledge claims that are based on constructivist perspectives, which consist of multiple meanings of individuals. These meanings can either be socially or historically constructed with the intention of developing a theory or a pattern of meaning and understanding (Creswell, 2003). This is important in this study because the purpose of the study is to critically interrogate English First Additional Language rural teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in Acornhoek high schools, Mpumalanga Province. This links with conceptions that gaining insight into teachers' beliefs, experiences and preferences can provide insight into how teachers have socially and historically constructed their meanings of learning and teaching.

Strategies used within qualitative research include but are not limited to narratives, phenomenology, ethnography, grounded theory studies, or case studies. The researcher usually collects open-ended data with the intention of developing themes from the data to explain the experiences or phenomena encountered (Creswell, 2003). For this study the qualitative research approach is appropriate in gaining

insight into First Additional English Language teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching and pedagogical practices during English lessons. Since conceptions consist of belief systems and experiences held by individuals, it is important to interrogate and problematize these belief systems and experience for a better understanding of how they shape teaching. Secondly, the approach is appropriate because it allows the researcher to hear the stories and voices of individuals who reside in socially marginalised communities such as rural contexts (Moletsane, 2012). Alternatively, research design based on the quantitative research approach focuses on post-positivist claims of knowledge reducing the research to be about specific variables and hypotheses. The approach denotes the use of measurement and observation, and testing of theories. However there are research approaches focuses on using both qualitative and quantitative approaches simultaneously and sequentially these are called mixed methods research approaches (Creswell, 2003). The quantitative and mixed methods research approaches are inappropriate to use for this study for reasons indicated above that the study is closely oriented in the qualitative research approach.

4.4 Research Methodology

One strategy in qualitative research that seeks to inquire about the meanings made by people in social contexts is phenomenology methodology. Underpinning phenomenological studies is the philosophical assumptions found within the constructivist perspective, particularly social constructivists that individuals share meanings of their lived experiences with other people. Phenomenology is the methodology that studies individuals' direct experiences taken at face value, and determined by the phenomena from the experience (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). This study also tries to study direct experiences of teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching, which can be conscious or subconscious beliefs derived from their experiences over time (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Thompson, 1984). What is important in phenomenological studies is that the study and the researcher attempt to understand individuals' shared experiences of a phenomenon. Another crucial aspect is to understand the types of participants and sample suitable for the study.

4.5 Research Sampling

Sampling, according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), depends on a number of factors: the sample size, the access to the sample, the sampling strategy to be used and finally the representativeness of the sample. Depending on the aims and objectives of a study, a researcher can use different samples, and for this study I used purposive sampling. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) make a distinction between probability and non-probability samples. A probability sample is a sample that is drawn from a wider population, in order to make generalizations. This sample is usually random and includes simple random sampling, systematic sampling and stratified sampling to name a few sampling strategies. Considering the purpose of this study, a probability sample was not suitable since by selecting a random selection I would not be able to select specific participants that might have relevant information about my study and consequently address the research questions and objective. Thus a non-probability sample was more appropriate because it represented a specific group in the population and not the wider population as with a probability sample. The non-probability sample includes convenience sampling, dimensional sampling and purposive sampling, to name a few sampling strategies (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

4.5.1 Sampling Strategy

As briefly mentioned earlier, this study used purposive sampling to choose participants that hold “particular characteristics being sought after” by the researcher (Cohen, Manion, and Morrison, 2007, p. 115). Purposive sampling is mainly used when a researcher is trying to gain in-depth knowledge from people who have certain skills and experiences about a particular topic. This study acknowledged that the sample needed to have particular knowledge of learning and teaching of English as a FAL, thus making it purposive.

4.5.2 Participants

The participants for this study comprised six secondary school teachers, that is, three teachers from Grade 10 and three from Grade 11. The teachers were chosen based on the criteria detailed below.

Table 4: Teacher selection criteria for the study.

Currently teaching Subject:	English as a First Additional Language
School:	Rural secondary school
Province:	Mpumalanga
Area:	Currently teach in Acornhoek
Grade:	10/11 teacher
Additional information:	The teachers needed to understand English as a medium of communication and general methods of teaching in their own classrooms.

Table 5: Participant's Profile

Teachers	Gender	Grade	Number of years teaching
Teacher A	Male	Grade 11	2
Teacher B	Female	Grade 10	23
Teacher C	Male	Grade 11	27
Teacher D	Female	Grade 10	6
Teacher E	Male	Grade 11	16
Teacher F	Male	Grade 10	8

The reason for having six teachers was to balance perspectives during the data analysis processes, and also to have manageable data considering that qualitative research does not need a large sample. However, after interviews one teacher decided not to be observed, resulting in data of six interviewed teachers and five observed teachers. I decided to use the interview information because it presented important information, even though the teacher was not observed. In phenomenological studies the sample size requires 5-25 individuals who have experienced the phenomenon in question, and six teachers were still within this criteria of phenomenological studies (Creswell, 2003). The data collection process took a duration of three weeks at the research sites. Three schools were chosen within different areas of the same district, in order to understand how the notion of context shaped teachers' experiences. The schools were selected purposively on the basis of being underperforming, and also being conveniently accessible due to

partnership with Wits School of Education Rural Education programme for pre-service teaching experience. The schools were also convenient because of the longitudinal educational projects already established and conducted in some of the schools.

4.6 Research Method

Phenomenological qualitative studies use multiple sources in order to generate textual and structural descriptions of the experiences, to provide a detailed understanding of the common experiences of the participants (Creswell, 2007). The research methods that were used to collect data were interviews and observations. General interviews, according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007), are research methods that enable participants and the interviewer to gain insight into how people interpret certain situations from their own points of view. There are different types of interviews that can be used to gain insight into how people interpret situations depending on the information the researcher is looking for. There are unstructured interviews, semi-structured interviews, group interviews and structured interviews. According to Bell (2005), unstructured interviews are similar to a conversation about a topic of interest that participants are given freedom to talk about, with limited interference from the researcher. Structured interviews produce structured responses that can be easily analysed and recorded. Each type of interview uses a different protocol and often gives different results (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). The interviews were conducted first to inform the classroom observation.

Observations, according to Bell (2005), are an important data collection method because they can reveal information that is often discrete or hidden and which other data collection methods might not be able to reveal. Observations are a good method to understand if participants behave the way they say they do and increase the confirmability of the study (Bell, 2005). They can be structured or unstructured, participatory or non-participatory – each approach is dependent on what the researcher wishes to achieve. During observations the researcher needs to decide whether he/she will move from being an observer to being a participant in the observation process, by asking questions and eventually becoming accepted by the group or the participants; this is participant observation (Bell, 2005). Alternatively, the

researcher can choose to have unstructured observations which consist of an idea of where the study is going, however the researcher spends time in the field defining and structuring the idea until a certain focus emerges (Bell, 2005). Given the discussion on the two research methods, for this study semi-structured individual face-to-face interviews and non-participatory observations were used and are discussed in detail in the next sections.

4.6.1 Semi-structured individual face-to-face interviews:

The semi-structured individual face-to-face interviews were used to gather data on First Additional English Language teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in rural Acornhoek schools. For this study semi-structured individual face-to-face interviews "are generally organized around a set of predetermined open-ended questions, with other questions emerging from the dialogue between interviewer and interviewee/s" (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p. 315). This means the interviewer brings pre-determined questions, but allows for spontaneity during the interview depending on how the interviewee answers the questions. It is therefore important that a researcher pays attention to participants' responses so that he/she can be aware of meanings being conveyed. The following research questions were addressed by using semi-structured individual face-to-face interviews, and for more questions refer to appendix 5.

What are grade 10 and 11 English First Additional Language teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching?

What shapes teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching?

The semi-structured individual face-to-face interviews were conducted using an interview schedule and further questions were asked in order to allow the interviewee to elaborate more, where there was no clarity. In addition, recording the participants' responses on a tape recorder helped to make the interviews more natural and comfortable, as less time was spent writing down participants' responses. The participants were notified of the use of the tape-recorder and a consent form and letter of participation was given to each participant detailing the importance of using a tape-recorder (see appendix 2). Thus, for this research, in

order to understand teachers' conceptions the interview questions were divided into three parts, beginning with introductory questions to ease the interviewee and interviewer into the interview. Part two of the interview asked questions about the contexts and the teacher's understanding of different concepts such as learning and teaching. The third part consisted of questions regarding the teaching of English FAL in rural contexts and some of the factors involved in teaching English FAL (see appendix 5). The purpose of this structure was to guide teachers and make sure that insight was gained into all questions from the participants. Since the interviews were individual, the teachers had the freedom and flexibility to express their thoughts and understanding beyond the interview schedule.

4.6.2 Non-participant observations

Non-participatory observations were used, where the researcher spent time as an observer and had limited or no participation in the field (Creswell, 2007). The purpose of observation in this study was to gain insight into the interactions between teachers and learners in the classroom in order to identify any cues about their conceptions in relation to the pedagogical practices during poetry and short story lessons. The following research question was addressed by use of non-participatory observations:

How do teachers' conceptions shape their pedagogical practices during English lessons?

The observations were captured through the use of a video-recording device. It is difficult for researchers in general to be completely non-participant; however different degrees of participation can be explored. In this study the participant-observer form of observation was used whereby the researcher is known to the group and has less extensive contact with the group (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). In order to capture the pedagogical practices in English lessons, comprehensive audio-visual data collection was utilized. This method assisted with impartiality of the observer's view and helped overcome the tendency towards recording only the frequently occurring events or addressing the assumptions made for the study. Audio-visual data collection also helped reduce the dependence on the interpretations by the

researcher. However, it was important to be aware that the presence of video cameras might change the participants' behaviours to that of irregular norms from their everyday behaviours (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). To prepare learners and minimize disturbance, I explained to the learners why I was in their classroom and that a video-recorder would be present to record lessons.

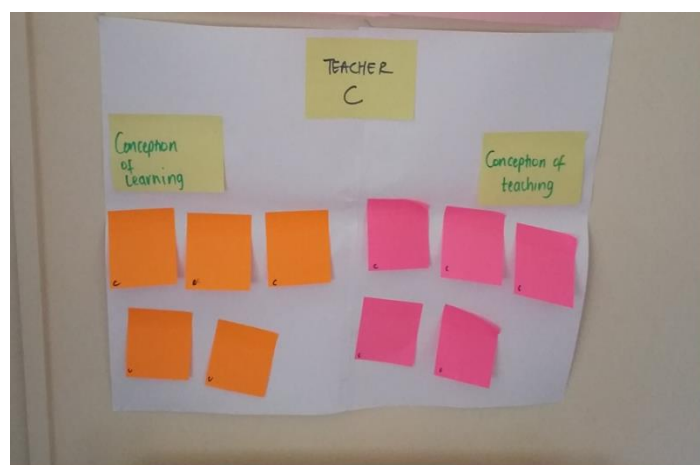
4.7 Data Analysis and Findings

All raw data in research needs to be analysed and interpreted. Data analysis according to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007,p. 461), "involves organizing, accounting for and explaining the data, which means making sense of the data in terms of the participants' definitions of the situation, noting patterns, themes, categories and regularities". The process of data analysis in this study was complex and required various stages in order to derive the findings. The data analysis process involved analysing two data sets individual face-to-face interviews and non-participatory observations. The analyses process focused on each data set separately and ensured that rich data and descriptions were achieved before looking for relationships between the two data sets (see Appendix 7 & 8). In order to help simplify this process the data analysis for the individual face-to-face interviews will be detailed first then it will be followed by the analysis from the classroom observations. The first reason for analysing the data set in this manner was to ensure that the data sets remain trustworthy and that there is consistency between the participants. The second reason is that in order to understand whether (or not) teachers' conceptions shape their pedagogical practices during English lessons the data set from interviews needs to be detailed. As mentioned earlier the interview data set informed the observations data set.

4.7.1 Data analysis and findings from individual face-to-face interviews.

The first phase of the data analysis process began with the transcriptions of the individual face-to-face interviews, which consisted of transcribing verbatim the audio-recordings and understanding the participants' perspectives. A list of significant statements from the participants' responses was developed and classified into two

broad themes: teachers' conceptions of learning and teachers' conceptions of teaching. These responses were displayed on poster charts in the photographs



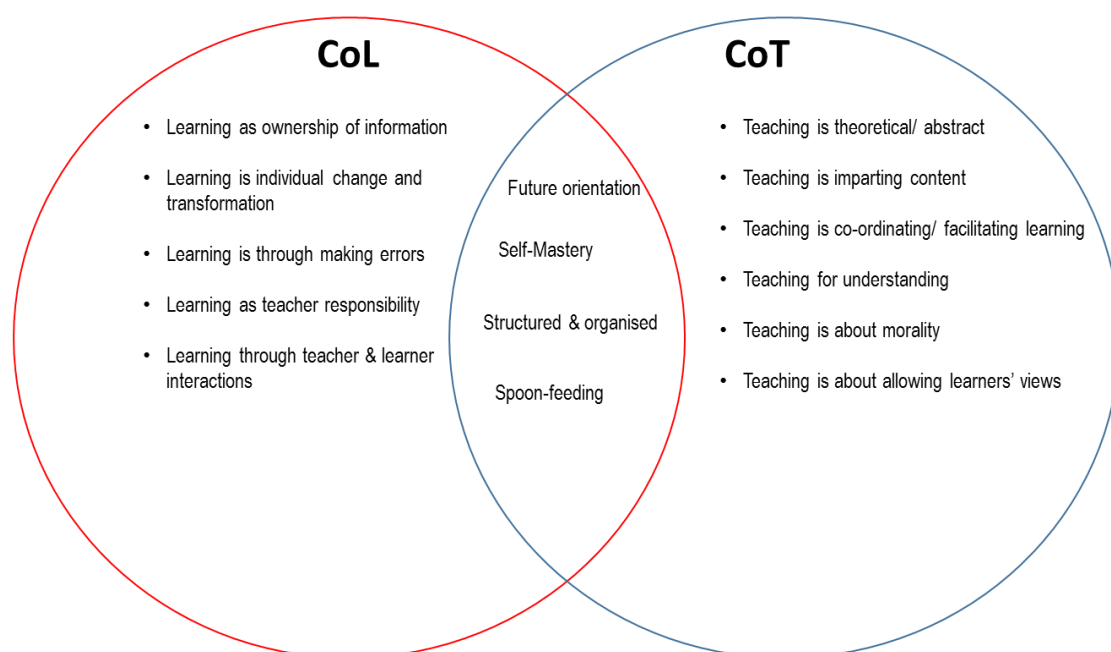
Photograph 3: Stage one of the interview data analysis process.

Teacher C, Maru High School.

The above process was used to analyse all six teachers' interviews, this process is called horizontalization of data as each participant was analysed individually in order to identify the teachers' responses in detail, for comprehensive representation of this stage (see appendix 8) (Creswell (2007). Since the methodology of the study was phenomenological, it involved understanding the teachers' lived experiences of learning and teaching in rural schools. Thus the list of statements had to be critically analysed and led the second phase of analysis which is represented in appendix 9, which details teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching with possible related factors, inferences or reasons for constructing those conceptions.

The third phase of analysis involved grouping participants statements with reference to conceptions of learning and conceptions of teaching. A list of statements was drawn to represent all the participants' responses. And in order to illustrate the similarities and differences of these statements a Venn diagram was used (appendix 10). The Venn diagram shows similarities and differences between teachers' conceptions of learning and conceptions of teaching from all six participants. The

similarities are captured where the two conceptions interlink, resulting in those statements being common for both conceptions of learning and conceptions of teaching.



Venn Diagram 1: Similarities and differences between teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching.

The forth data analysis phase critical analysed the findings represented in the Venn diagram above through the use of critical discourse analysis. Critical discourse analysis was used in order to engage with the participants' responses from their individual face-to-face interviews in order to draw inferences from these responses to answer the research questions. Through the use of critical discourse analysis I was able to identify sets of linguistic material that were coherent in order to construct meaning of the participants' responses, particularly in understanding the invisible forces that influence teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in poetry and short stories in rural schools (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). This analysis resulted in themes and sub-themes which are detailed in Table 5 and Table 6 below (see appendix 11). Table 5 details teachers' conceptions of learning and the themes that were identified from the data. Table 6 indicates major themes derived from

factors or inferences that were then used to organise teachers' conceptions of teaching. It is at this forth phase that the findings of the study are detailed and are discussed further in chapter five.

Table 6: Themes and sub-themes of teachers' conceptions of learning

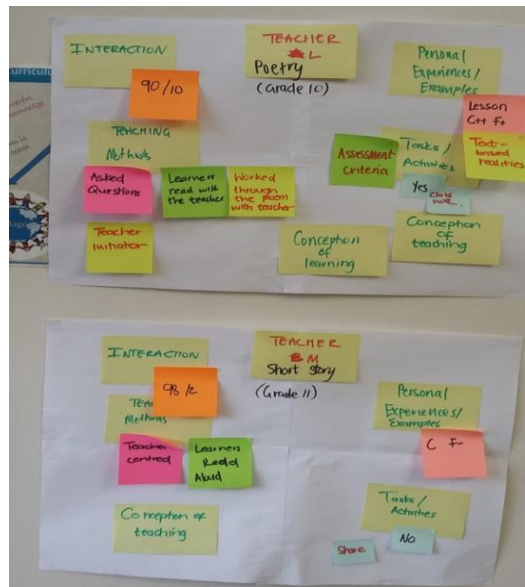
THEME ONE	TEACHERS' CONCEPTIONS OF LEARNING AS LEARNERS	INFERENCE/ REASON/FACTOR
SUB-THEME 1	LEARNING AS MIMICKING, REPRODUCING AND MEMORISING	
1	Learning through memorisation	Lack of resources
2	Learning through mimicking	To acquire the from the teacher
3	Learning as reproducing information	Personal trait
SUB-THEME 2	LEARNING AS SELF-INITIATED	
1	Learning as self-study	Lack of resources and teacher pedagogy, overcrowded-link to context
2	Learning as reading	Lack of resources
3	Learning is internalizing what you read	Past learning experiences
THEME TWO	TEACHERS' CONCEPTION OF LEARNING AS TEACHERS	
SUB-THEME 1	LEARNING FOR /WITH SELF	
1	Learning as Mastery	Personal trait
2	Learning as ownership of information	Personal trait-from school
3	Learning is structured & organised	Policy
4	Learning is individual change and transformation	Personal trait
SUB-THEME 2	LEARNING FOR/WITH OTHERS	
1	Learning as teacher responsibility	Learner perception
2	Learning is when being taught by a teacher	Learner perception
3	Learning through teacher & learner interactions	Personal
4	Learning for future	Socio-economic

Table 7: Themes of teachers' conceptions of teaching.

THEMES	TEACHERS CONCEPTION OF TEACHING
Teaching as transforming learners and coordinating learning	
	Planned & organized
	Teaching is co-ordinating/ facilitating learning
	Teaching as ownership of information and change
Teaching as telling and spoon-feeding	
	Teaching as spoon-feeding
	Teaching as telling
	Teaching is theoretical/ abstract
	Teaching is imparting content
Teaching as unlocking the mind and life-long learning	
	Teaching as unlocking the mind
	Teaching as life-long learning

4.7.2 Data analysis and findings from non-participatory classroom observations.

The video-recorded observations were watched and descriptive notes were written on the structure of the lessons. The annotated notes detailed how the lesson was introduced, the content taught, the questions the teacher asked, the responses by the learners, the tasks or activities that were given to learners and how the teacher concluded the lesson (see appendix 7). It should be noted that *Teacher A* was not observed after deciding not to be observed. It is from the above aspects that participants' responses were coded and categorized using broader conceptions such as interactions and activities. The above process was the second phase of the data analysis for the classroom observation. This process is detailed in photograph 4, where each participant's lesson observation was explicated.



Photograph 4: Stage two of classroom observation

The above process was very difficult and tedious to analyse as the conceptual framework was not introduced yet to the data analysis process. The process involved analysing the raw data from the classroom observations, and this was difficult to remain objective and allow the data to 'speak for itself'. Ultimately I decide which elements of the observed lessons are important and which ones are not as indicated in photograph above, with the help of my supervisor. However through the use of conceptual frameworks detailed in chapter 3 I was able to gain great insight into the classroom observations, this was third phase of the analysis process. Although the criteria of analysis was the same across the participants, each teacher was analysed individually. In order to capture the pedagogical relations in the classrooms and the forms of pedagogies enacted, Bernstein's framework of visible and invisible pedagogy was used and the results are outlined in table 7 below.

Table 8: The visibility and invisibility of Acornhoek teachers' lessons.

BERNSTEIN (2003) VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE PEDAGOGY

KEY:

IMP-IMPLICIT
EXP-EXPLICIT

ANALYTICAL CRITERIA	TEACHER A	TEACHER B	TEACHER C	TEACHER D	TEACHER E	TEACHER F
Hierarchical Rules		Explicit	Explicit	Explicit	Explicit	Explicit
Sequencing Rules		Explicit	Explicit	Explicit	Explicit	Explicit
Criteria Rules		Limited Explicit	Not clear	Explicit	Explicit	Implicit

In order to capture how and when the pedagogies detailed in Bernstein's framework (2003) were active and enacted, Alexander's framework on the generic model of teaching was used. This framework focused on explicating what was observed in the lesson, from the forms of lessons to the type of activities that the learners engaged with. Table 8 below shows the findings for the participants in the study.

Table 9 :A generic model of teaching in grade 10 and 11 poetry and short story lessons in Acornhoek schools.

ALEXANDER (2009) THE ACT OF TEACHING						
	TEACHER A:	TEACHER B: Grade 10-poetry	TEACHER C: Grade 11-Short story	TEACHER D: Grade 10-Short story	TEACHER E: Grade 11-Short story	TEACHER F: Grade 10- Poetry
1. Lesson structure and form						
Unitary lesson structures		X-it is difficult to make out the purpose of the lesson. Introduction Development No conclusion	X- Recap Development-learners selected to read the story to the class. No conclusion	X Introduction Development-learners' volunteer to read the story to the class. Conclusion-asking one question	X Introduction Development-learners' volunteer to read the story to the class. No conclusion	X Introduction Development Conclusion
Episodic lesson structure		_____	The short stories are part of an assessment task learners must do for their portfolio	_____	_____	_____
2. Frame of teaching						
Learner organisation & Space		Neat straight rows	No rows, tables placed randomly	Some rows visible but not neatly placed.	Neat rows, some there were two learners per table.	Neat rows, learners sharing tables.
3. The acts of teaching						
a. Task						
Unitary tasks		X	X-reads the questions out to the learners, they are given homework	_____	_____	X-Learners given homework
Episodic tasks		_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
b. Activities						
d. Assessments			Learners are given homework task from the prescribed book.	No task or activity-no time	No task or activity-no time	Teachers created homework questions.
Formative Feedback		_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Summative Feedback		X	_____	_____	_____	_____

As indicated in chapter 3, three conceptual frameworks were used and the third conceptual framework is that of Scott and Mortimer (2005), which focused on the types ideas and interactions that take place in the classrooms. These responses were coded for a detailed analysis on the coding process see appendix 15. Table 9 below provides an overview and combined findings for all the teachers. The table below captures the the total of the most frequent to least frequent questions, responses, interactions and ideas of the five teachers observed.

Table 10: Overview of possible question forms, evident in grade 10 and 11 poetry and short story lessons in Acornhoek schools.

COMBINED DATA FROM ALL THE TEACHERS		
CODE	DESCRIPTION OF CODE	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
AUTHORATIVE TEACHER DISCUSSION	The teacher initiates and leads the discussion and sticks to the topic or theme.	5
NOMINATED QUESTION	Teacher nominates a learner after learner to respond to the same question	4
TEACHER REPEATS QUESTION ASKS DIFFERENT LEARNER	Teacher repeats the question after a learners response to another learner	4
TEACHERS ASKS FOR CONSENSUS	Teachers asks for consensus from the whole class	4
TEACHER REPHRASES ANSWER	Teacher rephrases answer from a learner	3
TEACHER PROMPTS OR GIVES CUES	Teacher provides cues before the question or after the question	3
PURE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	Teacher acknowledges a response but does not seek further engagement	3
FOLLOW UP QUESTION TO THE SAME LEARNER	Teacher asks a follow up question from the same learner	2
NO EXPLANATION	Learners respond without providing any explanation.	2
FACTUAL	Learners give a factual or text-based response.	2
ELICIT ELABORATION OR EXPLANATION	Teachers asks for learner to explain or elaborate their answer	2
TEACHER ASKS FOR OTHER IDEAS	Teacher asks for other learners to provide further ideas to what has been said	2
CLOSED	Teacher elicits limited responses from learners	1
OPEN	Teacher elicits various responses from learners	1
OPEN EXPLANATION	Teacher elicits an explanation or justification-why do you say that?	1
DIRECTED QUESTION	Teacher directs a question to a particular learner	1

TEACHER EVALUATION	Teacher evaluates whether the answer is right or wrong	1
TEACHER MOVES ON	Teacher changes the discussion or topic	1
TEACHER IGNORES LEARNER	Teacher ignores a learner's response	1

Although the analysis process analysed the two data sets separately, the findings should be understood from a holistic and integrated perspective. It is from the above analysis process that rich descriptions of the data was written to ensure that the data and study maintained its credibility and trustworthiness. The research methods used in this study yielded large data to be analysed, hence the long and detailed analysis process.

4.8 Personal account: In the footsteps of the participant and researcher

The journey to balance being a researcher and participant was difficult, especially when attempting not to impose my ideas on the research site. Qualitative studies are challenging at remaining unbiased, and more so in phenomenological studies. According to Creswell (2007), in phenomenological studies having knowledge of common experiences with the participants might be an advantage to the researcher as this helps build trustworthiness in the study. Like any other study, when a researcher enters a research site they are strangers to the participants, and it can be difficult to gain the trust of participants, particularly if they are to be observed. My personal account was not any different – some teachers agreed to participate in the study, however they were uncomfortable with being observed, thus they withdrew from the study. Another setback was that I took ill and had to be off for a few days which then delayed the data collection process and teachers had other commitments. The purpose of phenomenological research is to maintain the environment of the participants and not inconvenience them. The research process is complicated because on one hand you do not want to inconvenience the participants, but on the other hand there is a need to conduct and complete the research within a specified time. It required constant reflection on when I should introduce my personal experiences without compromising the integrity of the research. It was difficult, but being conscious that I was at the research site as a

researcher helped, as well as asking participants their opinions rather than offering advice.

4.9 Trustworthiness, Credibility and Confirmability

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), in order for a research study to be trustworthy, it needs to meet certain criteria. The trustworthiness of a research study is dependent on whether it is credible, transferable, dependable and conformable.

4.9.1 Credibility

In this study credibility was evaluated through giving the participants the transcripts of the interview, to check whether the conversation recorded was what they intended without any discrepancies. The process is also known as member-checking (Creswell, 2008). The interviewer still needs to be aware of his/her biases when transcribing the audio-tape so as not to put his/her own opinion on what the interviewee was trying to say, thus increasing the credibility of the study (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). In addition to the use of video-recording, audio-taping the participants' interviews was crucial as it added another level of credibility because teachers' responses can be inferred between the two research methods to find consistencies.

4.9.2 Transferability

Transferability is when findings can be applied to other contexts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Lincoln and Guba (1985), state that in order to ensure that data can be transferable to other contexts the data must provide rich and detailed explanations of the data collected, so that other researchers can transfer it to other contexts. In this study, the collected data was analysed and meanings drawn from the interviewees and observations were detailed in order to authentically represent the responses of the teachers. The use of two research methods on the same teachers provides deep data that can be transferred to another context in the future.

4.9.3 Dependability

Through the use of the similarities and differences within the participants' responses as well as two research methods and six participants, the data has a high rate of dependability. Another way to ensure that the data collected is consistent with the interpretation is through the advice of the research supervisor checking if the data is consistent and correctly transcribed (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The supervisor read and helped with analysing sample of the data. It was important that the interview questions remained constant and that similar conditions were applied to all the participants if applicable.

4.9.4 Confirmability

Confirmability was achieved firstly by the interviewer being a research instrument in the study and building a relationship with the interviewees. In this study I immersed myself in the study by interacting with the social and school contexts and participants with their responses, for the purpose of understanding their experiences and meanings within their contexts. My research supervisor was also present on the research site to ensure that the interviews scheduled were conducted efficiently. It was through this process of constructive feedback and commenting that confirmability was achieved.

Therefore the more rigorous the above processes are during the study, the more trustworthy the study. The aim of the researcher is to understand the participants' perspectives from the participants' points of view. However since this is a qualitative study it is difficult to remove my own perspective in the study as this might compromise any of the abovementioned criteria of trustworthiness.

4.10 Ethics

As with any research instrument used, there are ethical issues the researcher needs to consider when conducting interviews. According to DiCicco-Bloom and Crabtree (2006, p. 319), there are four main ethical issues to consider when conducting interviews.

- "reducing the risk of unanticipated harm;

- protecting the interviewee's information;
- effectively informing interviewees about the nature of the study, and
- reducing the risk of exploitation"

The four main ethical issues detailed above are important for researchers to engage with as they provide important boundaries and protection for all involved in the research. Below, these points are explicated for further detail and clarity.

4.10.1 Informed consent

The interviewees were given two informed consent forms, one a letter asking them to partake in the study and the second asking for the interviewees' informed consent to be interviewed, audio-taped and video-taped through a digital recording device and video camera for validity and reliability purposes of the study (see appendix 2).

4.10.2 Anonymity

The teachers' identities would only be known to me and my supervisor; in the study the five teachers were given pseudonyms "teacher A-F", to hide their original identities to ensure anonymity. In addition, all information shared in the interviews would remain confidential and anonymous. The transcriptions from the audio-tape and video recordings would be stored in a password protected folder on my laptop and remote flash drive which only the researcher and supervisor would have access to. Under academic conditions the research supervisor would be granted access to analyse the transcripts and view the video recordings. Transcripts would be kept for 5 years before being deleted from the system. The participants were informed of all of the information above.

4.10.3 Right to withdraw

Thirdly, the participants were informed of the study and its purposes in advance before the interview sessions commenced. The participants were informed that they had the right to withdraw from the research study at any time if they did not wish to continue. They were also informed that they would not be held liable for withdrawing from the study. Finally, participants were told that the study was not for any personal gain, that it was for academic purposes only, and that they would not be paid for

participating in the study. However, they would be anonymously acknowledged for participating in the study and if possible an intervention plan would be drafted in the areas of need that might emerge from the data. (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006).

4.11 Conclusion

A qualitative approach is suitable for this study because it provides a framework to design a blueprint in understanding the experiences, knowledge and conceptions Grade 10 and 11 First Additional English teachers hold of learning and teaching. Choosing a purposive and convenience sampling enriches the study because it is assumed that participants will have knowledge on conceptions of learning and teaching English in a rural context, as opposed to randomly selected participants. Semi-structured individual interviews are suitable as a research method because research questions focusing on teachers' conceptions allow the participants to elaborate their thoughts and experiences of learning and teaching English in rural secondary schools. Classroom observations provide insight into the forms of pedagogical choices teachers make in rural schools and insight that can be gained from those practices. These research methods allow the participants' experiences and practices to be analysed coherently, and simultaneously deeper meaning is to be drawn for further developments in the study.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conceptions of learning and teaching: A generational curse between old and new ideas

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings holistically from the analysis of semi-structured individual face-to-face interviews and non-participatory observations of six secondary school teachers in Acornhoek, rural Mpumalanga. The themes that emerged from teachers' conceptions of learning are discussed first, followed by themes on teachers' conceptions of teaching, and lastly findings that emerge from the conceptual frameworks. All the findings are related and should not be read in isolation but interrelatedly. The analysis of teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching was complex and challenging, as mentioned earlier, as the former examined two different time periods during teachers' lives. The first time period focused on teachers' conceptions of learning when they were still young, attending school as learners, and the second time period explored teachers' conceptions of learning as either student teachers in college and/or university and professional teachers. In addition, teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching were shaped by various factors such as curriculum expectations, availability of resources, and perceptions that teachers held of learners in rural schools, which added to the complex analysis of the data. The research questions below were asked in semi-structured individual face-to-face interviews:

What are grade 10 and 11 English First Additional Language teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching?

What influences teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching?

The following research sub-questions were addressed by non-participatory classroom observations:

How do teachers' conceptions shape their pedagogical practices during English lessons?

Before I engage with the findings and discussion, I present a summary of the findings and related themes and sub-themes in Table 5 and Table 6 below for the readers to understand the organisation of the findings and the complexity I explained earlier.

Table 5: Themes and sub-themes of teachers' conceptions of learning

THEME ONE	TEACHERS' CONCEPTIONS OF LEARNING AS LEARNERS	INFERENCE/REASON/FACTOR
SUB-THEME 1	LEARNING AS MIMICKING, REPRODUCING AND MEMORISING	
1	Learning through memorisation	Lack of resources
2	Learning through mimicking	To acquire the information from the teacher
3	Learning as reproducing information	Personal trait
SUB-THEME 2	LEARNING AS SELF-INITIATED	
1	Learning as self-study	Lack of resources and teacher pedagogy, overcrowded – link to context
2	Learning as reading	Lack of resources
3	Learning as internalizing what you read	Past learning experiences
THEME TWO	TEACHERS' CONCEPTIONS OF LEARNING AS TEACHERS	
SUB-THEME 1	LEARNING FOR/WITH SELF	
1	Learning as Mastery	Personal trait
2	Learning as ownership of information	Personal trait – from school
3	Learning as structured and organised	Policy
4	Learning as individual change and transformation	Personal trait
SUB-THEME 2	LEARNING FOR/WITH OTHERS	
1	Learning as teacher responsibility	Learner perception
2	Learning is when being taught by a teacher	Learner perception
3	Learning through teacher and learner interactions	Personal
4	Learning for future	Socio-economic

Table 6: Themes of teachers' conceptions of teaching.

THEMES	TEACHERS' CONCEPTIONS OF TEACHING
Teaching as transforming learners and coordinating learning	
	Planned and organized
	Teaching as co-ordinating/ facilitating learning
	Teaching as ownership of information and change
Teaching as telling and spoon-feeding	
	Teaching as spoon-feeding
	Teaching as telling
	Teaching as theoretical/abstract
	Teaching as imparting content
Teaching as unlocking the mind and life-long learning	
	Teaching as unlocking the mind
	Teaching as life-long learning

Teachers' conceptions of learning resulted in two major themes with each theme detailing two sub-themes. The first theme is called '*Teachers' conceptions of learning as learners*', and consists of two sub-themes namely '**Learning as mimicking, reproducing and memorising information**' and '**Learning as self-initiated**'. The first theme discusses teachers' past learning experiences as learners at school and institution of higher learning, and how the experiences have shaped their conceptions of learning. The first sub-theme within this theme focuses on the teachers' conceptions of '**Learning as reproducing and memorising information**'. The second sub-theme '**Learning as self-initiated**' focuses on the teacher's individual capacity to initiate the learning process without much help from their teachers, despite lack of learning resources and other factors prevalent in rural schools, such as overcrowding.

The second major theme is *teachers' conceptions of learning as teachers*. This theme refers to teachers' conceptions as professionals, and some teachers showed a change or shift from the conceptions they had held when they were learners. In this theme two sub-themes '***Learning for/with self***' and '***Learning for/with others***' were identified. The first sub-theme '***Learning for/with self***' discusses teachers' conceptions of learning that relate to individual development or change within or for the individual. This sub-theme details conceptions of learning which are concerned with how learning is perceived or can be achieved for individual growth. Conceptions of learning in this sub-theme are mainly influenced by personal choice largely from previous experiences in teacher training institutions and schools. The second sub-theme '***Learning for/with others***' focuses on teachers' conceptions of learning that involve others. The sub-theme presents findings that support the idea that the learning process is initiated by others, mainly the teacher, and its focus is on the teacher as the main source that helps learners with the learning process.

For teachers' conceptions of teaching, three themes were identified, namely; '***Teaching as transforming learners and coordinating learning***', '***Teaching as telling and spoon-feeding***' and '***Teaching as unlocking the mind and life-long learning***'.

The transcript of the semi-structured individual face-to-face interviews can be found in Appendix 6. In addition, the detailed data analysis process for semi-structured individual face-to-face interviews can be found in Appendices 8-11, including the Venn diagram which details the similarities and differences between teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching.

5.2 Teachers' conceptions of learning as learners

As mentioned earlier, two sub-themes were identified: '*Learnings as mimicking, reproducing and memorization of information*' and '*Learning as self-initiated*'.

5.2.1 Learning as mimicking, reproducing and memorization of information

In this sub-theme participants talked about the experiences of learning that required mimicking, reproducing and memorising information that was presented by the teacher(s). Teacher C stated that at school “...*I used to make it a point that I memorize some of the things that were said*”, by a teacher that is seemingly perceived as the information giver. The response suggests that the participant appears to have only been exposed to learning word by word presented information, for the purpose of memorizing it, to possibly regurgitate the information back to the teacher during assessment. Considering this experience, it is assumed that the form of memorisation was ‘mechanical memorization’, which means that the knowledge is ‘dead knowledge’ because it cannot be retained for a long time because it is stored in short memory to serve a particular purpose. This memorization can be contrasted with ‘memorization with understanding’, which means individuals are able to retain what they already understand and is a strategy that can be used to achieve deep learning (Cai & Wang, 2009, p. 275; Wang, 2010). For the participant it appears that the focus was on receiving most of what the teacher was saying rather than understanding and critiquing what was being said (Wang, 2010). Similarly Teacher A stated that “*I study through the whole chapter, and later on put the textbook aside and reproduce the very same things I’ve studied in my empty book ... I will do that until it looks like I crammed the information*”. This process of learning is interesting because the word “study” seems to be used synonymously with learning as memorizing because of importance is to remember “... *the whole chapter ... reproduce the very same things I’ve studied ...*”, and not necessarily make meaning of the information and appears to be perceived as better than ‘cramming’ information. The response suggests that the chapter is read repetitiously so that it resembles the original information when it is reproduced, which appears to mean the information has been learnt for understanding because “... *it looks like I crammed the information.*” It appears that participants confuse learning for memorization with learning for understanding, because reproducing information seems to be perceived to mean understanding of the information.

Regarding memorization, Cai and Wang (2009) argue that there are two types of memorization linked to understanding. One type is memorization before understanding and the second type is memorization after understanding. In their study Cai and Wang's (2009) findings show that memorization before understanding can be an intermediate stage to initiate learning, while memorization after understanding is about making sure the information is understood then memorised for knowledge application. It therefore appears that Teacher C and Teacher A talk about memorization as an intermediate stage to initiate learning, because they do not seem to learn for internalizing and restructuring the information for meaning making and 'own' the information. Furthermore, Teacher A used the word "*crammed*" which suggests that the information was packed in the brain for a short period of time, in order to reproduce the knowledge as accurately as possible and not necessarily to own the knowledge for future use.

For Teacher F the choice of words was also interesting: "*... I tried my level best to mimic what the teachers were saying ... and also acquiring knowledge from the tutors*". This response suggests that the participant put in effort to 'acquire' word by word what the teacher was saying, possibly to give it back to the teacher 'as is', which might be perceived as showing understanding of what the teacher was teaching. This way of learning appears to be tolerable as the participant "*... tried my level best...*" to acquire as much information from the teacher as possible, presumably without participating in the process of teaching and learning. This discussion does not overlook the possible role that teachers played in shaping participants' conceptions of learning, because sometimes the way teachers teach shapes learners' understanding of learning. The participant's response also suggest that this way of learning was familiar and the only way of learning, as it was also practiced in the teachers' college. The tutor was the centre of knowledge because learning was about "*... acquiring knowledge...*" presumably in a passive way, rather than being proactive in the process of learning, for the purpose of restructuring and reconceptualising the information to show understanding. In particular that the participant was attending in a higher institution of learning, that requires a particular way of learning. The teacher and/or tutor seem to be perceived as the knowledgeable person who needs to be listened to carefully, possibly making it important to 'mimic' and 'acquire' the knowledge as is. While the participants did not

mention what they did with the memorized, mimicked, and acquired knowledge, the manner of doing it proposes learning to regurgitate the information for later requirements or assessments. Franz et al. (1996, in Dahlgren, Dahlgren, Hult, Hård af Segerstad, Szkudlarek, 2006) find that the conception of learning as doing what the teacher expects, means that individuals produce “an outcome” similar to that of the teacher or instructor. Furthermore, the conception of learning as memorising is defined as “absorbing unit specific content, particularly what is likely to be covered in tests and examinations”, which corresponds with the earlier statement that learning as regurgitation is often linked with learning for assessments (Franz et al., 1996, in Dahlgren et al., 2006, p. 8).

The participants’ responses seem to suggest different factors that shape their understanding of learning, as mentioned earlier, which is possibly teachers’ and/or tutors’ ways of teaching and also their beliefs about learning. While it can be argued that sometimes a teacher’s pedagogical approach can influence the manner of learning, the agency of participants can also play a role in the choices made about learning, especially when for some of them a particular way of learning was also practiced in teachers’ college. This shows that it might have been a personal choice because there was no change in a new and different context. Thus the findings from Acornhoek teachers as learners in school and students in teacher training confirm some of Marton and Saljo’s (1976) findings: learning as a qualitative increase in knowledge, memorizing, and the acquisition of facts, although it is unclear how learners’ knowledge is increased in this way of learning. According to Loughran (2010), the participants’ conceptions of learning lead to a surface learning approach associated with behaviourist theories of learning, which require learners, or teachers in this study, to learn through memorising facts and accumulation of “atomized bits of knowledge” (Shepard, 2000, p. 5). Even though the findings show strong relations with those of Marton and Saljo’s (1976); Bruce and Gerner (1995) and Franz et al. (1996, in Dahlgren et al., 2006), they did not explicate which factors contributed to their participants reproducing conceptions of learning. Even though it could be argued that they were not focusing on that, it could have been helpful to understand what shapes the conceptions. For this study the learning context, that is teachers, and possibly participants’ personalities shaped their conceptions as some did not change when they were in a new context that needed a particular way of learning.

5.2.2 Learning as self-initiated

This sub-theme focuses on how some teachers, even though faced with the negative conditions in their school and society, chose to take control of their learning process as compared to the teachers discussed above. The findings do not justify the possibility that these conceptions of learning might be surface learning, however the findings demonstrate the willingness and pro-action teachers embarked on to make learning a personal process. While Teacher E seemed to use learning and reading interchangeably, the response suggests ownership of the learning process which might lead to learning for understanding and self-improvement. The participant said *“... at school I’ve been motivated to learn ... I had developed something inside to read to learn”*, which suggests not only engaging with reading for the sake of doing it, but for the purpose of understanding what is read and what to learn from what is read. The aspect of *“... read to learn”* links with Freire and Macedo’s (1987, p. 23) concept of “reading the word and reading the world”, which means engaging with information critically not only for immediate understanding but to make sense of the broader society and the world. The participant appears to always take the initiative in the learning process and not only rely on the teacher, but uses self-motivation to read for the purpose of learning. Through a particular way of reading, words can help to network and connect various perspectives from around the world, giving the word meaning beyond the current context. This conception of learning as reading corroborates McConnachie’s (2000) findings with grade 7 learners in South Africa who also viewed learning as reading, however other studies did not mention such findings. The conception of ‘learning as reading’ might also be perceived as indicating confusion and lack of clarity between the meaning of the two words, because reading and learning are not the same and do not mean the same process, although interrelated. This will be further explored in PhD study because it is of interest that some participants think of these words as the same, and why is that the case, is something to find out. Thus in addition to the previous findings, this findings suggest that some participants initiated their learning without waiting for a teacher, in that way establishing particular ways of engaging with the knowledge. This means learning is self-initiated because meaning-making also depends on how the participant engages with reading to be able to learn something from the read information.

What is interesting about the participants is that they all grew up and attended schools in similar contexts in Limpopo and Mpumalanga, but have different conceptions of learning. This possibly means that although context plays a role in influencing teachers' conceptions of learning there are other factors such as policy, teacher training and personal traits that can also influence teachers. Considering the teachers' conceptions, it became important to identify the factors that shaped their responses on conceptions.

5.2.3 Factors influencing the conceptions

As part of the second research question mentioned earlier, the findings in this section suggest various factors that influenced participants' conceptions of learning, in addition to the earlier mentioned, as shown in Table 5. The identified factors are: lack of resources, acquiring knowledge from the teacher, personal traits, teachers' pedagogy, overcrowded classrooms, policy, learner perceptions, socio-economic factors and past learning experiences. The participants' responses expressed that some of the factors identified above influenced how they learned at school. For example, Teacher F said the school *"...was very bad because we were learning under the trees..."* which was a difficult teaching and learning situation without proper infrastructure that promoted good learning. Despite these challenges the participant seemed not to have allowed this situation to dictate learning, and was instead pro-active and resorted to individual learning and self-study. Teacher A added that the conditions were worsened by *"...overcrowding in our classes, and that made it difficult for our teachers to actually interact with us one-on-one"*, possibly resulting in learning through cramming and reproducing the knowledge from the textbook, because it appears that a teacher was not easily accessible. While it could be argued that overcrowding is also experienced in township schools, the possible difference with rural schools is that some teachers are under-trained and/or untrained in this context and lack of proper professional development. Mukeredzi (2013) found that South African rural teachers did not have professional development from their whole-school meetings, parent-teacher gatherings, and mentoring. The above challenges and factors were shaped by contextual factors

such as large classes and socio-economic issues that often led to teachers adopting and perpetuating teacher-centred pedagogies in rural areas.

In Teacher C's school *"...books were scarce ..."* and thus memorizing information a teacher said appears to be the way to learn, because there were no books to help re-learn what the teacher taught for individual understanding. The lack of books presumably meant resources had to be shared or were limited, leading to surface learning, reproducing information and remembering facts as a means to learning. Attakumah and Tulasi (2015) state that if learners do not have sufficient textbooks and have to share, this might lead to low academic achievement and quality of education. This plays itself out in different ways in different contexts, and it could be argued that in farm and rural areas lack of resources and infrastructure is more intense than in urban schools, because the latter have additional places to gain content knowledge other than school. Furthermore, the UNESCO report (1985, p. 122) states that without adequate resources and libraries in schools "learning to learn cannot succeed and the effectiveness of lifelong education will be reduced" subsequently leading to inadequate learning. Thus the majority of the participants seem to have experienced ineffective life-long learning while in school, although it does not mean it remained this way forever. A different response came from Teacher E *"...I've been brought up by a single parent, my mother was struggling... It motivated me to change and become something better in life"*. The participant believed that self-motivation and taking leadership and ownership of the learning process could possibly result in a better life, rather than being 'trapped' in the home and social context. Pillay, Purdie and Boulton-Lewis (2000) link self-concept with intrinsic motivation and suggest that when individuals view themselves positively they tend to adopt deep approaches to learning. These are some of the factors that shape participants' conceptions of learning, and they show diversity of home, school, and personal traits addressing the complexity of factors.

Considering teachers' conceptions of learning as young learners in schools, the following conceptions reflect teachers in a profession. With these conceptions in mind, it is interesting the way some teachers transferred some of their views of learning into their professional work. Although the following sub-theme focuses on teachers' conceptions of learning when they are professionals, there are some

similar perceptions to those identified by teachers' conceptions while they were learners.

5.3 Teachers' conceptions of learning as professional teachers

The possible reason some participants showed changes in their conceptions is that although the context remained the same, the conceptions of learning changed as some teachers started their journey to becoming professional teachers. Within this theme there are two sub-themes that emerged: *Learning for/with self* and *Learning for/with others*.

5.3.1 Learning for/with self

When teachers referred to learning in this sub-theme, they viewed learning as an individual process that must be achieved by an individual or for individual growth. As mentioned earlier, some conceptions in this section might relate to the earlier mentioned conceptions in the previous section. Teacher E stated that “... *whatever you read about, you must learn something out of it and internalize it*”, which links with the conception of learning when young that “... *I had developed something inside to read to learn.*” This conception shows that the participant always perceived learning beyond the classroom, as something an individual has to take ownership of and re-organize the information as the process of making meaning and internalize the knowledge. Thus learning something for the participant suggests not only the acquisition of information, which is part of learning, but also ensuring the knowledge is possibly interrogated for better understanding. This response relates to the cognitivist constructivist notions of learning because it is about mentally constructing meaning from a person's environment and creating one's own learning process (Piaget, 1964; Forrester & Jantzie, 1998). From this perspective, learning is viewed as an internal process which must be left to the individual to try and make meaning of the learnt information or knowledge, and that irrespective of the context it depends on the individual's characteristics. Maclellan (1997) argues that reading to learn helps with understanding the topic and new ideas in a text. Saljo (1984, as cited in Maclellan, 1997) states that in general the concept of reading to learn is supposed to

develop cognitive structures which can be used for complex thinking, leading to internalization of knowledge. Thus the participant's conception shows the ability to learn for deeper understanding of information, moving beyond regurgitation.

Teacher A elaborated on the notion of internalization and said “...*when you learn, you own the information, it stays in you and you can actually change – it changes you...*” This response suggests that learning is about owning the information being learnt, through engaging with the information critically for it to stay internalized. This way of engaging with knowledge also leads to thinking differently about the information, consequently changing the person's way of thinking about the words and the world. The concept of internalization can also be associated with Vygotsky, in the sense that the teacher was able to take the knowledge they had learned in the external world and transform it into an internal mental process to own it. The teacher further said that learning is about being “... *a life-long learner...*”, because it possibly mean you ‘own the information’ that change your perceptions about the world and changes an individual. Thus learning is a continuous process for a person to grow and change, and relates to Marton and Saljo's (1976) sixth conception of learning as change. It is the most elaborated conception, since it acknowledges and critically engages with the amenability of conceptions. This participant shows a change in the way learning is understood from the schooling year experience to the professional experience, because it is no longer about reading the textbook for the reproduction of knowledge but is about learning to change the world-view and being a life-long learner. Learning as change indicates that individuals have the ability to transform and change over time and through experience, hence teachers in this study showed varying conceptions of learning at different periods of their lives. This change makes it interesting to observe the teacher's approach in the classroom, which will be discussed shortly.

Teacher C stated that “*To me learning is about learning something in order to master something or particular subject*”. This response seems to suggest that what is learned has to show a high degree of competence and mastery of a specific subject, equating the knowledge with experts. The word “*master*” further suggests that for the participant learning is about striving for higher mental functioning, and that the individual can be trusted to self-regulate the knowledge without help from others.

The above conceptions of learning for/with self, show that although teachers reproduced the conceptions of learning they had experienced when they were young, some had shifted and were able to operate within conceptions of learning that were transformative. Transforming conceptions is concerned with making meaningful connections between new and old ideas and information, and leads to learning as change within a person (Brown, Lake & Matters, 2008). Even though some teachers indicated that conceptions of learning could change over time, these ideas were contradictory as some teachers maintained that for learning to take place there needed to be others involved, especially a teacher. I acknowledge that teachers are important in the process of teaching and learning, however, learners should also be encouraged to participate in the same process to be transformed by the knowledge they are learning and link it with the modern world (Lotz-Sisitka, 2009).

5.3.2 Learning for/with others

Learning for/with others focuses on teachers' conceptions of learning that involve or require others. Teachers' responses indicated that the learning process is dependent on others to be successful, especially a teacher. Teacher B stated that *"... if you learn it's when you've been taught by your educator, you are learning"*. This conception appears to link with the conception by Teacher F of 'learning as mimicking what the teacher says', the possible difference is that learning is perceived as only happening when initiated by the teacher and the learner seemed not to be considered capable of initiating learning. While this research does not focus on learners, it would have been interesting to listen to learners' conceptions of learning while being taught by this teacher. The response seems to link with Bernstein's (2003) notion of strong hierarchical rules, which sets rules and boundaries between the relation of the teacher and learners. Hierarchical rules state the rules of acceptable behaviour, manner and social order in the classroom. Of interest is that this teacher's conception of learning links with the teaching approach in the classroom, as the participant demonstrated teaching that was authoritative. The teacher gave learners all the information about the poem *"My Name"* by Magoleng wa Selepe, talked about the meaning of the words alone, summarizing the poem on the board alone, without giving learners the opportunity to voice their opinions. This presumably means that if learning is to occur the teacher is the sole

initiator and educator of the learners, and learners might be passive during the process of teaching and learning and shape their perception of learning. According to Scott, Mortimer and Aguiar (2006) Teacher B was using an authoritative communicative approach which can be compared to teacher-centred teaching styles, where the teacher is viewed as the disseminator of knowledge and learners as passive acquirers and followers of what the teacher presents in the classroom. Freire (1970) calls this the “banking” model as the teacher assumes the role of a depositor and learners are the depositories. For example as indicated in Teacher B’s poetry lesson the teacher led the learners to mechanically memorise the “narrated content” with the learners receiving the information and repeating it (Freire, 1970, p. 72). Symbolically the learners become some form of a storage vault and collectors of knowledge, hence they are perceived as passive.

Teacher D, on the other hand, stated that learning was about interaction or intervention because *“If there’s no interaction between the learner and educator learning won’t take place. There must be an intervention...”* While the type of intervention is not mentioned, the response suggests that for learning to take place a teacher needs to initiate the learning process and seemingly without this initiation, intervention, and interaction, learning will not take place. Thus learning appears to be understood as dependent on interaction and intervention, and *“... must be...”* suggest the teacher as the centre of knowledge and the learner a follower rather than an initiator. For the participant, learning is not an individual process but involves communication between two or more people, however the partnership seems asymmetrical as participants appear not to trust learners’ ability to take ownership of the learning process. Thus far the responses indicate that some teachers believe that learning should not be left to the individual but requires the strong presence of the teacher, which Vygotsky calls the knowledgeable other. While this is true, of concern is the way some teachers think about learning in relation to their perceptions of learners and the social context. Regarding the process of internalization, it is not immediate but can be achieved when a learner is assisted by someone with more knowledge than them to reach the level where they can perform tasks without assistance. However, considering the participants’ understanding of learning, it seems like some do not provide learners with space to reach independent thinking at grades 10 and 11, but continue with scaffolding and do not eventually remove it.

With the participants' responses in mind, I also examined factors that shaped the responses. Although theme two focused on teachers' conceptions of learning when they were professionals, as mentioned earlier, some conceptions were identical to those of teachers while at school. The influential factors in this theme were policy, teacher training, and learners' perceptions. A possible transference of these conceptions is that five of the six teachers have not taught or learned outside Acornhoek or other rural areas. Therefore some of the factors that influenced teachers' conceptions as professional teachers were the same as those identified for teachers' conceptions as learners.

For example, Teacher B stated that *"...learning nowadays it's when the educator works more than learners, since learners are not able to study on their own..."* This response suggests that a teacher is 'supposed' to do the learning for learners by giving all the necessary information, because they are perceived as unable to do it themselves. I wondered whether this perception was not influenced by the apartheid ideology, because teachers were expected to think of themselves in this way. According to Hoadley (2011, p. 144) teachers were given a "highly prescriptive teacher manual with detailed work plans", in particular African schools, where teachers were subjected to an autocratic inspection system. Under the Christian National Education the theory of pedagogy was known as "fundamental pedagogics" which was underpinned by authoritarian pedagogical philosophies, where learners were perceived to be ignorant and undisciplined requiring the guidance of the teacher. This pedagogy emphasized rote learning and memorization (Hoadley, 2011). It is interesting that the teacher says *"nowadays"* teachers work more than learners while also stating that learning is about a teacher initiating the process, overlooking the possibility of the teaching approach influencing learners' approach to learning. If learners are exposed to a teacher that gives them all the information and little or no opportunity to engage and contribute in the process of teaching and learning, learners will *"... not be able to study on their own..."* because they would not have developed individual studying skills.

5.4 Teachers' conceptions of teaching

Teachers' conceptions of teaching were as complex as teachers' conceptions of learning, and three themes were identified from the responses which were also recognised to be the factors that shaped the conceptions. The identified themes were: *'Teaching as transforming learners and coordinating learning*, *'Teaching as telling and spoon-feeding'* and *'Teaching as unlocking the mind and life-long learning'*.

5.4.1 Teaching as transforming learners and coordinating learning

Considering the different curriculum reforms that teachers experienced from the apartheid to the post-apartheid era and the type of training institutions they attended, their conceptions of teaching have been complex and appear to tell this journey. For example, Teacher A said *"I think teaching is about being a life-long learner ... to transform learners ..."*, because transformation depends on constant continuous learning possibly from both research and learners. It was interesting that the participant associated teaching with *"... being a life-long learner"* which suggests recognizing that teaching is also about learning, which includes reflection as a teacher to be aware of which transformation to instill and conscientise learners. Loughran (2010) talks about the interplay between teaching and learning and learning and teaching, to offer more insight into the notion of pedagogy and educating. According to Loughran (2010), being a life-long learner is about a teacher being a learner in order to build their teaching expertise and in that way help learners with their transformation as persons. Thus "life-long learning" seems to be shaped by the notion of a teacher as a researcher to ensure continuous learning, not only to transform the learner but also the teacher. This conception of teaching links with the participant's conception of learning as a professional *"... own the information, it stays in you and you can actually change – it changes you ..."* The ideology of a teacher as a researcher is promoted in teacher training institutions, especially universities, and the participant attended university. In teacher training institutions, especially after being merged with universities, teachers are encouraged to see themselves as researchers to be aware of the relationships between theory and practice (Price, 2001). The participant also said teaching is about *"... planning and being organized*

...” to be a life-long learner, which is also prioritized in teacher training when lesson planning and organisation is taught. According to Narsee, Rule, Chisholm, Hoadley, Kivilu, Brookes, & Mosia (2005), 14% of teaching time is often used for planning and preparation, because the policy suggests that planning and preparation should be done during and outside school hours. Thus maybe the aspect of planning and organization is shaped by policy as Alexander (2009) posits that policy legitimises and formalises teaching.

In contrast to Teacher A, Teacher C stated that “... *teaching is no longer like in the past where you just sit down and teach. Today teaching is such that they have actually reduced us to the level of the person who is actually coordinating the learning*”

The response suggests different teaching experiences from the apartheid and post-apartheid era, the latter having “*reduced*” teachers to ‘coordinators of learning’. While it appears that teachers were just providers of information through a process of ‘*sitting down and teaching*’, the practice has currently been changed to another concept of ‘*coordinating the learning*’. Thus the concept of ‘coordination’ seems to imply guiding and facilitating the overall learning process in the classroom, and learners are perceived to possess some prior knowledge about the subject matter, with little teacher interaction with the learners hence less ‘sitting down and teach’. There was concern when seeing teachers as ‘facilitators’ when curriculum 2005 was introduced, as Jansen (1998) states that the idea was ambitious and made greater demands on the teacher. This seems to link with the participant’s response of scepticism with teaching as ‘coordination of learning’, which possibly means de-professionalisation, as teachers are “*reduced... to the level of the person*”. According to Samuel (2014), the teacher of the post-apartheid era is expected to embrace learner-centred pedagogy, however, teachers feel very demoralised because of the demands made by these pedagogies in the policy. Similar to Teacher C, teachers feel that the new curricula after 1994 treat them as deficient and without any knowledge or expertise. As a result teachers resort to self-preservation, because they are targeted for being incompetent to teach and this leads to some feeling de-professionalized (Samuel, 2014).

For Alexander (2009), teaching as facilitation is guided by principles of development of the learner's natural abilities, and it is often linked to Piagetian theories. The main emphasis within this form of teaching is the teacher's role to nurture the learner's individual development and not directly impose on it. If this is the current teaching methodology teachers' observation suggests a different teaching approach. For example, in Teacher C's class the learners did not participate, instead the lesson was still direct instruction and bring more concerned with covering the lesson content than with promoting participatory co-teaching and co-learning. The teacher was recapping the short story "*The Boy and Mr Katz*" by Jack Cope that they had been reading. While the teacher tried to include learners in the process of teaching and learning by asking questions, she responded to those questions as learners did not participate, instead they finished her responses in unison. Without judging the teaching approach, given that this approach happened until the end of the period, it appears to be normal and the teacher used the past teaching approach of giving learners' information, rather than coordinating their learning using the learner-centred approach. According to Brodie, Lelliott, and Davis (2002) teachers are well aware that they need to embrace and change their pedagogy to include learner participation, however most believe that old practices are better than the newly proposed methodologies as they work for them. In Uganda Sikoyo (2010, p. 256) state that teachers struggle to implement learner-centred and problem-based approaches due to "contextual factors within the school environment and the broader schools system and society in Uganda". Not surprising because Guthrie (2013) posits that most sub-Saharan African countries have found that learner-centred approaches are inappropriate culturally and are very difficult to implement especially in non-middle class schools. Thus it appears like using teaching approaches that teachers are familiar with is safer, than using something that is 'relatively' new and with little training for. Taylor and Vinjevold (1999, in Brodie, Lelliott & Davis, 2002) teachers showed enthusiasm when the curriculum was introduced and most embraced the general idea of learner-centred pedagogies, however many continue to teach predominantly in teacher-centred approaches.

The discussion with Teacher C about the observed teaching approach suggests that for the participant it was a facilitation and coordinating process as prescribed by the government. This possibly means that the way the teacher was trained and previous

teaching experience shapes the choices of teaching approach that are made during the teaching and learning process. While the curriculum reform expects teachers to teach in particular ways, some teachers seem to revert to something they are comfortable with, that is, their comfort zone. As mentioned earlier by Samuel (2014), teachers regress in order to self-preserve themselves and revert to what they know or are comfortable with. Even though the participant perceives the new methodologies negatively, the teacher believes sub-consciously he is teaching some form of learner-centred pedagogy, but the substance of the pedagogy is lacking during the lesson observation (Brodie, Lelliott & Davis, 2002).

5.4.2 Teaching as telling and spoon-feeding

When a country undergoes some form of political change sometimes the education system also changes, consequently requiring the curriculum to be reviewed. Usually the people responsible for implementing the educational changes within an education system are teachers, and they are expected to change their pedagogical approaches with the reform of a curriculum. This means reforms introduce a variety of pedagogic approaches that reflect national educational policy and cultural perspectives on how to deliver the national curriculum. Although reforms in South Africa have shifted from conservative to more progressive ideologies, due to the type of training and teaching experiences within the conservative era, some teachers' conceptions of teaching might still reflect the past.

For instance Teacher D stated that *“As an educator, when you teach them (learners), you must tell them the purpose to be at school ...”* The participant's response suggests that teaching is about telling learners, and it appears that a teacher is the centre of content knowledge who must also *“tell”* learners about the purpose of being at school. The use of *“must”* seems to imply that the participant believes that the teacher is 'obliged' and 'ought' to instruct learners, as if they did not have knowledge before they came to school. The response seems to further suggest that learners are unable to think or learn without being told by a teacher, including basic information about a reason for attending school which is assumed to be of importance to learners. Freire and Macedo (1987) talk about a teacher as a learner and address the importance of seeking to become involved in the students' curiosity,

and not teach as bureaucrats of the minds – the latter seems to be the participant's approach. Considering that teaching is about 'telling' for the participant, it is unclear how a teacher is curious of learners' learning and raising their awareness for the purpose of growing with them. Of interest is that the teacher's conception of teaching as telling was apparent during classroom observation, as the teacher proceeded to tell learners about the short story "*The Wasteland*". Bearing in mind that it was a grade 10 class it is expected that learners will read the story and summarize it, but instead the teacher re-told the whole story while learners were sitting listening and not even writing notes that the teacher had written on the board. It was seriously interesting to observe this because, considering the way learners were sitting and the way the teacher was teaching, I presumed it was the 'normal' way of teaching and learning and is not something that is happening at that particular day. It is difficult to see how this teaching was to raise learners' awareness "to become subjects, rather than objects, of the world", because it seems like the teacher was not encouraging learners "to think democratically and continually question and make meaning" of the information they were learning (Freire, 1998, p. 58). The teacher was lecturing learners, and Samuelowicz and Bain (1992, in Gunersel & Etienne, 2014) state that teachers who use a lecturing format view themselves as transmitters of knowledge and learners are focused on the subject matter or content, because the teacher holds teacher-centred conceptions of teaching.

Along the same line as Teacher D's response, Teacher B said "*The teacher should work more than learners, you must really work very hard as the teacher, spoon-feed them*". It was noticed that the participant said this with conviction and seems to suggest that the teacher should do the learning and teaching for the learners, and is unclear what role learners are expected to play in this process. The second part of the response appears to propose that a teacher should not only work more than, and very hard for learners, but also "*spoon-feed*" them with knowledge. Thus the statements "*work more than learners*" and "*must really work very hard*" suggest that learners acquire knowledge possibly passively, if some teachers have such perceptions of teaching. The teacher as spoon-feeding learners information seems to discourage the opportunity for learners to take ownership of learning and think for themselves, because teachers "... *must always teach them* ..." presumably because teachers are assumed to have knowledge whereas learners are 'empty vessels'.

McKay and Kember (1997) define spoon-feeding as instruction or teaching that is based on transmitting information and leads to transmission of conceptions of teaching.

It was unsurprising during the lesson observation that the teacher's approach was strongly sequenced and paced. The teacher read, and analysed the poem "*My name*" to the learners line by line, while learners were sitting looking at the teacher. The teacher presented only her understanding and meaning of the content being taught, and did not engage the learners to understand their interpretation of the poem. The learners sat and listened and did not participate during the lesson delivery, considering the nature of poetry, and all the questions that were asked were elicited by the teacher and were closed-ended, leading to learners passively offering responses without any elaboration. This way of teaching poetry did not encourage learners to talk about their understanding of the poem, considering the promotion of critical thinking that poetry offers. Scott and Mortimer (2005) call this kind of a teacher authoritative because of a monologue teaching approach with little to no input from the learners. According to Scott, Mortimer and Aguiar (2006) in the authoritative approach the teacher does not allow or bring in the learners points of view or explore their ideas about the topic. The teacher seems to only refer to the content knowledge and how they understand it.

Similarly Teacher C stated that "... *speaking of teaching, you have somebody that must actually impart content to an individual.*" Again the word "*must actually impart*" is used as it has been appearing in other participants' responses and unsurprisingly suggests the teacher's belief in the responsibility to impart knowledge, and possibly the best method of teaching to ensure that learners gain the necessary knowledge. The participant's response seems to suggest that teaching is when the teacher delivers the content, as expected, but at the same time seems to suggest giving learners' knowledge. Furthermore, "*must*" seems to suggest the teacher's perception of the learners' ability to contribute and participate in the process of teaching and learning, possibly due to the assumed lack of appropriate knowledge considering the experience of the context. Of interest is the recurring use of "*must tell*", "*impart*", and "*spoon-feed*" in teachers' responses, and appears to propose teaching to ensure that learners have some kind of knowledge to regurgitate in assessment tasks. This is in

consideration that two of the three participating schools were declared under-performing, and 'giving' learners information might prepare them to engage with the external assessment tasks. It is unclear in teachers' responses what role learners are expected to play in such a context and process of learning, because teachers seem to believe that of importance is 'giving' learners knowledge, and this perception appears in the way they teach English short stories and poetry. Without judging teachers' pedagogical practices, it is of concern to observe this way of teaching short stories and poetry, when it has the potential to encourage learners to develop or enhance their critical thinking skills. The participant further said "*We have to teach kids on abstract level, theoretical level without doing the practical or demonstrate something*". The use of "... *have to*..." seems to link with the use of "*must*" in the previous response, to suggest that particular situations, that are beyond the teacher's control, 'dictate' how teaching should take place.

While Karpov (2003) states that teaching theoretically requires learners to acquire methods for scientific analysis of objects or events, or are taught to select essential characteristics of an object, which is also the process required when teaching English poetry or short stories, of concern is that due to teacher dominance it is unclear what methods of analysis learners are acquiring. Although the learners' role is unclear in the process of 'acquiring scientific analysis', of concern with the participants' response is the lack of practicals and/or demonstrations after learning the theory. This seems to still mean providing learners with as much knowledge as possible because it "... *boils down to lack of resources*...", for the practicals and possibly learners to read prior coming to class to participate in the process of teaching and learning rather than only acquiring knowledge. Thus the perception of teaching as 'abstract' and 'theoretical', mentioned earlier, can mean that some teachers are lecturing rather than teaching, and unable to demonstrate knowledge for learners to ensure better understanding. The teacher's struggle with demonstration was noticed during classroom observation as it was difficult to use gestures on how to fish using a fishing rod. The learners had to visualize these gestures of fishing to have a particular meaning, considering that some might not have been at a harbour or fished before. The teacher's demonstration was to elaborate on the story and help learners understand more about fishing, because there were no resources to use. Thus the teacher's conception of teaching is

influenced by the lack of resources, although it is not clear which types of resources are needed in order to use a different teaching approach.

5.4.3 Teaching as unlocking the mind and life-long learning

Teacher F seemed to have a different understanding of teaching, but before presenting it the participant confidently said “... *my class is a democratic classroom, learners are allowed to give their opinions and is not a one person’s show ...*”, which seems to suggest that the teacher co-learns with learners and has possibly unlearned the cultural conditioning of traditional authoritative, dominant and subordinate role in the classroom. According to Alexander (2009), Teacher F’s response can be interpreted as a teacher who views teaching as a negotiation, as a teacher and learners jointly co-create knowledge and understanding in a democratic classroom in contrast to that of an authoritative and passive classroom. This response seems to link with the teacher’s conception of teaching as “... *opening the mind which was locked, in the manner that one should be able to see life in a different broader sense.*” This response suggests that a democratic classroom allows learners to access unlimited knowledge that exists in the world, by actively participating in the process of knowledge construction and meaning making to “*see life in a different broader sense*”. Although the statement “*opening of the mind which was locked*” might be negatively interpreted as learners’ minds are locked, it might also mean that the teacher acknowledges the opportunity to prevent further ‘jamming’ of the minds and promotes critical thinking to help learners see and understand life differently. Kuhn (2007) states that the goal of modern education is to nurture students “to use their minds well in school and beyond” (p. 110), which possibly depends on the teacher’s conception of learning and teaching that cultivates critical minds. It seems that the teacher is aware of the importance of ‘always’ figuring out which key to use to open learners’ minds, which encourages learners’ empowerment through a democratic classroom that recognises different voices.

Of interest with the participant’s classroom observation while teaching a poem called “*On Aging*” by Maya Angelou, is the contradiction of the conception of teaching expressed. Instead of the classroom resembling the practice of ‘democracy’, it was about giving out information using a ‘one person’s show’. For the whole 50 minutes

learners were sitting quietly and passively listening to the teacher, and there was no interaction between the teacher and learners but a more chalk and talk lecture approach. Again, considering that it was grade 11 poetry, it appears that the teacher constrained the continuous process of the learners' construction and reconstruction of their representations of the poem (Tynjala, 1998; Vygotsky, 1978), in particular if critical thinking is to be promoted. It appears that the above teaching approach was possibly shaped by the idea of unlocking learners' minds, and to do that the teacher resorted to do the learning for the learners and appeared to overlook that they would write the examination and not the teacher. According to Bernstein (2003), strong visible pedagogy means that the regulative and discursive rules are explicit, which emphasizes evaluating the performance of the learner against a set of criteria or how well they respond or perform according to the teacher's standards, however this aspect of the rules was not evident in class.

During classroom observation the lesson was explicitly sequenced and paced, for instance, the teacher instructed learners to read the poem silently for 2-5 minutes and then stopped them abruptly. The participant seems to be making an assumption about the learners' reading speed and comprehension ability considering that the lesson was 60 minutes and learners were given a maximum of 5 minutes. Bernstein (2003) calls this process explicit sequencing rules as the teacher strongly paced the lesson and task. The teacher told learners during various stages of the lesson what to do and how to do it, while learners were just sitting and listening to the teacher, as though they had forgotten that they should at least take notes that were written on the board by the teacher. It was only after 50 minutes of the lesson that learners started writing, after the teacher asked them closed questions such as 'do you have a different view towards your grandparents?'. The question requires a yes or no answer without much elaboration or explanation. While it is understandable that sometimes a teacher uses a particular teaching approach and/or approaches depending on the plan and topic, of concern with this approach is the lack of learners' voice and participation. Thus similar to Teacher D, Teacher F's teaching approach was authoritative and presented only one interpretation of the poem and no other possible interpretations were given or elicited from the learners (Scott & Mortimer, 2005), although the teacher's response earlier suggested a 'democratic' classroom indicating valuing of learners' opinions. The responses of the two

teachers possibly address underlying assumptions about how learning should and/or does take place, their perceptions of learners and the context of teaching and learning, as well as their training and experiences of teaching and learning.

The findings on teachers' conceptions of teaching, as mentioned earlier, were complex and needed careful interpretation and understanding of the relationship and/or lack thereof between conceptions of learning and the teaching approach. The findings suggest that teachers' conceptions of unlocking the mind are transformative and relate to conceptions of learning that are self-initiated and learning for/with self. Even with this insight the teachers seem to continue to teach in an authoritative approach and not critically engage with learners. After engaging with teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching and also classroom observations, I realized that classroom observation was not analyzed in detail using the conceptual framework to show the complication of pedagogy in the classrooms of different schools. The following section presents an in-depth analysis of the observed lessons of the teachers and uses different conceptual frameworks to make sense of teachers' pedagogical choices.

5.5 The dominance of visible pedagogies in rural

Acornhoek schools

Pedagogical practices are multiple and varied and in order to understand this multiplicity Bernstein's (2003) conceptual framework on visible and invisible pedagogies was used to understand and make sense of teachers' practices in the study. Bernstein (2003) conceptualizes pedagogic practices using three pedagogical rules namely hierarchical, sequencing, and criterial rules. The lesson observations of the teachers in Acornhoek schools dominantly illustrated visible pedagogies, because all three pedagogical rules were explicit. For a better understanding and overview see appendix 9.

5.5.1 Hierarchical Rules

Hierarchical rules refer to the power relations that exist between the teacher and the learners, which is often an intrinsic relation. In the study all five participants observed demonstrated strongly explicit hierarchical rules, as teachers dominated the lessons by giving learners instructions they were expected to follow passively. For example, Teacher D asked learners to open their short-story textbooks, fold their arms and listen to her, and narrated the story "*The Wasteland*" by Alan Paton rather than discussing it with the learners. This instruction suggest that learners were not told to read the story prior coming to class, resulting in the teacher re-telling it rather than co-teaching and co-learning with learners, considering they are in grade 10. The teacher did not only narrate the story but also summarized it on the board while learners sat quietly and listened, and did not even correct the teacher when she misspelled "anonymous" instead of anonymous. While is unclear whether learners did not see the mistake or they 'do not care' is unclear, however this addresses clear boundaries between the teacher and learners. I can only assume that learners did not correct the teacher because they were told to only listen and say nothing at the beginning of the lesson, which links with the teacher's conception of teaching as telling. This pedagogical approach was observed in other four participants' classes, as they demonstrated explicit control during the lesson by asserting their positions as teachers. While it is understandable that teachers should be in control of their lessons, a problem with being authoritative is shifting the process of learning from learners to the teacher, thus depriving learners of opportunities to make meaning of the knowledge. It is possibly because of this teaching approach that learners are unable to engage with assessment and eventually perform poorly, because they have been passive in the classroom instead of taking the initiative to make meaning of the knowledge.

5.5.2 Sequencing Rules

Sequencing rules, which also include pacing rules, focus on the amount of time learners are given in order to acquire the taught knowledge in the classroom. The sequencing rules amongst the participants were explicit, as some teachers read to the learners and proceeded to explain the text to the learners. The teachers' reading for learners set the pace and the sequence for the learners. This action relied on the

teachers to guide the learners to where they were headed, hence the sequencing, progression, and pacing of the lesson was determined by the teacher. In instances where learners were asked to read for the whole class, Alexander (2001) classified this as public talk, after this activity they did not engage in a discussion, however teachers often interjected without the learner completing the activity. Rather, the discussion was elicited by the teacher who took control by explaining the content, setting the pacing for the lesson and how much the learners needed to know at that particular time of the lesson. For example, Teacher E asked for a volunteer who could read the story fast, and the learner was only given approximately 3 minutes before the teacher stopped the learner and started explaining the setting, mood and tone of the short story. It could be argued that the sequence of this lesson was unclear as the teacher interjected while the learner was still reading, and the teacher controlled the pacing of the reading activity to teach the content.

With this approach in mind, it seems like the teacher did not give learners enough time to engage with the task of reading, possibly making assumptions that they understood what it was all about. This means where learners are given the opportunity to participate in the process of teaching and learning, they are not given enough time to engage with the task at hand due to the teacher's interference and determining the pace. It also appears from these observations that learners were merely reading the text and I wondered if they comprehended and understood what they had read, especially as they were not expected to explain or elaborate on what they had read. The above observation complicates Bernstein's (2003) notions of sequencing and pacing rules because although the teacher made the rules explicit, the transmission of knowledge was unknown or implicit, which makes it difficult to determine whether the overall rules were also implicit. From the above lesson observation, even though the learners were reading, the teacher still had control of the sequencing and pacing rules in the classroom. The teacher directed what and how much the learner must read, and interjected at will to elaborate. A similar strategy was observed with two other teachers where learners were asked to read, but the teacher stopped the learners, elaborated and then told the learners to continue reading. The teacher seemed to not be concerned with whether the learners understood what they had read but more concerned with how quickly the

short-story was completed, making the sequencing rules explicit as the progression of the lesson is solely the teacher's responsibility.

5.5.3 Criterial Rules

Criterial rules refer to the practice of evaluating learners' texts, whether oral or written, in terms of what counts as legitimate or illegitimate knowledge based on a set criteria (Naidoo, 2012). Similar to the hierarchical and sequencing rules, the participants, although not the majority, demonstrated explicit criterial rules when they reminded learners to support their arguments and provide evidence from the text to demonstrate legitimate knowledge. For instance, Teacher F asked learners to define a plot in a short story, and the learner's response was technical with no elaboration or explanation and was taken straight from the textbook. The learner gave the teacher the response they assumed the teacher wanted to hear – which was a definition from the textbook. While the response could count as evaluation of a learner's legitimate knowledge because the answer was directly from a text, it also suggests that learners are unable to re-contextualize the knowledge to show understanding and meaning making. In grade 10 it is expected that learners understand the meaning of a plot in a story, to be still relying on reading the answer from the textbook. This possibly addresses the nature of teaching and learning in the school, if learners are unable to provide a 'simple' answer of the knowledge they have learnt in previous grades. They possibly show that they can regurgitate the information according to the teacher's expectations and meet the criteria, instead of using the criteria to also critically engage with the information to show understanding. Thus far, the classroom observations suggest that teachers' pedagogic practices were strongly visible with explicit hierarchical, sequencing and criterial rules. Although the purpose of the study was not to critique teachers' pedagogical practices, there is a concern that the majority of teachers in the study appear to mainly use a teacher-centred approach that promotes learner passive learning, which might influence learner performance because learning is done by teachers rather than learners. Of interest is that teachers' pedagogical practices link to their conceptions of learning and teaching which were dominantly teacher oriented.

5.6 The act of teaching

Alexander (2009) states that teaching involves methods which combine tasks, activities, interactions and judgements during teaching and learning in the classroom. Therefore this study used Alexander's (2009) conceptual framework on the generic model of teaching to understand the nature of teaching at Acornhoek schools, particularly the form of lesson structure, tasks, activities, learner organisation and assessments the participants used.

5.6.1 Lesson structure and form

From the observed lessons I noticed that all five participants used a unitary lesson structure, which means that the lesson focused on one task. Although some participants did not have a task during the lesson, that they taught only one short story or poem during a 60-minute lesson, makes the lesson unitary. Most of the participants had an introduction and development of the lesson that was unidirectional, from a teacher as a main speaker to learners, without a conclusion for some to show the end. A possible reason for not having a conclusion even though the content was completed in one lesson, is probably that teachers came to class with no lesson plan to guide them on the sequence of the lesson. Teachers taught the lesson to get through the short story or poem, without properly planning or thinking through how the lesson would be structured to also ensure learners' participation. Alexander (2001) does caution that a lesson is unpredictable and that teachers and learners can only understand the lesson as they experience it moment by moment, however teachers still need to have a generic lesson structure in a form of a lesson plan. The reason is because through a lesson plan the teacher is able to see the completeness of the lesson through its form, which can provide insight into how the lesson was assembled and the kinds of messages that were portrayed which a teacher may not be able to see during the enacted lesson (Alexander, 2001).

5.6.2 Frame of teaching

With regard to the frame of teaching, the learners' organisation and space was considered during the lesson observation as this can affect the manner in which a lesson is successful or not. In the classrooms of Teachers B, E and F, tables were

placed in neat straight rows, while with Teachers E and F learners shared one table. Teachers C and D's classrooms had no visible rows as learners sat randomly with some facing the back of the classroom. I noticed that in some classrooms seating arrangements were shaped by lack of textbooks, and learners had to share books resulting in the classrooms being rearranged and learners facing different directions. In Teachers C, D, and to an extent Teacher E's classes, teachers could not access learners sitting at the back as there was no space to walk in between the tables, due to overcrowding, thus the teachers remained in the front of the classroom. Irrespective of the learners' organisation the teaching methods at the schools were still dominated by 'chalk and talk' methods, because of a lack of resources and also teachers' assumptions about learners' intellectual capacity. According to Alexander (2001) when the blackboard is in the front and has one surface, it tends to limit the teacher's flexibility to move around. While this might be the case, teacher's creativity need to show in such instances, especially if it is a situation that has been in existence than new.

5.6.3 The act of teaching

The act of teaching comprises tasks, activities and assessments. Tasks are the "conceptual component" of a lesson structure, because the teacher uses them to link to the knowledge learned previously and what learners currently need to know and they can be closed or open depending on the purpose of the lesson. Activities, on the other hand, consist of smaller units that build up a task and focus on knowledge that is already learnt or still has to be learnt. Thirdly, assessments judge how and what the learners have learnt at the end or during a task or activity. From the study only three participants administered some form of task and/or activity. For example, Teacher B gave learners a closed unitary task which they had to complete before proceeding to the next lesson. The lesson was dominated by direct instruction, the teacher reading and learners writing out the task, these are central stages of a unitary task. While some learners were still busy with the task the teacher walked around and took a sample of the learners' tasks and marked them in class, while others were still engaging with the task. I also noticed that the teacher did not recap or link the task with the next section of work, possibly because the task was not cumulative and was self-contained and only relevant to the poem taught. The activity

was given after the teacher finished teaching the content that had little participation of the learners, and it appears that from the small sample that was marked the teacher concluded that the rest of the class understood the lesson.

Teachers C and F gave learners homework after teaching the short story and poetry lessons respectively, without learner participation or allowing questions or suggestions. Teacher C gave learners the activity/task at the end of the short story, without asking questions and/or allowing learners to ask questions or provide suggestions presenting their understanding of the story during the lesson. Again, the teachers seemed to make assumptions about learners' understanding of the content without asking whether the content made sense and how they engaged with the knowledge. In Teacher F's class the participant wrote questions on the blackboard during the poetry lesson, however there was no feedback session as the learners had to complete the task at home. Thus the teachers did not recap the lessons at the beginning of the lesson to link with the new lesson to show continuity. I also observed that the nature of the activities did not assess whether and how learners made sense of the lessons. While Teacher B marked a small sample of learners' work, other learners' work was not checked and work was not collected for later marking. For Teacher F the nature of the questions written in the learning task were of low level questioning, focusing on the level of remembering information as learners had to remember facts and recall information (Krathwohl, 2002).

5.7 Rural teachers' authoritative approach to classroom interactions

Scott and Mortimer's (2005) communicative approach was developed in order to understand how teachers can guide meaning-making interactions to support the learners' learning process. As a result two dimensions were identified, namely the dialogic-authoritative dimension and the interactive-non interactive dimension. In order to understand which dimension the participants used, a set of criteria was derived to categorize the nature and forms of possible questions that could be used by teachers. The criteria used suggested that most teachers engaged with questions and ideas that were authoritative. For example, Teacher C asked "*What is a bribe?*"

Instead of waiting for learners to respond, the teacher prompted the learners by rephrasing the question to “*A bribe is...*”. Teacher D asked “*Who was the pursuer?*” The above questions asked by the participants led to chorusing by the learners. In the authoritative approach “the teacher’s purpose is to focus the students’ full attention on just one meaning” and present only one point of view (Scott, Mortimer & Aguiar, 2006, p. 610). Considering that the majority of teachers used a teacher-centred ‘banking’ teaching approach during lesson observations, teachers focused on teaching a specific topic (poem or short story) and dominantly presented their views. The nature of communication in classrooms was non-interactive and dominantly authoritarian, because teachers wanted to finish teaching the poem and short stories rather than learners understanding main points/information of the writer. Teachers either read for the learners or when learners were reading the teachers interjected and elaborated, the participants set the pacing of the lesson and in four of the observed lessons the poem or short-story was completed in the 60-minute period. The teachers did all the talking and assumed that all learners shared their same views. Learners’ ideas or views were not taken into consideration, hence the communication approach was non interactive and authoritative (Scott, Mortimer & Aguiar, 2006). The evidence of this communicative approach was further supported by the conceptions of learning and teaching that focused on reproducing information or traditional teaching conceptions. The nature of the classroom talk and discourse consisted of teachers initiating the interaction, learners responding and the teacher evaluating the response. Scott, Mortimer and Aguiar (2006) call this interaction an I-R-E (Initiation-Response-Evaluation) interaction. Of interest though is how the participants rarely evaluated the responses from the learners. A possible reason for this is that the dominant form of questions focused on teachers asking for consensus from the whole class, providing cues before the question or after the question and teachers acknowledging a response but not seeking further engagement from the learners.

Within a 60-minute lesson most teachers asked learners questions in the last 5 minutes of the lesson. The authoritative communicative approach interlinks with the findings that the pedagogies at the schools were visible resulting in performance based teaching approaches, which are concerned with how well learners respond in relation to some form of criteria or assumed answer by the teacher. There was more

teacher talk and less learner engagement in most of the lessons, resulting in the teachers giving learners all the content information without much reasoning or dialogue, thus making the interactions authoritative.

5.8 Conclusion

In the current debates about education and learner performance in South Africa it is important to understand what teachers think about learning and teaching, particularly teachers who teach in rural areas as they continue to be marginalised by policy makers and the government. The findings that emerge from this study provide insight not only into the needs of rural teachers but also on teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching. As noted in this chapter, teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching are complex and complicated because of the various factors and influences teachers encounter before and during their teaching profession. During the data analysis stage teachers' conceptions of learning appeared in two different time periods and themes, namely teachers' conceptions of learning as learners and teachers' conceptions of learning as professional teachers. Within teachers' conceptions of learning as learners, the majority of responses suggested conceptualisation of learning as *"mimicking, reproducing and memorizing information"* while only two participants perceived learning as *"self-initiated"*. Irrespective of which conception of learning teachers oriented towards, various factors influenced their understanding of learning. These factors varied from lack of resources, policy, teachers' pedagogical practices, overcrowded classes, self-motivation and personal traits. Due to these factors some teachers became entrapped and resorted to memorizing or mimicking information as there was a lack of adequate learning resources, thus they relied on the teacher as the disseminator of information. On the other hand, some teachers viewed these factors not as constraints but as motivators for them to initiate the learning process because they were self-motivated to read and learn.

In the second time period teachers' conceptions of learning were based on their experiences, factors and beliefs they had encountered during teacher training college and in-service teaching. Teachers believed they needed to continue

developing themselves in order to be good teachers, and others viewed learning as a process initiated by others. The participants' responses suggested that learning is when individuals have been taught and that it is an intervention between the teacher and learners. Of interest with the conceptions of learning is how some conceptions from when teachers were learners became transferred to their professions. Some teachers who were self-initiators of learning when they were learners later adopted conceptions of learning which required explicit teaching.

Teachers' conceptions of teaching were not free from complications either as teachers' responses suggested the continued conflict between policy and practice. Teachers' conceptions of teaching demonstrated that some teachers were aware of pedagogical ideologies which are progressive, transformative and learner-centred as they are possible strategies that can emancipate rural learners. However during classroom observations teachers taught using traditional, teacher-centred approaches. Of interest is that the participants' classroom observations were influenced by the teachers' conceptions of learning particularly when they were learners and not teachers' conceptions of teaching as it could be assumed. Teachers seemed to have regressed during the lesson and taught in similar ways they were taught when they were at school, considering the majority of responses. Possible reasons were the teachers' perception of learners but also their conception and understanding of the learning process. Also noted were prescribed expectations from the curriculum and labelling of schools as underperforming, and seemed to have constrained teachers' understanding of teaching and consequently their teaching approach. As a result the conceptions the teachers held of learning were transferred to their conceptions of teaching and furthermore to their pedagogical practices. The above regression by the participants was further explicated when the conceptual frameworks from Bernstein (2003), Alexander (2001, 2009) and Scott and Mortimer (2005) were used to analyze the lesson observations. The frameworks found that the reason teachers continue to teach in teacher-centred approaches and not learner-centred approaches was because the rules, structuring and interactions are still dominated by traditional ideologies where the teacher continues to impart the content knowledge to learners because they reside in rural schools and are disadvantaged. Even though teachers criticized these traditional ideologies when

they were young and in teacher colleges, the teachers continue to use them in their classrooms repeating the 'generational curse'.

CHAPTER SIX

Reversing the generational curse: working with and through teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching for transformation

6.1 Introduction

“Conceptions are more general mental structures, encompassing beliefs, meanings, concepts, propositions, rules, mental images, preferences and the like... conceptions represent different categories of ideas held by teachers behind their descriptions of how educational things are experienced”

(Brown, 2004, p. 303).

The above quotation by Brown (2004) signifies the depth and complexity involved in understanding teachers' conceptions, particularly those mental structures that lie within the teachers, hence the conceptualisation of this study. This study sought to understand grade 10 and 11 First Additional English rural teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in Acornhoek schools in Mpumalanga Province. The study aimed at addressing the following question: What are grade 10 and 11 First Additional English rural teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in Acornhoek secondary schools, Mpumalanga Province? Given 22 years after the first democratic elections, the quality of education in South Africa continues to be faced with various challenges, especially in rural and farm schools. Thus in order to understand and gain insight to some of the challenges imminent in rural schools the study focused on researching rural teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching to understand the meanings, beliefs, propositions and preferences the teachers might possess.

Amongst the literature reviewed on conceptions of learning and teaching, the study also examined literature on rural education, English as a First Additional language and pedagogy practices. However within this corpus of literature, research that focuses on rural schools and rural teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching, particularly research linking teachers' conceptions with pedagogical practices remains unpopular in education research. Thus in order to address the unpopularity

in educational research and literature, this study focused on understanding rural teachers beliefs, meanings and ideas they hold of learning and teaching. In order to achieve the above, the study used a qualitative research approach in particular the phenomenology methodology because both the qualitative approach and phenomenology methodology seek to inquire about the meanings made by people in social contexts (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

Therefore the main research question for this study was: What are grade 10 and 11 First Additional English rural teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in Acornhoek secondary schools, Mpumalanga Province? To address this question, the study focused on two sub-questions:

1. What shapes teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching?
2. How do teachers' conceptions influence teaching approaches, if at all, during English poetry and short story lessons?

To address the research the study used critical discourse analysis and thematic analysis in order to problematize and interrogate the meanings and responses from the participants. Thus in this final chapter I present an overview of the findings of the study: teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching and how these conceptions influence teaching approaches in poetry and short story lessons. Furthermore I highlight some of the insight and gaps posed by the conceptual frameworks detailed in Chapter Three. This section is then followed by a discussion on the implications and limitations of the study. Finally the chapter concludes by focusing on possibilities for further research in rural schools and rural teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching, particularly on how place-based theories could be beneficial in a deeper understanding of dynamics and complexities that exist in rural schools.

6.2 Summary of Findings

As mentioned in previous chapter, analysing teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching was a complex process, however I learnt a lot about the teachers and the complications of teaching and learning. The critical question for this study was: What are grade 10 and 11 First Additional English rural teachers' conceptions of learning

and teaching in Acornhoek secondary schools, Mpumalanga Province? The answer for the above question is therefore detailed in the summary of findings detailed below.

6.2.1 Teachers' conceptions of learning

As discussed in Chapters One and Two, teachers have experienced, amongst other challenges, various curriculum reforms since 1994, which have required them to change their pedagogical practices. Considering this background, thus far it has been unclear whether research has been conducted to explore their conceptions of learning and teaching in general and specifically in rural contexts, considering teachers' training background during apartheid. Given the above uncertainty it was unsurprising when the findings revealed that teachers' conceptions of learning were affected by two time-periods of the teachers' lives. The findings identified suggested that teachers' conceptions were firstly attributed by various factors and experiences stemming from the time they were learners at school. However when teachers began careers to become professional teachers a different set of conceptions of learning emerged for some of them. Considering that most of the participants schooled in rural schools, some participants indicated conceptions of learning as learners to be within the sub-theme of '*learning as mimicking, reproducing and memorization of information*' while others perceived '*learning as self-initiated*'. The sub-themes above were a result of several factors such as home, schooling context, and teacher's pedagogical approaches, which shaped the manner participants conceptualize learning.

For instances while some participants viewed the lack of teaching and learning materials as a means to desperately acquire and consume information from the teachers, some participants saw this scarcity as a way to enrich themselves by taking ownership of the learning process. This addresses the dynamics of individual personalities, and not necessarily the context where learning takes place. As a result some teachers viewed learning as mimicking, reproducing and memorizing information which meant the participants lack to make meaning, critique and understand the information presented by the teachers. The teachers were assumed to possess all the knowledge which participants must acquire and consume without

further interrogation or engagement, which was possibly shaped by the political context of that era because some teachers were born and schooled during apartheid. Within this group of participants and during the early years viewed learning as a process they must self-initiate and take ownership, which presupposes a different way of thinking about education, schooling, a teacher, and the process of learning. Participants who regarded learning as self-initiated indicated that they were self-motivated and that everything read was purposefully used as a means to learn and gain information.

However, when teachers began their careers to be professional teachers, the conceptions of learning fell within two sub-themes namely *learning for/with self* and *learning for/with others*. What was interesting is how some teachers transferred some of their views of learning from when they were learners into their professional work. Some similarities were noted between teachers' conceptions of learning while they were learners and when they were teachers. Teachers who perceived learning to be for/with self shared similar views with participants who saw learning as a self-initiated process. In this sub-theme teachers suggested that learning is a process that requires the individual to internalize what they read, and that individuals own information in order to master it or for the information to change them. There seemed to be an understanding learning is not only for fun but is supposed to change an individual's manner of thinking about issues, to change the person. One of the differences between learning for/with self and learning as self-initiated was the choice of words, from 'reading to learn' to 'reading for internalization of information'. The participants' responses as professional teachers indicated influences from teacher training institutions, policy and personal awareness of what learning is about.

On the other hand some teachers held conceptions of teachers as *learning for/with others*, often the other being denoted to as the teacher. Teachers who fell in this sub-theme suggested that learning is when someone was being taught mainly by the teacher. The participants perceived that learning was responsibility for the teacher to initiate, because learners lacked the necessary skills to learn on their own. This conception of learning reinforced the conception of learning as mimicking, reproducing and memorizing information. Teachers seem to have expected learners to reproduce or mimic what they taught without further understanding, possibly to

make sure that they are able to engage with assessments. Of interest is how some teachers who held conceptions of learning as self-initiated later when they were professional teachers believed in learning to mimic, reproduce and memorize information.

6.2.2 Teachers' conceptions of teaching

The findings for teachers' conceptions of teaching were, *teaching as transforming learners and coordinating learning*, *teaching as telling and spoon-feeding* and *teaching as unlocking the mind and life-long learning*. The above themes were based on the teachers' responses of their view about teaching, and not their observations in the classroom. What was imminent with teachers' conceptions of teaching was the existing conflict teachers' encounter between views about teaching emerging from policy, teaching institutions, curriculum reforms versus what teachers do in practice. However, teachers' preferences and ideas about what teaching should be like cannot be taken for granted. The findings from the current research data suggested that teachers fell into three categories of what teaching is about. The first theme focused on teachers' conceptions of teaching that focused on transforming learners and coordinating learning. In this theme teachers suggested that learning should be a process that changes and transforms learners, but similarly teaching has to do with the teacher not imparting information but coordinating learning. The conceptions of teaching in this theme seem to be influenced by teacher training institution and the policy, because even though some participants viewed teaching as coordination of learning they felt deprofessionalised by the method of teaching (although they referred to curriculum 2005 than current CAPS policy). The teachers believed that teachers as coordinators of learning reduces their role in the classroom as the teacher becomes a facilitator. Even though teachers held this resentment towards the teaching as coordination of learning, they felt compelled to adhere to this methodology as it is prescribed by the national policy and curriculum.

Teachers who held conceptions of teaching as telling and spoon-feeding believed that teaching is when the teacher imparts knowledge because learners in rural schools are unable to learn without the teacher. This conception of teaching closely related to the conception of learning for/with others, where the role of the teacher is

clearly visible in the classroom and the teacher teaches the learners in order for them to acquire the information to reproduce it, considering the nature of teaching and learning in the classrooms. While the presence of a teacher is important, the difference with this conception is the dependency on a teacher without a sign of promoting learners' engagement with learning. This conception of teaching is influenced by the perceptions teachers' hold of rural learners, that the learners are incapable of learning, thinking and make meaning on their own. If this is the case the teacher must assume the responsibility for the learning process by teaching and imparting the content to the learners. The final group of participants perceived teaching as unlocking the mind and life-long learning. The teachers who held these conceptions of teaching exhibited progressive ideas about teaching, as teaching was about emancipating learners in rural schools by ensuring that they are exposed to information that will unlock their mind. Teachers also suggested that in order to unlock learners' minds a democratic classroom needs to be created to allow learners to voice their opinions. In addition participants stated that teachers need to be life-long learners if they want to be good and effective teachers who impact on learners' lives beyond the classroom.

6.2.3 Relationship between teachers' conceptions and pedagogical practices

The findings suggested that teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching influenced pedagogical practices for some. In this study conceptions of learning and teaching which authors such as Marton and Saljo (1976); Bruce and Gerner (1995) and Franz et al. (1996, in Dahlgren et al., 2006), considered to be reproducing conceptions of learning were the ones dominant during the lesson observations. As a result prevailing teacher pedagogical practices signified authoritative, traditional, visible and performance-based pedagogies. Teaching involved teachers as disseminator of knowledge and learners as passive acquirers who follow what the teacher says without questioning or enquiring. Of interest is that although some teachers conceptualised learning and teaching as transformational, their teaching approach in the classroom was in conflict with those conceptions. The reason was because of the lack of resources and curriculum policy expectations, which appeared to constraint teachers' teaching practices. The form of teaching observed is what Freire (1970) called the "banking" model of teaching. The above pedagogical

practices were visible, as already mentioned, irrespective of whether teachers held progressive and learner centred views of teaching, teachers seemed to continue to teach in traditional practices. This conflict between conceptions and pedagogical practices suggest that although some teachers aspire for a critical pedagogical approach for the purpose of transforming learners' thinking and engagement with information and/or knowledge, the school context, curriculum policy, and teachers' perceptions of the learners shape their teaching approach in the classroom.

6.3 Implications of the study

Given the findings in this study there are several implications that have emerged. This section of the chapter highlights some of the implications from the data collected, this implications include research on conceptions of learning and teaching, issues pertaining to policy and teacher professional development and further research in rural schools.

6.3.1 Research on teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching

From the reviewed literature research on teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching continue to focus on surface attributes of conceptions such as whether conceptions are reproducing conceptions or transformative conceptions (Brown, Lake & Matters, 2008; Aguirre, Haggerty & Linder, 1990). As discussed in Chapter Two the focus of research in conceptions has been dominant in conceptions of learning and not in conceptions of teaching or teaching and learning. Furthermore literature also seems to have focused on conceptions of learning at tertiary level and limited on teachers, specifically rural teachers. What the findings in this study have presented is conceptions of learning and teaching as separate and then draw on the similarities and differences that underpin the conceptions to show their interconnected as well as their exclusivity. Furthermore the study explicated the complexities of researching teachers' conceptions by presenting various factors that influence teachers' conceptions leading to the indefiniteness of conceptions. The findings suggest that same teachers' held varying conceptions of learning and teaching depending on the stage of life they found themselves. The reason for this fluidity is because at various stages of individuals becoming teachers, they encounter varying factors that shape their understanding of learning and teaching.

Research on teachers' conceptions seems to have neglected and taken for granted contextual and societal factors that teachers encounter as observed in Marton and Saljo (1976); Bruce and Gerner (1995) and Franz et al. (1996, in Dahlgren et al., 2006).

This study was able to show that teachers' conceptions of learning are different from when teachers were learners to teachers as professionals, and also demonstrated how conceptions of learning influence conceptions of teaching and pedagogical practices because of the underlying factors shaping conceptions. Therefore research on teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching needs to consider highlighting factors that shape conceptions, as these can influence the type of conceptions teachers hold, particularly if education in rural schools is to be improved and developed. Considering the little research that has focused on teachers and learners' conceptions of learning in South Africa, especially with rural teachers, the current study recommend that more research need to be done to continue gaining insight on teachers and learners' conceptions of teaching and learning. The complex conceptions of learning and teaching from the teachers responses suggest more research in general and specifically in rural schools, as they continue to be marginalised hence there is information that need to be understood.

6.3.2 Issues of policy and teacher professional development

The findings also highlighted implications for policy and teacher professional development. Conceptions of teaching that teachers held showed tension between what teachers are aware of and what they do in practice. Although teachers were aware of progressive and learner-centred teaching approaches advocated by the policy documents and teacher training institutions, from teachers' practices it appears like teachers still believe that traditional, teacher-centred approaches are better. Although the nature of the social and school context plays a role, but that teachers seemed to only use a unidirectional teaching approach suggest they use what they know best. Thus it appears like certain issues that are prevalent in rural contexts are not taken into account by policy makers, because even though a policy expects teachers to teach in a particular way, what happens in the classroom, shaped by learners and the lack of resources, is something different. This is because

curriculum reforms implement a 'one size fits all' methodologies overlooking challenges that come with progressive learner-centred approaches. However, the above does not undermine the positives that can be created by learner-centred approaches as these approaches enable learners to initiated and be responsible for the learning process. Policy and national department of education need to provide teachers with adequate and effective teacher professional development programmes in rural schools, which help teachers learn to work with these methods of teaching particularly in rural schools.

6.3.3 Reframing conceptual and theoretical frameworks for rural classrooms

The research data was informed by the use of three conceptual frameworks by Bernstein (2003), Alexander (2009) and Scott and Mortimer (2005). The conceptual frameworks were useful at analysing key aspects of the lesson observations in order to determine which of the teachers' conceptions influenced pedagogical practices. However during the data analysis process, I encountered challenges of understanding underlying dynamics that might possibly not be analysed using the above frameworks. The challenge was understanding the extent of the contextual factors that might affect the effectiveness of the frameworks, as this was schools in rural South Africa. Hugo, Bertram, Green and Naidoo (2008), have noted how Bernstein's conceptual framework on visible and invisible pedagogy might not be effective in South Africa because of different social classes and contextual issues that might be different from where the framework was developed. Moletsane (2012) argues that it is time to develop research paradigms that move away from perceiving rurality as deficit but towards more context-specific and place-based and strength paradigms. This paradigm view research as a means for social change and that the participants are key players in their development by developing, implementing interventions that address the challenges they encounter. The above conceptual framework led to teachers' classroom observations being perceived as still teacher-centred and traditions without providing insight of some of the causal factors.

6.4 Limitations of the study

The first limitation for the study was various challenges encountered at the research site such as some teachers withdrawing from the study and the interviews and observations with the participants being conducted within two weeks.

The second limitation emerged from not having adequate time to spend at the research site and making following up interviews or classroom observations. The study was conducted in another province, requiring traveling between Johannesburg and Mpumalanga Province, this limited the flexibility to access the research site constantly. During the data analysis stage interesting findings emerged and it would have been useful to re-interview the participants or ask further questions from some of their responses and classroom observations, and due to the distance it was not easy to do that.

The third limitation is that there was large data to analyse and this resulted in a long time analysis process. As I was new to using critical discourse analysis the discussion chapter (see Chapter Five) was a challenge to engage and write, especially in interpreting, explicating and problematizing particular words from the participants' responses. However, I have learnt a lot by engaging with this process of analysis and role it play in understanding participants' responses.

6.5 Breaking the curse: towards a transformative education in rural South African schools

It is clear from the above discussion and the entire study that teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching are complex, particularly if contextual factors are taken into account. The study was able to highlight significant developments and knowledge in conceptions of learning and teaching particularly for Acornhoek rural teachers, in Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. The study provided insight on the conceptions that exist for teachers in Acornhoek, however further research is needed to explore these conceptions especially if transformative interventions are to be developed. I believe that continuing with this kind of research might provide information about learners' continuing poor performance in English, because classroom observations

are important in understanding teachers' practices and the reasons for the chosen practices. The purpose of the study was to critically interrogate English First Additional Language rural teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching, however if teachers' are to improve and reflect on their conceptions and pedagogical practices further research is needed with the teachers and for the teachers. Conducting research with teachers is important so that it is not only a researcher that gains knowledge but teachers also gain information about the nature of their teaching and how to enhance it. This research is the beginning for other scholars to start conceptualising rurality in ways that recognizes the dynamic interplay of various factors and how rural schools can be the pivotal point to breaking and reversing reproducing practices that do not assist learners to be critical thinkers. Some teachers in the study are already conscious of learning being critical thinkers, but the challenge is developing and teaching in ways that build learners and teachers to transforms them.

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APPENDIXES

Appendix 1: LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL, SGB Chair.

LETTER TO THE PRINCIPAL, SGB Chair

17 September 2015

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Annie Tiny Mafunganyika (Student number: 0714697D) I am a Masters in Education student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on *Grade 10 and 11 First Additional English teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in rural Acornhoek schools of Mpumalanga Province*. This research is part of a broader research project on *conditions of teaching and learning that facilitate and/or constrain learning in five rural high schools*.

My research involves individual semi-structured interviews with two English Language teachers and classroom observation at your school. Video-recording will be used during classroom observations and audio-recordings will be used during interview sessions.

The reason why I have chosen your school is because of the relationship we have established as the institution, and the possible rich information that could emerge in your school.

I am inviting your school to participate in this research and share your experiences that could improve conditions of teaching and learning in other rural schools. The purpose of the study is to critically understand English First Additional Language teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in Acornhoek high schools. In addition is to gain an insight on how teachers' conceptions influence their teaching in the English classroom. Finally the study also seeks to examine teachers' understanding of the nature of English as a subject. Your participation might contribute knowledge on factors that facilitate and/or constrain learners' participation, performance, and success in rural schools. Individual interviews will be done after school, to ensure that teachers are not disturbed. The interviews will take approximately one hour to one and a half hour.

The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. They will be reassured that they can withdraw their permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The teachers will not be paid for this study.

The names of the research participants and identity of the school will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

All research data will be destroyed in 5 years after completion of the project.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,
Ms. Annie Tiny Mafunganyika
64 Bangladesh Crescent, Ext 8
Cosmo City
annie.nyika@outlook.com
083-519-6599(cell)

Appendix 2: INFORMATION SHEET TEACHERS

INFORMATION SHEET TEACHERS
2015

17 September

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is Annie Tiny Mafunganyika (Student number: 0714697D) I am a Masters in Education student in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on *Grade 10 and 11 First Additional English teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in rural Acornhoek schools of Mpumalanga Province*. This research is part of a broader research project on *conditions of teaching and learning that facilitate and/or constrain learning in five rural high schools*.

My research involves individual semi-structured interviews with two English Language teachers and classroom observation at your school. Video-recording will be used during classroom observations and audio-recordings will be used during interview sessions.

The reason why I have chosen your school is because of the relationship we have established as the institution, and the possible rich information that could emerge in your school.

I am inviting your school to participate in this research and share your experiences that could improve conditions of teaching and learning in other rural schools. The purpose of the study is to critically understand English First Additional Language teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching in Acornhoek high schools. In addition is to gain an insight on how teachers' conceptions influence their teaching in the English classroom. Finally the study also seeks to examine teachers' understanding of the nature of English as a subject.

I was wondering whether you would mind if I request your participation in this study to share your experiences and information about the conditions of teaching and learning in your school as an English teacher. Your information will assist with understanding what factors facilitate and/or constrain learning, learners' participation, performance and success in rural schools how we can improve teaching and learning conditions to ensure learners' performance is improved. The interviews will take approximately one hour to one and a half hour and will be conducted after school or a time that best suits you.

The research participants will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. They will be reassured that they can withdraw their permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating in this study. The teachers will not be paid for this study.

The names of the research participants and identity of the school will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. Your individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

All research data will be destroyed in 5 years after completion of the project.

Please let me know if you require any further information. I look forward to your response as soon as is convenient.

Yours sincerely,
Ms. Annie Tiny Mafunganyika
64 Bangladesh Crescent, Ext 8
Cosmo City
annie.nyika@outlook.com
083-519-6599(cell)

Teacher's Consent Form

Please fill in and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness to be a participant in my voluntary research project called:

I, _____ give my consent for the following:

Permission to review/collect documents/artifacts

Circle one

I agree that (SPECIFY DOCUMENT) can be used for this study only.

YES/NO

Permission to observe you in class

I agree to be observed in class.

YES/NO

Permission to be audiotaped

I agree to be audiotaped during the interview or observation lesson

YES/NO

I know that the audiotapes will be used for this project only

YES/NO

Permission to be interviewed

I would like to be interviewed for this study.

YES/NO

I know that I can stop the interview at any time and don't have to
answer all the questions asked.

YES/NO

Permission to be videotaped

I agree to be videotaped in class.

YES/NO

I know that the videotapes will be used for this project only.

YES/NO

Informed Consent

I understand that:

- my name and information will be kept confidential and safe and that my name and the name of my school will not be revealed.
- I do not have to answer every question and can withdraw from the study at any time.
- I can ask not to be audiotaped, photographed and/or videotape
- all the data collected during this study will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of my project.

Sign _____ Date _____

Appendix 3: INFORMATION SHEET LEARNERS

INFORMATION SHEET LEARNERS

16 February 2015

Dear Learner

My name is Dr Thabisile Nkambule, I am a lecturer in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on the conditions of teaching and learning that facilitate and/or constrain learning in five rural high schools.

My research involves the distribution of questionnaires to teachers, learners, and parents; individual semi-structured interviews with three teachers and learners; separate semi-structured focus group interviews with five teachers, learners, and parents; learners' first and second terms results. Video-recording and audio-recordings will be used during data collection.

I was wondering whether you would mind if I invite you to participate in the study and share your experiences and views on the research topic. Your information will assist in improving the conditions of teaching and learning in rural schools, and also understand factors that facilitate and/or constrain learning, participation during teaching and learning, performance, and success in rural schools. I need your help with participation in semi-structured individual and focus group interviews that will be audiotaped, fill-in questionnaires, and participate in classroom observation that will be videotaped.

Remember, this is not a test, it is not for marks and it is voluntary, which means that you don't have to do it. Also, if you decide halfway through that you prefer to stop, this is completely your choice and will not affect you negatively in any way.

I will not be using your own name but I will make one up so no one can identify you. All information about you will be kept confidential in all my writing about the study. Also, all collected information will be stored safely and destroyed in 5 years after I have completed my project.

Your parents have also been given an information sheet and consent form, but at the end of the day it is your decision to join us in the study.

I look forward to working with you!

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Thank you
Dr Thabisile Nkambule
Wits School of Education
Leseding Block, Office No. L124
Thabisile.nkambule@wits.ac.za
Phone No.: (011) 7173049
Cellphone: 0734935098

Learner Consent Form

Please fill in the reply slip below if you agree to participate in my study called:

My name is: _____

Permission to collect documents

Circle one

I agree that my first and second term results can be used for this study only.

YES/NO

Permission to observe you in class

I agree to be observed in class.

YES/NO

Permission to be audiotaped

I agree to be audiotaped during the interview or observation lesson

YES/NO

I know that the audiotapes will be used for this project only

YES/NO

Permission to be interviewed

I would like to be interviewed for this study.

YES/NO

I know that I can stop the interview at any time and don't have to

answer all the questions asked.

YES/NO

Permission for questionnaire

I agree to fill in a question and answer sheet or write a test for this study.

YES/NO

Permission to be videotaped

I agree to be videotaped in class.

YES/NO

I know that the videotapes will be used for this project only.

YES/NO

Informed Consent

I understand that:

- my name and information will be kept confidential and safe and that my name and the name of my school will not be revealed.
- I do not have to answer every question and can withdraw from the study at any time.
- I can ask not to be audiotaped, photographed and/or videotape
- all the data collected during this study will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of my project.

Sign_____ Date_____

Appendix 4: INFORMATION SHEET PARENTS

INFORMATION SHEET PARENTS

16 February

2015

Dear Parent

My name is Dr Thabisile Nkambule, I am a lecturer in the School of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand.

I am doing research on the conditions of teaching and learning that facilitate and/or constrain learning in five rural high schools.

My research involves the distribution of questionnaires to teachers, learners, and parents; individual semi-structured interviews with three teachers and learners; separate semi-structured focus group interviews with five teachers, learners, and parents; classroom observation, and learners' first and second terms results. Video-recording and audio-recordings will be used during data collection. The interviews will take approximately 45 minutes to an hour and will take place after school hours.

The reason why I have chosen your child's class is because s/he has been recommended by teachers. I was wondering whether you would mind if your child participate in the research project and share any experiences and information on the research topic. The information will be used to understand the conditions of teaching and learning in rural schools and factors that facilitate and/or constrain learning, participation during teaching and learning, performance, and success in rural schools. Your child will participate by filling in a questionnaire, individual and focus group interviews that will be audio recorded, and also be a participant in the classroom during the video recording of interaction between a teacher and learners during teaching and learning.

Your child will not be advantaged or disadvantaged in any way. S/he will be reassured that s/he can withdraw her/his permission at any time during this project without any penalty. There are no foreseeable risks in participating and your child will not be paid for this study.

Your child's name and identity will be kept confidential at all times and in all academic writing about the study. His/her individual privacy will be maintained in all published and written data resulting from the study.

All research data will be destroyed in 5 years after completion of the project.

Please let me know if you require any further information.

Thank you very much for your help.

Yours sincerely,
Dr Thabisile Nkambule
Wits School of Education
Leseding Block, Office No. L124
Thabisile.nkambule@wits.ac.za
Phone No.: (011) 7173049
Cell phone: 0734935098

Parent's Consent Form

Please fill in and return the reply slip below indicating your willingness to allow your child to participate in the research project called: Conditions of teaching and learning that facilitate and constrain learning in rural high schools.

I, _____ the parent of _____

Permission to review

Circle one

I agree that my child's first and second term results can be used for this study only.

YES/NO

Permission to observe my child in class

I agree that my child may be observed in class.

YES/NO

Permission to be audiotaped

I agree that my child may be audiotaped during interview or observations.

YES/NO

I know that the audiotapes will be used for this project only

YES/NO

Permission to be interviewed

I agree that my child may be interviewed for this study.

YES/NO

I know that he/she can stop the interview at any time and doesn't have to answer all the questions asked.

YES/NO

Permission for questionnaire

I agree t my child may be fill in a question and answer sheet or write a test for this study.

YES/NO

Permission to be videotaped

I agree my child may be videotaped in class.

YES/NO

I know that the videotapes will be used for this project only.

YES/NO

Informed Consent

I understand that:

- my child's name and information will be kept confidential and safe and that my name and the name of my school will not be revealed.
- he/she does not have to answer every question and can withdraw from the study at any time.
- he/she can ask not to be audiotaped, photographed and/or videotape
- all the data collected during this study will be destroyed within 3-5 years after completion of my project.

Sign _____ Date _____

Appendix 5: Interview Schedule

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS.

1. Please tell me about yourself.
 - Where did you attend Primary and High School?
 - If you still remember, reflecting back in your high school, how was the conditions of teaching and learning?
2. Did you always wanted to be a teacher?
3. Where did you train to be a teacher?
4. How long have you been teaching?
5. What is your highest qualification?
6. What are your specialisation(s) and how long have you been teaching it?
7. Where did you start teaching?
8. What stands out for you about teaching?

RESEARCH QUESTIONS: PART 1.

1. According to your experiences what is the difference between reading and learning?
2. Can you please explain how you learn?
3. Given the above response what is your understanding of learning?
4. Considering the above response what is your understanding of teaching?

RESEARCH QUESTIONS: PART 2.

1. What can you say about the general conditions/circumstances of teaching and learning in your school?
2. What do you think shapes/influences these conditions/circumstances?

3. According to your observation/experience, to what extent are these conditions/situations enable or constrain learners' participation to learning and performance?
4. What are the conditions/circumstances of teaching and learning English?
5. Briefly talk about your experiences of teaching English in a rural or semi-rural school?
6. Are there any challenges, if any, that you have experienced while teaching English in a rural classroom?
7. How did you address these challenges?
8. English can be mediated in two ways, *in* English and *through* English. According to your experiences what is your understanding of teaching *in* English and *through* English?
9. From your experience, do learners participate in your English lessons? How?
10. Do you think learners in your English class take ownership of their learning? How?
11. What kind of relationship exists between you and the learners during the teaching and learning of English?
12. What possible interventions would be appropriate in order to enhance teaching and learning in your English classroom?
13. What possible interventions would be appropriate in order to enhance the conditions of teaching and learning in your school?

Appendix 6: Interview Transcript

Teacher F: Izwe Secondary School

19 May 2015

[R]: = Researcher speaking

[F]: = Teacher F speaking

{MM:SS} = Timestamp

() = Transcriber's corrections/notes

[R]: Here you go. Ok good morning today is the 19th of May 2015. I'm with Mr Mabunda in ma, at Mahashe secondary school he is the second teacher I'm interviewing at the school. Good morning Sir...

[F]: Morning how are you?

[R]: I'm good and yourself? Ok we gonna start with some introductory questions I want you to tell me a little bit about yourself. Where did you attend primary school, where did you attend high school?

[F]: Oh ok. I attended my primary school in a village called Ornogo, Ornogo C that's where I attended my primary school from there went to Oravelani where I did my high school then I (pause) attended my ... ya my teaching course at Tivumbeni College of Education in Kowakowa.

[R]: oh okay, and if you remember like back in your high school days, do you remember wat the conditions of teaching and learning were like? In your high school?

[F]: Oh well... the conditions were (pause) I would say overcrowding was the challenge because we didn't have classes back then we used to attend under the trees you know whereas you are coming from rural areas that was the challenge back then but of late I can see there are changes as the government is playing a big role in terms of seeing to it that learners do

have a good space for teaching and learning. Classes are being built, err mobile classes are brought in of late.

[R]: Ummm...

[F]: Yeah.

[R]: And, and did you always wanted to be a teacher?

[F]: Mmmmm... yeah why not?

[R]: Laughs

[F]: I also want, I wanted to be cos I the teachers who were teaching me back then they were good role models in such a way that the way they were teaching you could even have the interest of becoming a teacher one day. Cause you know err teaching it should be a calling and not something you want to err say err a quick err what let me say a quick what? A quick err, a quick err what you call? A quick profe... a profession that you can just quickly make money or sort of that you must have an interest in terms of err loving the learners you cannot be a teacher if you don't like learners err children at all.

[R]: Ok. And, and err where did you train to be a teacher? I think you mentioned this before...

[F]: Yes, I trained to be a teacher Tivumbeni College of Education

[R]: Oh okay so you went straight to an education err like institute to train?

[F]: Yeah, that's where I went.

[R]: Okay and how long have you been teaching?

[F]: Err, I've been teaching for the past 8 years now.

[R]: Oh ok. And, and what's your highest qualification in terms of err teaching?

[F]: My highest qualification is diploma, a three years course.

[R]: Oh Ok. And, and what's your specialization in terms of major

subjects?

[F]: My major subjects is Geography and English

[R]: **Ok err and how long you've been, you've been also teaching those for 8 years or how long you've been teaching let's say geography longer or English**

[F]: I have been teaching English and Geography, ya those are the subjects I've been teaching since.

[R]: **Ok, ok. And, and where did you start teaching?**

[F]: Mmmmmm... I'd say I started teaching here at Mahashe cause after err graduating, back then the posts were not err in abundance so one have to see to it that, first I started with working in Joburg as err in private sectors

[R]: **Ummmm...**

[F]: Up until I come back in 2007 here at Mahashe since then I've been working here.

[R]: **Okay, what has stood out about teaching, what stands out about teaching? What's that thing that you know, makes teaching what it is, for you?**

[F]: Errr, I'll say first thing is err... the love of children it should be the key first thing because if you don't love these children there is no way that you can commit yourself to that extent in trying to help them in whatever they want to realize in terms of their future. First thing first, one should know that once you wake up in the morning I'm going to work don't say I'm going to school cause if you're going to school definitely you won't do what you're supposed to but if you say I'm going to work and in terms of helping the child, the child whose err hoping or putting the err what you call err his or her err how can I put this? Err... err hopes, err hopes on you as the teacher so that is what motivates me every day. Making sure that whenever I come to school I, I come to work in terms of assisting the learners in a proper way.

[R]: Ok now we are gonna start more into the research questions. How will you classify Acornhoek? Is it a rural, semi-rural place? And why?

[F]: Mmmmm... of late I'd say its semi-rural yeah but cause yeah development is coming in and you can see that majority of err... parents are, are working so if there is, there are jobs you cannot say err deep rural I'd say its semi err, err rural cause yes there are challenges there and there but yeah you can see that things are starting to shape up cause even the government is coming in with the feeding scheme so some of the learners at least even if they are not working , their parents are not working at least they are able to have something to eat during err feeding periods here at school. Ummm.

[R]: Ummm. And, and according to you is teaching in the rural or semi-rural area different from teaching in an urban?

[F]: Yes, I will say it's very, there is a great vast difference and in terms of err urban and rural because of...In rural areas it is quite difficult for learners to err, err grasp something that they just hear of they've never seen it's just theoretical but in urban areas lots of the things are there when you talk of some you're talking of something you can even point and say this is what we are talking about but in rural areas most of the things are just err, err a theory to them they've never seen such things you, you can nar, try to narrate or give an example with, mmm... so that's the great challenge.

[R]: And can you please tell me what you like more, what you like about your school?

[F]: About the school, what I like is the dedication of the teachers err. You can see that they, they mean business. Every day you can see that these teachers are prepared to help the learners in terms of teaching and learning. The commitment is so high in terms of err... teaching err, err these children. Even err, the working relationship there is animosity in the school, that's what I like about the school.

[R]: And, and if there is anything that you are not happy about or satisfied with in your school. Is there anything?

[F]: mmmm.... I'll say yes. Err, few things are there. I can cite err the issue of err, information. Sometimes you find that you are part and parcel of the, the staff but you don't know about certain things that are happening. So sometimes information is not dissected in a correct manner. That's the challenge that I've seen. Communication sometimes is lacking in terms of notifying every, err, every individual in terms of things that are gonna happen. Yes.

[R]: mmmm. And, and would you say then that there is a difference then now between learners that are in semi-rural areas like Acornhoek and urban areas. Do you think the learners themselves are different?

[F]: Yes, they are different, in, in a great sense there is a very vast difference. Err, learners in semi-rural areas are sometimes shy to speak err the language of learning and teaching because err, to them they must firstly think about their mother tongue before they can say it in the language of learning and teaching so, those are the things that I've seen as a challenge in terms of our learners here at school but in err... when you talk of a learner in urban areas they, they are more advance in terms of err... yeah to say technology and whatever media access. They do have access in terms of media so in that way we say there is a vast difference.

[R]: And, and do you think that it is important for learners to take control of their learning and why?

[F]: It is very important for learners to take care of their learning. I'll say 90 err 10 % I'll say is for the teacher in class to guide the learners err 90% is up to the learners to commit themselves in terms of making sure that they follow-up on what the teacher have been doing, teaching them making sure that they research even though there is this there is challenge of technology but at least if they made follow-up then that 90% will be covered if they commit themselves in terms of their learning. Ja

[R]: And you think learners take ownership of their learning? Your learners, here at the school. And how do they do that? Do they take care or...

[F]: I can say the majority of them do take care cause if you give them assessment task, suppose it's a homework or its classwork you find that majority of them do like err, they do write the homeworks, but in terms of err, in terms of err, in coming to say err formal assessment that's where you start to see that these learners sometimes if you give them homework you find that they copy one err, one another's work because you will see when you mark the scripts. Usually when I mark essays you find that can, out of 60 you mark 20 scripts which talks about the same thing, so you could see that there is cheating in this thing, yeah. Some of the learners are not committed, they wait for others to write, most especially, even parents they do err err, play a big role in terms of destroying these learners cause you find that they write for the learners and you could tell that when you read this essay or whatever, you can tell that this is not the learner that I am working with in the class cause I as the teacher have to detect whether this is the learner whom I am working with in the classroom or the parent role, so that's where I come across these challenges.

[R]: And also now, according to your own experiences, what do you think then is the difference between reading and learning? When we talk about reading and when we talk about learning.

[F]: Well err, reading is another story cause when you read you just read for the sake of reading, but learning that's where one starts to acquire the knowledge of what is it that's being taught, err, what is it that is needed of, cause you have to learn it in a content form unlike reading, you can just read for the sake of reading. Maybe for fluential reading, not understanding what you are reading about, but learning yeah it's another dimension.

[R]: Okay, an now can you just briefly explain to me how you learn, like as an individual or when you were at school or at the college, how did you learn?

[F]: Well, err, err, I have learnt through err I tried my level best to mimic what the teachers were saying so that I should be able to have that confidence even myself when I come across a, a say a, say maybe interviews or whatever cause if you don't speak there is no way that you can acquire a language, it is through speaking, that is why speaking is one of the most skills that we need to develop to the learners in terms of teaching and learning. Cause if they can't speak how are they going to venture into the outside world without speaking. Communication is the paramount important when it comes to yeah.

[R]: **Okay, and then given your response of you learnt by mimicking the teachers, then what is your understanding of learning generally? The term, the concept of learning? As a concept generally?**

[F]: **Err...**

[R]: **When we talk of learning and teaching, what do we mean?**

[F]: Err, I will say it's all about err acquiring knowledge from the tutor in a manner that you would be able to be responsible in future using the information or the language that you have acquired cause without err acquiring language from the teacher it will be difficult for you to venture to the outside world cause truly speaking one should be confident wherever he or she is in terms of communication cause if you have not err grasp what is, what you are taught it would be difficult for one to express him or herself for outside there.

[R]: **And what then is your view of teaching? When we talk about teaching then?**

[F]: Err, with my, my view of teaching I would say it's like err opening err the mind which was locked in the manner that one should be able to see life in a different broader sense whereby you can say now that I have been taught this now I can differentiate between right and wrong, cause if you have not been taught about certain things, you will do things that you think are right, cause you haven't learn that this we don't do, we do this, yeah that's what I can say.

[R]: Okay, and, and then, what can say, what can you say then let's say about the general conditions of teaching and learning in your school, what are the general conditions?

[F]: Mmmh, the general conditions well say they are challenging but not to that extent (quiet for some seconds) I will say they are challenging but not to that extent cause well overcrowding in class is one of the major challenges but that one depends on the individual teacher cause even if the learners are not overcrowded discipline starts with the adult, if you can't maintain discipline from learners, then teaching will be a challenge to you. Yeah, crowding here is challenge, but first thing first one have to make sure that he or she has a full control of the learners, then the conditions will be conducive for anyone to teach here.

[R]: Okay, and what do you think then shapes these, some of these conditions, like overcrowding, what influences overcrowding? What do you think?

[F]: Err, when I look at it in terms of our school, yeah err, it is because we, yeah we are running lack of facilities in the school, err I mean you can talk of the issue of err, a hall where we can gather in terms of maybe we, there is, we want to address one another, or there is on a rainy day you don't even have a hall, we don't even have a proper staffroom for educators to name just a few. Challenges of yeah, talk of err toilets, you sometimes you can even pity these poor learners when they go to the toilet, you find that it's a challenge actually, it's a worrying factor, it's a worrying factor, if you can think of 32 teachers or 36 staff members sharing one flushing toilet you can see that it is a big challenge, it's a big challenge which we have here. Well, when it comes to the issue of err, learners troubling it is because of the history of the school, the school's history was a hard work sacrifices, learners were passing, they were taking their education into consideration back then, of late we don't know what happened because of this thing of learners being progressed due to age, some of the things are as a challenge cause at primary levels you cannot keep this child for long then they would progress that boy child, that child who can't even read nor, can't even speak fluently

like that, but what can you do? And it's a local school, err yeah at the end you have to admit learners cause the depart, the policy says admit learners, then you cannot pick and choose and deny the learners right to education.

[R]: Okay, and that kinda accumulates ...

[F]: Exactly ...

[R]: Yeah, into the high school, okay, and, and then from your own observation and experience, to what extent do these conditions then enable or constrain learner performance? Or their participation to learn?

[F]: I would say the conditions play a very big role in terms of err, err, blocking or disturbing the learners participation because I mean if a class has got more than 60 learners, err, learners do take advantage especially in our grade 8 and 9, err, so those kids they will take advantage and say arg because I am sitting at the corner, there is no, individual teaching is not there, we cannot even have that time to have a one on one with learners trying to check their downfall, how can we help them. So is a great challenge if the class is overcrowded, even in terms of assessing them, you find that when you assess their work you just sample, and at the end of the day, what the other child? You might find that there is a gifted learner but you haven't assessed them well, because some learners do shy when they are overcrowded in the class to answer questions cause you know there are those who are bullying others, so such things does have a great impact in terms of the teaching and learning err for learners.

[R]: And can you just give me like in terms of the numerical form, you say grade 8 and 9 there is about 60 learners per class, and then in the FET?

[F]: In the FET let me say grade 10 and 11 yes we are at a range of 50-60, that is the range.

[R]: Yoh, they are still in their big numbers ...

[F]: They are still in great numbers, it's only grade 12 of late that at least it's

manageable, the classes, yeah.

[R]: Okay, and so, what are the conditions then, of teaching and learning English, what are the conditions there?

[F]: I would say the conditions are, are good, it's only that err our learners sometimes err have got that fear of, of say if I, I say this I will be laughed at because there are those who are there just to laugh at others, but if you are as a teacher make sure you encourage the learners to speak irrespective of whether they are speaking what you can say is a broken English, but what we we focus on is only fluency irrespective of whether grammatically errors are there we should encourage learners to speak up until such time when we can say that now they can differentiate words that are grammatical errors in terms of their speaking of the language, but all in all I can say yeah they are trying their best to ...

[R]: And now, briefly talk about your experience of teaching English in the semi-rural school, how has that experience been like?

[F]: Mmm, I will say it's a great challenge cause err most especially in terms of our school cause you find that there are two ethnicity here, there are Tsonga speaking, there are Sepedi speaking people, so when you are teaching, most especially those who are not teaching err, but I would say the majority of the, all the subjects actually, six subjects are taught in the language of learning and teaching. But you find that here the teachers starting to explain in one of the vernacular languages, and now it is starting to become a barrier in terms of the learners grasping exactly what is it that is supposed to mean in the language the subject is taught. See if you explain in their home language, then there is a challenge there, the questions will come in the language of learning and teaching, so that is a barrier on its own cause sometimes you find the learners having written in his or her home language to show that the learner understood when you explained, but now we are putting it in the language of teaching and learning, this is a problem, so those are the challenges. Err, to me it was a learning curve because they never thought that a person can speak or teach the whole lesson without explaining in another language because that

is what I do, I don't know, I don't want to explain in another, because there are two language groups, so why should I have to divert to the other language, I would be denying the other one the right to learn, so let me explain it in the language of teaching and learning, that's what I usually does.

[R]: So, the students find that quiet interesting that you speak English for instance the whole way and not even code switch?

[F]: Yeah, that's why they were surprised that this person think like this until the period ends, but of late now they know that with Mabunda there is no changing ...

[R]: English is English ... (giggles) okay are there any challenges, if there are any that you have experienced in teaching English in a rural classroom? I mean you have mentioned the language one, which is a barrier, are there any other challenges?

[F]: Mmmm, the other challenge is I can say in terms of the textbooks, err, we don't have textbooks whereby learners we can say this learner has his or her own textbook, they can read on her own at home, you know when you go to class and say you are reading a short story or whatever they read in class and then you take the books with you out, then its problematic because the learner cannot follow the story which you were teaching about and of late the, the poems that we are doing they have introduced new poems and its difficult for us to get the the those poems, but we are trying our level best to download from the internet all those things. That is the challenge we are facing in terms of the ...

[R]: So, you are just given the poems and you need to go as a school to find those poems?

[F]: Yeah, so that is a challenge, but we are trying, we are trying out level best.

[R]: Okay, and how have you addressed some of these challenges, like how do you address then the issue of textbooks? Since the learners do not have textbooks to take home and read.

[F]: Yeah, in the, in our subject meetings that's where we err outline these problems that we are facing then well they keep on ordering but nothing comes, that is the challenge we are facing, we don't know what is happening, but we do mention this with our HODs when we are having our subject meetings, yeah.

[R]: **So, now I'm coming more to, towards the deep research, that English can be mediated in two ways, you can mediate *in* English and you can also mediate *through* English, err within English is more like poetry you know, when you are doing a poem, you cannot just say line, you have to know, or you can't just say paragraph, it's stances you know, you have to use the proper terms for that particular section, if you are doing grammar you can't just say that word, you have to be specific, is it a verb ...**

[F]: A verb ...

[R]: **And then though English is just mediation, like, like you were saying you teach in English, so teaching Math you have to teach it in English, through English, I have to go through the subject as a mediation, so what is your understanding of those *in* English, *through* English in relation to your own teaching in the school?**

[F]: Yeah, in English it means one have to err while teaching guide these learners in the manner they are able to fossilized what one is saying in terms of err suppose I'm teaching a poem as you have eluded, err they should be able to detect what figure of speech is being used here, is it literally used or figuratively used, all those things, one should make sure he or she emphasizes those things to learners so that they should be able to differentiate the meaning behind what the speaker is saying in this poem, yeah.

[R]: **And, and then, through English, how, what can you say about that? If you are using English as our means?**

[F]: Mmm, through English I can say one should be err confident enough so that the learners mustn't doubt what you are teaching cause if you are not sure

also as a teacher that's where the problem creeps in, yeah, learners are quick to detect whether the teacher is sure of what he or she is saying, so is something which needs us as educators to be on our toes also, making sure that we develop ourselves in terms of our English speaking.

[R]: Okay, and from your experience do learners participate in your English lessons and how do they participate?

[F]: Yes, they do participate, they participate in terms of answering questions when questions are posed to them, they also ask questions, they are free to ask questions cause err learners needs to be err respected also, you don't have to make learners fear you, learners have to respect you so that they are able to communicate with you in any way in terms of asking questions, when it comes to asking questions, if they are not sure of what you have taught, but if you want learners to fear, then that's where the culture of learning is being compromised, yeah, we mustn't, we have to be err, err open to the learners in the manner that they can approach us and ask whatever challenges that they might be facing.

[R]: And, and do you think that the learners, more in your English class, because you have talked of learners taking ownership of learning, but you think specifically in your English classes, since you teach FET, take more ownership of their learning?

[F]: Yeah, I will say yes they do take ownership of learning, err in the sense that whenever I give them task or assessment they make sure that they write, there is no way that when I check their work I will find that they haven't written the work. So I will say they are committed in terms of their ownership of their work, yeah.

[R]: And, and what, what kind of relationships exist between you and your learners during the teaching and learning of English?

[F]: Err, I will say the relationship that exist is that one of err a learner-teacher relationship, in the sense that I do allow them to have inputs if there is a, they want to have an input or ask freely without being, err without fear or favour, I allow them that room, and they know that when is time to to to

learn we do things accordingly, they, yes they do have that err, err I would say that my class is a democratic classroom, yeah, learners are allowed to give their opinions, not a one show off thing, just because I am the teacher I will always dominate everything, I don't do domineering, I allow them also to have inputs on whatever they think they can ask ...

[R]: Mmm, and then what possible interventions would be appropriate in order to enhance or help the teaching and learning of English in your classrooms? What kind of interventions can come in?

[F]: Err, I will say learners should be allowed to have err that rule of err they let's say, let's say, we should bring back the debates thing in class because without debate there is no way that they can be able to err communicate this language cause if they learn only and write and nothing like debating, they cannot err be able to err, yeah venture into the outside world whereby they can stand on their own and say this and this is not done, yeah I think we should bring back debate issue in the school, yeah.

[R]: Okay, and do you think that should come into English classes or should it be overall school err intervention, or you think it's a task only for English teachers or the English classrooms or is it more for the whole school, whether you, you know?

[F]: Uhm, I think the English err, err, educators are the one who should be responsible for this one cause I mean if learners can't express themselves out there, there is no one who is go and blame the maths teacher or the physical science teacher, no ways, they will first look at the English teacher, who taught you this, so yeah. Yeah, we as English teachers, we should take charge of this debate thing ...

[R]: And, and what other possible interventions would be appropriate in order to enhance the conditions of teaching and learning in the school in general? Is there any intervention that would help just the teaching and learning in the school, as a whole?

[F]: Mmmm, yeah, I think the intervention that can be made in the school is yeah, they say "Mens sana in corpore sano", "a healthy mind in a healthy

body”, whereby you know in terms of our environment in the staffroom it’s a challenge maybe can check, go and check there you will see the tables are full, right now you can ask for something which I know is there but because of the setup it’s a worrying factor to be honest, yeah, if we can have a conducive staffroom where we can say yes this is the department, the English department staffroom, all those things, then you know we will be talking one language there, what are the challenges, how can we deal with this problem that we are facing, but if someone is down there, someone is sitting in the car and all those things, we are just improvising and things in that way will not shape in.

[R]: Okay, thank you so much, so now we gonna, I’m gonna ask you just 10 questions on parental involvement in the school, is there any form of partnership that exist between the school and the parents, that you know of?

[F]: Yeah, the partnership that we have with parents is that quarterly we invite parents to come and assess and check the work of their, of their children, yeah, that’s what we are doing, quarterly we do so, but because as I have eluded in the beginning that err Acornhoek is a semi-rural, majority of the, our learners’ parents are working far away from within the, the so you find only those few who are their parents are the educators or they are nurses, policemen, those are the ones that are able to come and assess their learners’ work, so usually, that is, I can say it’s a, there is a a a wide gap in terms of parents assessing their learners, yeah.

[R]: Mmm,

[F]: Cause, yeah, yeah, yeah, that is the challenge we are facing cause you will find that err you know the parent of the child come December when they come to collect the final report or when the child have misbehaved then you write those letters you call the parent that’s when we start to see that is this the parent, why since January you were not coming, now you are coming in and say you are, so those are the challenges, but we understand cause most of them are working in the farms you see, so that is the problem, they leave in the early hours of the morning and come late at dusk, so those are

the challenges.

[R]: And when you say they assess learners work, can you describe the process for me, do they come, check the books or ...

[F]: Yes, yes, they come and check the books for the, of learners, like their files cause we keep them with us then checking if the learners are being assessed in terms of the homeworks and classwork, those are the things that they do, they will even ask whether there are challenges in terms of, you cannot wait for say around September and say, call a parent and say your child is doing this and this, cause we are the parents when we are here with the learners, so if we see challenges or anything that is untoward towards the child we have to quickly intervene and call the parent and say assist us in terms of this challenge. Is it the way he or she is behaving at home or is it because of a, this err what do you call it? Err mixing with other wrong guys or yeah, so that is the challenge we sometimes face. Yeah.

[R]: And do you think that the parents' educational background plays a role in the children's education?

[F]: Big time, big time cause, well if the parent is not educated enough or not educated at all the only thing the parent knows is that if my child goes to school he or she will become something, and in terms of checking the books or whatever, whether they write or they wrote homeworks or whatever they will never know, and that's a challenge that we are facing here, when you check, illiteracy is the challenge that is affecting this err, this rural area. Illiteracy is the challenge.

[R]: And the family, do you think then the family socio-economic background influences the attitudes the learners' attitudes to school and motivation to learn? That like you were saying some of the parents work in the farms and all that, does it influence like how they learn, how their attitude is towards school?

[F]: Yeah, I will say it does affect the, the learning of the children cause sometimes if you, if they see that their parents are working in the farms err is a burden for them to accept that my parents working in the farms and not

being a professional, so those are the challenges, sometimes a learner would just come, you could see even the way they are dressed that where they are coming from it's a great challenge, you know we don't expect a high school child to have that smelling odor , but if there is such thing, it hinders their teaching and learning cause yeah I mean if an, a sixteen year old or seventeen year old boy or girl is having that smell then you see in one way or another it will hinder his or her learning cause the others will look down upon her or him, so those are the challenges, socio-economic background is a challenge.

[R]: And, and do you know of any cultural practices that takes place at Acornhoek?

[F]: Yeah, there are cultural practices that does takes place here at Acornhoek, err, its called Muchongolo, the traditional dance, yeah, I also err play part in terms of err dancing also even myself on Sundays, but usually I do that when school holidays, yeah, that's when I I participate in those cultural dance.

[R]: And do they influence teaching and learning, the teaching and learning, do they influence, have any influence in the teaching and learning?

[F]: You mean this cultural dance?

[R]: Yes, yes ...

[F]: I will say one way or another it does influences, children err like to copy what the elders, especially if they regard you as a role model, if they see you doing that they say why not me? So it means even if you are not edu ..., if you are educated you can also, because culture is when someone or something which one have to be, take pride of, yeah, ones culture is paramount important, you cannot shy away from that.

[R]: Okay, and how do that parents, do parents participate in activities of the school? Like do they come and participate at the soccer games or ...

[F]: Err, of late we have took a backseat in terms of activities like playing soccer, we used to go out, but now the focus of late is more on teaching and learning and it's one ways or another is not good cause when you work without playing it makes John a dull boy, sometimes they have to free their mind in terms of participating in sporting activities, yeah, yeah we used to do that but of late we are focusing more on the teaching and learning ...

[R]: **Okay, and what role do you think parents play in the learning of their children? Just in general?**

[F]: Well, I will say they play a role cause err without the parents I mean if you see learners in the morning, some are coming with the, they are coming with their taxi, the mode of transport coming, so that shows that parents are serious about the future of their learners, so they do play a role, yeah.

[R]: **And, and , how can the school then encourage parents to participate more in school stuff? Or school activities and school meetings?**

[F]: The only way is to, yeah I will say to keep reminding, cause we usually give the letters to the children to go and give their parents when there is, most especially when there are parents meetings on Sundays, that's when we come across the parents of the learners, err, besides that err as I have eluded that eishs rural areas people are working far away, in the farms and you know when you are working in the farms you have to work six o'clock and you come back six o'clock, by the time they arrive this side its late, so, yeah, the only time when they are able to come and we have contact with them is Sundays, when there are parents' meetings.

[R]: **Okay, okay, thank you sir, is there any questions from your side? Anything you want to ask?**

[F]: Err, not a real question, I will just say thanks for having conducted the interview, err to me it's a learning curve, yeah, it's a learning curve, I really appreciate what you are, have done.

[R]: **Okay, thank you so much, I thank you too. (Giggles).**

Appendix 7: Lesson Observation Transcript

Teacher F: Izwe Secondary School

Teacher observation summary notes

Grade 10 Poetry: On Aging by Maya Angelou

Time	Teacher	Visuals
00:00	Introduction: The teacher begins by informing the class that they will be doing the poem written on the board.	The teacher write the name of the poem and poet on the board "ON AGING"-BY MAYA ANGELOU
00:36	The teacher tells the class that by just looking at the title on aging they will get the sound it's about age. And that on aging is a process that continuing.	Teacher writes AGE on the chalkboard
01:18	The teacher gives learners 2-3 minutes to do silent reading of the poem and get a sense on what the poems is about and that they will be asked questions.	While learners are reading the teacher walks around the classroom.
03:21	Body of lesson The teacher stops the learners from reading and reminds them of the four skills they need to know in order to communicate with whoever. The teacher explains that the learners need to know the language of learning and teaching (LoLT) in order to communicate. The learners need to master the language and develop the four skills. The teacher further explains that the only language the learners are not taught in English it's their home language and Afrikaans. The teacher explains that it was just to give the learners a background on how to read and write fast while listening.	Teacher write on the chalkboard: WRITING READING LISTENING SPEAKING

06:58	The teacher continues to discuss the poem and tells the learners that they are growing old as well as they move through high school. Teachers asks a question: How many of you have grandparents at home or grandfathers? The teacher reads the poem to the class twice while they listen.	Learners grandparents put their hands up.
07:35	The teacher explains the poem and relates it to how grandparents are like at home and that the poem speaks to the readers.	Teacher SYMPATHY writes
08:22	The teacher explains the difference between sympathy and empathy. And says that one should rather show empathy.	
12:10	The teacher asks the class what figure of speech is “Like a sack” The teacher tells the learners to not feel offended on how the pronounce words as long as they know how to spell it.	
14:49	The teacher is going through the poem and stops to explain each line. The teacher asks the learners talk to themselves. The teacher explains that it is good for people to talk to themselves. And reflect on life and be true to themselves. Some learners are now taking things for granted when they reach grade 10 but they actually have one more year before matric. The teacher goes to explain the FET phase and that the learners have one foot in grade 11 so they must learn to talk to themselves.	
15:00	The teacher explains that they not sure if Maya Angelou is a male or female and carries on with explaining the poem.	
17:32		

	The teacher points to a group of learners who are sitting quietly and asks them that they must use the hand out and make their own notes. That while they listen they must also write and the teacher emphasized on the four skills. The teacher tells the learners they must ask for homework if a teacher does not give them any. The teacher is reading the line “when you see me walking, stumbling” and asks the learners who knows what is to stumble? Who knows what is to stumble or can show us what is to stumble? Or a language you can tell us what is to stumble? Learner A: Ukukhumbulunga 21:47 Teacher: Kukhumbulunga? Teacher: In the other language? Learner B: Kgokologa Teacher: Kgokologa? 24:46 Teacher: Can someone show us? Yes can someone show us? 25:08 25:10 The teacher continues with the poem. And explains that the speaker is saying people mustn't conclude things. And the teacher emphasizes the four skills. As the teacher reads the learners chorus some lines. The teacher emphasizes on the language used is informal throughout the lesson. 25:11 The teacher asks the class what figure of speech this is?	The teacher draws stairs to illustrate a line in the poem. The teacher demonstrate what is to stumble.
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25:19		
25:20		
25:28	The teacher explains that the repetition of the consonant sound 'L' is alliteration. Teacher continues to explain the poem and that there is changes that occur to the speaker. The teacher explains that the speaker is positive about aging. The teacher includes examples in relation to how students must treat their grandparent throughout the lesson.	Teacher writes study/examine/investigate on the board.
26:12	The teacher states that learners must take advice from the elders because they are speaking from experience Conclusion: The teacher concludes and summarizes the poem and explains that when we see the elderly we must not pity them but draw from their experience. And that if the learners listen to the elderly they will grow and God will bless them with many years. On aging is a process and it shows that we must treat the elderly with respect. The teacher gives the learners homework.	Teacher writes on the board "A lot less lung..."
32:28		
33:26	The teacher asks if there is anyone who has a different view when it comes to elders?	Teacher writes experience on the board.
37:53		
38:35		The teacher cleans the board Learners: All say yes

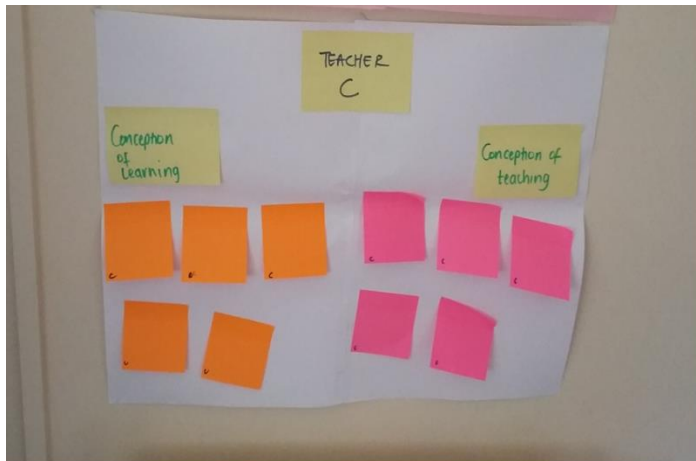
42:10		The teacher writes the homework on the board.
42:15		
43:18		

Learners' observation summary notes

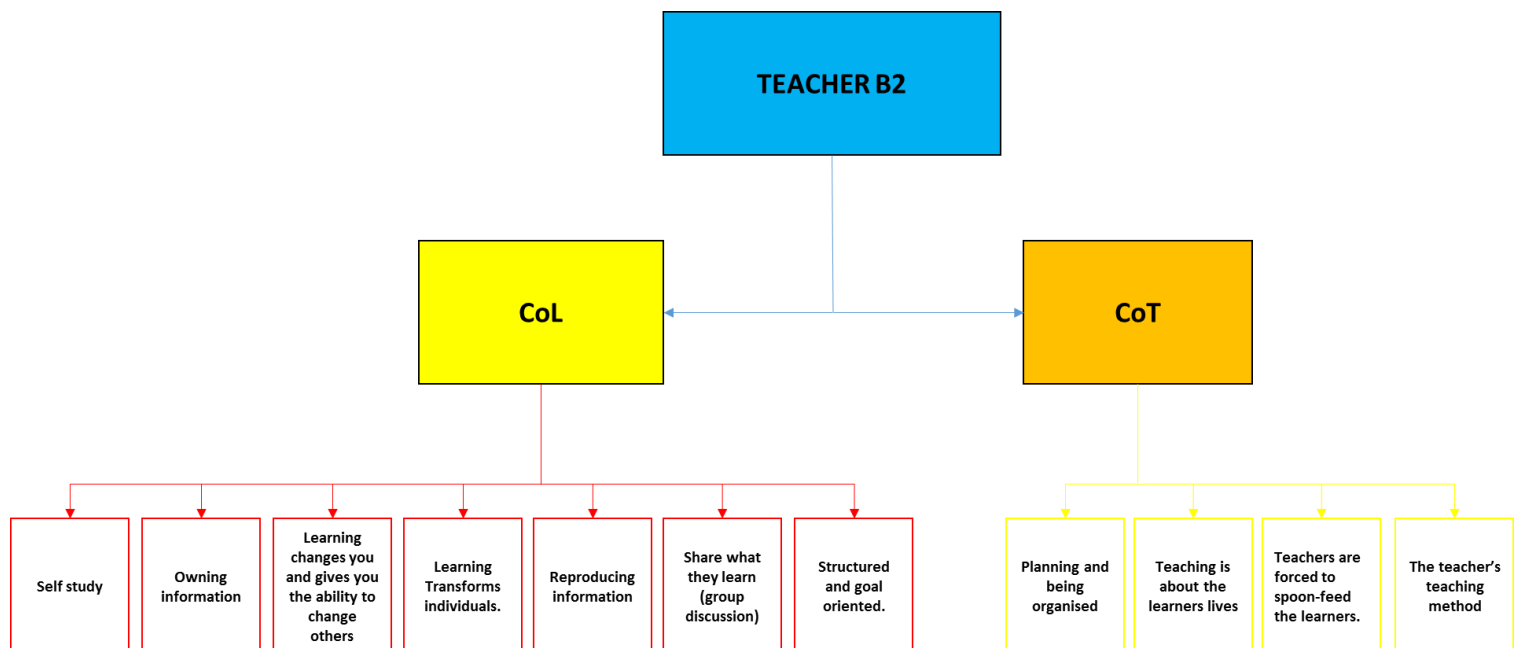
Time	Learners	Visuals
01:44	Learners read silently for 2-3	Handout of the poem "ON AGING"-BY MAYA ANGELOU
14:50	In unison learners respond that " like a sack " is a SIMALI (SIMILE) Learners had to listen and take down their own notes throughout the lesson.	
43:18	Learners copy homework down.	

Appendix 8: Data Analysis Stage 1: Interviews

Poster charts and concept map



Photography 3: Stage one of the interview data set analysis process.
Teacher C, Maru High School



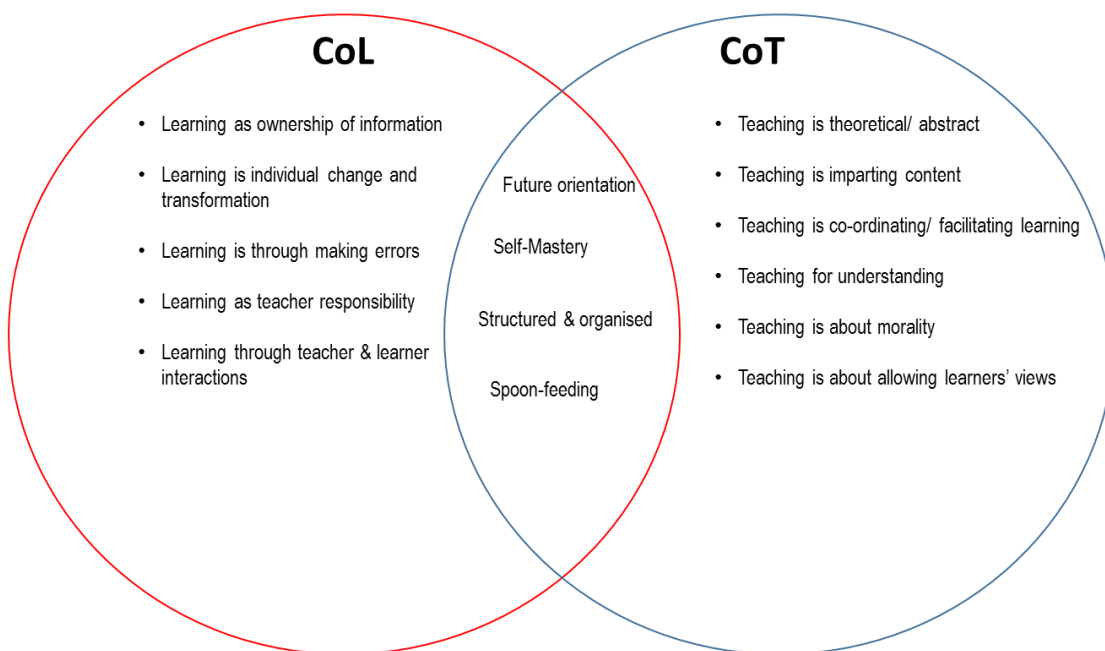
Appendix 9: Data Analysis Stage 2: Interviews

Conceptions of learning and teaching including factors or inferences

<u>TEACHER F</u>				
	CONCEPTIONS OF LEARNING	INFERENCE/ REASON	CONCEPTIONS OF TEACHING	INFERENCE/ REASON
	Learning to acquire knowledge	You learn it in a content form	Opening the mind to see a different perspective (Broader perspective)	For a broader sense and future oriented.
	Learning through mimicking	Past experience as a student	Equipping learners with the ability to distinguish between right and wrong	Moral/ethical
	Acquire knowledge from the teacher for future use	For future prosperity or use/ to cope with the outside world	Teacher says they are not dominant in class but allow the views of the learners	Learner centred

Appendix 10: Data Analysis Stage 3: Interviews

Venn diagram showing similarities and differences between teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching



A Venn diagram: Similarities and differences between teachers' conceptions of learning and teaching.

Appendix 11: Data Analysis Stage 4: Interviews

Themes and sub-themes

Table 5: Themes and sub-themes of teachers' conceptions of learning

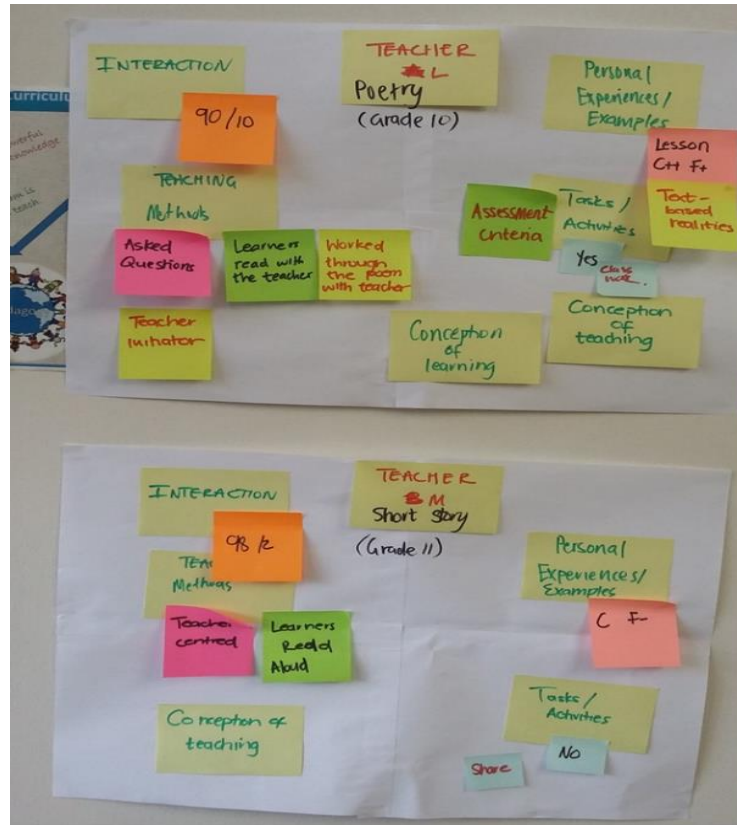
THEME ONE	TEACHERS' CONCEPTIONS OF LEARNING AS LEARNERS	INFERENCE/ REASON/FACTOR
SUB-THEME 1	LEARNING AS MIMICKING, REPRODUCING AND MEMORISING	
1	Learning through memorisation	Lack of resources
2	Learning through mimicking	To acquire the from the teacher
3	Learning as reproducing information	Personal trait
SUB-THEME 2	LEARNING AS SELF-INITIATED	
1	Learning as self-study	Lack of resources and teacher pedagogy, overcrowded-link to context
2	Learning as reading	Lack of resources
3	Learning is internalizing what you read	Past learning experiences
THEME TWO	TEACHERS' CONCEPTION OF LEARNING AS TEACHERS	INFERENCE/ REASON/FACTOR
SUB-THEME 1	LEARNING FOR /WITH SELF	
1	Learning as Mastery	Personal trait
2	Learning as ownership of information	Personal trait-from school
3	Learning is structured & organised	Policy
4	Learning is individual change and transformation	Personal trait
SUB-THEME 2	LEARNING FOR/WITH OTHERS	
1	Learning as teacher responsibility	Learner perception
2	Learning is when being taught by a teacher	Learner perception
3	Learning through teacher & learner interactions	Personal
4	Learning for future	Socio-economic

Table 6: Themes of teachers' conceptions of teaching.

THEMES	TEACHERS CONCEPTION OF TEACHING
Teaching as transforming learners and coordinating learning	
	Planned & organized
	Teaching is co-ordinating/ facilitating learning
	Teaching as ownership of information and change
Teaching as telling and spoon-feeding	
	Teaching as spoon-feeding
	Teaching as telling
	Teaching is theoretical/ abstract
	Teaching is imparting content
Teaching as unlocking the mind and life-long learning	
	Teaching as unlocking the mind
	Teaching as life-long learning

Appendix 12: Data Analysis Stage 1: Observation

Poster chart of classroom observations



Appendix 13: Data Analysis: Observation (Bernstein's Conceptual Framework)

Analysis of visible and invisible pedagogy

BERNSTEIN (2003) VISIBLE AND INVISIBLE PEDAGOGY

KEY:
IMP-IMPLICIT
EXP-EXPLICIT

ANALYTICAL CRITERIA	TEACHER A		TEACHER B		TEACHER C		TEACHER D		TEACHER E		TEACHER F
Hierarchical Rules			Explicit		Explicit		Explicit		Explicit		Explicit
Sequencing Rules			Explicit		Explicit		Explicit		Explicit		Explicit
Criteria Rules			Limited Explicit		Not clear		Explicit		Explicit		Implicit

Appendix 14: Data Analysis: Observations (Alexander's Conceptual Framework)

The act of teaching

ALEXANDER (2009) THE ACT OF TEACHING						
	TEACHER A:	TEACHER B: Grade 10-poetry	TEACHER C: Grade 11-Short story	TEACHER D: Grade 10- Short story	TEACHER E: Grade 11-Short story	TEACHER F: Grade 10- Poetry
1. Lesson structure and form						
Unitary lesson structures		X-it is difficult to make out the purpose of the lesson. Introduction Development No conclusion	X- Recap Development-learners selected to read the story to the class. No conclusion	X Introduction Development-learners' volunteer to read the story to the class. Conclusion-asking one question	X Introduction Development- Development-learners' volunteer to read the story to the class. No conclusion	X Introduction Development Conclusion
Episodic lesson structure		_____	The short stories are part of an assessment task learners must do for their portfolio	_____	_____	_____
2. Frame of teaching						
Learner organisation & Space		Neat straight rows	No rows, tables placed randomly	Some rows visible but not neatly placed.	Neat rows, some there were two learners per table.	Neat rows, learners sharing tables.
3. The acts of teaching						
a. Task						
Unitary tasks		X	X-reads the questions out to the learners, they are given homework	_____	_____	X-Learners given homework
Episodic tasks		_____		_____	_____	_____
b. Activities						
d. Assessments			Learners are given homework task from the prescribed book.	No task or activity-no time	No task or activity-no time	Teachers created homework questions.
Formative Feedback			_____	_____	_____	_____
Summative Feedback		X	_____	_____	_____	_____

Appendix 15: Data Analysis Stage: Observations (Scott and Mortimer's Conceptual Framework)

The communicative approach

TEACHER QUESTIONS			TEACHER A	TEACHER B	TEACHER C	TEACHER D	TEACHER E	TEACHER F	TOTAL OF PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES
CODE	ABBREVIATION	DESCRIPTION OF CODE							
CLOSED	CLD	Teacher elicits limited responses from learners		1					1
OPEN	OPN	Teacher elicits various responses from learners		1					1
OPEN IDEAS	OPN-I	Teacher elicits ideas -what is do you think?							0
OPEN DISCRIPTION	OD	Teacher elicits a description-what does it mean?							0
OPEN EXPLANATION	OE	Teacher elicits an explanation or justification-why do you say that?			1				1
DIRECTED QUESTION	DQ	Teacher directs a question to a particular learner		1					1
NOMINATED QUESTION	NQ	Teacher nominates a learner after learner to respond to the same question		1	1		1	1	4
ELICIT ELABORATION OR EXPLANATION	EE	Teachers asks for learner to explain or elaborate their answer		1		1			2

FOLLOW UP QUESTION TO THE SAME LEARNER	FUQ-SAME	Teacher asks a follow up question from the same learner				1	1		2
TEACHER REPEATS QUESTION ASKS DIFFERENT LEARNER	TRQ-DIFF	Teacher repeats the question after a learners response to another learner		1	1	1	1	1	4
TEACHERS ASKS FOR CONSENSUS	CONS	Teachers asks for consensus from the whole class		1	1	1	1	1	4
TEACHER REPHRASES ANSWER	TR	Teacher rephrases answer from a learner		1		1	1		3
TEACHER PROMPTS OR GIVES CUES	TP-BEFORE Q TP-AFTER Q	Teacher provides cues before the question or after the question		1	1		1		3
TEACHER IGNORES LEARNER	T-IGN	Teacher ignores a learner's response					1		1
PURE ACKNOWLEDGEMNT	ACK	Teacher acknowledges a response but does not seek further engagement		1			1	1	3
TEACHER EVALUATION	T-EVAL	Teacher evaluates whether the answer is right or wrong					1		1
TEACHER ASKS FOR OTHER IDEAS	T-OI	Teacher asks for other learners to provide further ideas to what has been said		1			1		2
TEACHER MOVES ON	MOVING ON	Teacher changes the discussion or topic					1		1
TEACHER INTERACTION									

AUTHORATIVE TEACHER DISCUSSION	AUTH-TD	The teacher initiates and leads the discussion and sticks to the topic or theme.		1	1	1	1	1	5
DIALOGIC TEACHER DISCUSSION	DIA-TD	The teacher initiates a dialogue and allows learners to engage with each other or the teacher							0
LEARNER INITIATED DISCUSSION	LEAR-ID	Learners initiated the classroom discussion							0
PEER DISCUSSIONS	PD	Learners discuss the lesson with someone or in pairs							0

LEARNER TALK			TEACHER A	TEACHER B	TEACHER C	TEACHER D	TEACHER E	TEACHER F	TOTAL OF PARTICIPANTS' RESPONSES
CODE	ABBREVIATION	DESCRIPTION OF CODE							
NO EXPLANATION	NE	Learners respond without providing any explanation.		1	1				2
FACTUAL	FACT	Learners give a factual or text- based response.		1			1		2
EXPLANATIONS	EX	Learner provides an explanation of why something is the way it is and what might happen in future							0
DESCRIPTION	DES	Learner describes the process							0
REASONS	REA	Learner provides reasons and justifications for answers							0
ELABORATED ENGAGEMENT	ELA-ENG	When the class discussion is dominated by learner explanations, more than 100 words in the transcript.							0

COMBINED DATA FROM ALL THE TEACHERS		
CODE	DESCRIPTION OF CODE	NUMBER OF PARTICIPANTS
AUTHORITATIVE TEACHER DISCUSSION	The teacher initiates and leads the discussion and sticks to the topic or theme.	5
NOMINATED QUESTION	Teacher nominates a learner after learner to respond to the same question	4
TEACHER REPEATS QUESTION ASKS DIFFERENT LEARNER	Teacher repeats the question after a learners response to another learner	4
TEACHERS ASKS FOR CONSENSUS	Teachers asks for consensus from the whole class	4
TEACHER REPHRASES ANSWER	Teacher rephrases answer from a learner	3
TEACHER PROMPTS OR GIVES CUES	Teacher provides cues before the question or after the question	3
PURE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	Teacher acknowledges a response but does not seek further engagement	3
FOLLOW UP QUESTION TO THE SAME LEARNER	Teacher asks a follow up question from the same learner	2
NO EXPLANATION	Learners respond without providing any explanation.	2
FACTUAL	Learners give a factual or text-based response.	2
ELICIT ELABORATION OR EXPLANATION	Teachers asks for learner to explain or elaborate their answer	2
TEACHER ASKS FOR OTHER IDEAS	Teacher asks for other learners to provide further ideas to what has been said	2
CLOSED	Teacher elicits limited responses from learners	1
OPEN	Teacher elicits various responses from learners	1
OPEN EXPLANATION	Teacher elicits an explanation or justification-why do you say that?	1
DIRECTED QUESTION	Teacher directs a question to a particular learner	1
TEACHER EVALUATION	Teacher evaluates whether the answer is right or wrong	1
TEACHER MOVES ON	Teacher changes the discussion or topic	1
TEACHER IGNORES LEARNER	Teacher ignores a learner's response	1